

How does one begin to capture the uniquely wonderful experience that is Beach Elementary School in words? I will do my best. I attended Beach School from 1st through 6<sup>th</sup> grades, leaving part way through my 6<sup>th</sup> grade school year to move to Hawai`i, where I currently reside. I left Beach School in 1995 and have not been back to the school since that time. However, thoughts of Beach School never fail to evoke fond memories, warm feelings, and cravings for homemade cider!

My memories of Beach School come to me in the form of numerous sensory and experiential recollections. The smell of salt water, as we took various field trips over the years to the beach for science projects, or to the ferry landing for a Halloween parade. The sound of an apple, nearly the size of my head, crunching as I bit into it, on our annual apple-picking field trip to prepare for cider-making; additionally, the songs I still sing to myself from time to time, kept in memory from fantastic school plays (Annie, Alice in Wonderland, to name a few). The taste I most fondly recall is that of apple cider, made fresh each year by the students, using old-fashioned cider presses (you can consider this my official vote for apple cider as a refreshment at the Centennial Celebration)! When I think back to sunny recess periods spent on the far end of the field, I can almost smell the Lilacs that hung over the fence that divided the school from the home that bordered it, and which I picked at least a few times; I'm also reminded of our school garden when I dig in my own garden, as I smell the scent of earth (I still remember tips I learned then, such as planting Marigolds to repel slugs)!

By far the most important experience I had at Beach School was that of a school community that deeply cared about the students. I was blessed to have the same teacher from 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and then one teacher for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Both deeply cared about their students and provided learning environments which promoted well-being of the whole child, not just reading, writing, and the like. When my (single-parent) father underwent major surgery in the fall of 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I remember declining attendance to the fall song performance, because I had no one to drive me. My teacher (who was also my neighbor) drove me to the performance without hesitation, and also at one point delivered home-made soup to our house during my father's recovery (other school community members also offered assistance such as home-cooked meals, which has never been forgotten). I fondly remember the various office staff, all of whom provided a warm and welcoming school environment. When I think back, I am struck by just how involved the island community was in the school community. I can easily remember several parents who regularly contributed in the school environment, by assisting in the lunch room, providing tutoring, and other such activities. I remember trick-or-treating (shout out for the map system!) and being in awe at my Spanish teacher's house, where we were allowed to choose from several stations of home-made goodies. Beach School's history is made up of so many wonderful and caring individuals, I wish I could name them all!

I'm now a Psychologist for a school district in Hawaii, and strive daily to provide my students with a caring environment such as that which I once experienced at Beach Elementary. Congratulations on 100 years, Beach School! I look forward to seeing everyone at the centennial!

Warmly,  
Dr. Amithea Love  
Sixth Grade Class of 1995