

BERNARDS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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www.bernardsboe.com

NICK MARKARIAN
Superintendent of Schools

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August 24, 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I hope you have been having a great summer with your family. I am very excited to be welcoming you back to school for what promises to be another wonderful year.

The summer activity here in district has been intense and very busy as usual. Dozens of curriculum writing projects and hundreds of hours of staff development training were completed. In addition to the usual summer cleaning and maintenance work, we are also finishing up some major projects. Most notably we have replaced the turf field at Ridge High School with a brand new surface and installed new goal posts and soccer goals. A significant number of old heating units at Ridge High School and Cedar Hill School were replaced with modern heating and cooling units. Parking lot repairs are taking place at William Annin and Mount Prospect. Finally, the Ridge High School wellness center was relocated to a newly renovated space. Of course, our usual summer work also includes preparations for bus transportation and student schedules. Bus passes are currently being mailed; the passes should arrive at your home no later than Friday, August 28th. Elementary school student/teacher assignments will be available through the Home Access Center (HAC) this year; login information for (HAC) is being emailed to elementary parents this afternoon. Middle school and high school schedules will go live via Home Access Center on August 28th.

One change for the 2015-2016 school year that I wanted to bring to your attention are four abbreviated days that will occur across the district K-12 for in-service activities. In an effort to achieve district goals that focus on improving instruction for students through our staff evaluation system and our professional learning communities we need to designate time. The four abbreviated days will follow the same schedules we use for the day before the Thanksgiving and mid-winter recesses. The four dates for the abbreviated days are October 7th, November 4th, February 3rd, and March 2nd; if school is closed for inclement weather on one of those dates, June 1st will be an abbreviated day. School and district calendars will be updated to reflect these abbreviated days.

Immediately following this letter, please find two important documents. The first is a quick reference guide to some of the most useful and important links on the district website. An example of one of these links is our electronic calendar - DynaCal. DynaCal is a great resource for tracking events at the schools such as Back-to-School Nights. The second important document provides the links for all of our required annual notifications.

The Bernards Township School District is such an incredible place to be a part of. Have you seen the latest Newsweek rankings of America's top 500 public high schools? Ridge was ranked 37th nationally! The complete article is available online [here](#). I know that this tremendous success is a product of a system that starts working hard right at Kindergarten, through the elementary school, through middle school and right up through the high school level. Central to all of the success is a strong partnership between school and home. Please remember, in the event that you have a concern, early communication to a teacher, counseling office, school office, health office, or to our central office is often quite helpful. On behalf of the entire staff of the Bernards Township School District, welcome back to school on Tuesday, September 8, 2015!

Sincerely,



Nick Markarian

BERNARDS TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT WEBSITE - QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

<u>WEBSITE LINK</u> (hover over to see address)	<u>NOTES</u>
<u>Friday Folder</u>	Virtually all school and district notifications are sent home electronically via email, therefore it is critical that parents register in this system to receive both school and district office notices.
<u>Home Access Center (HAC)</u>	All parents must have a Home Access Center account in order to view report card grades. Bus stop assignments are also listed here. <i>It is critical for parents to review their contact information and their child's medical information in HAC for accuracy. Contact the school and or nurse's office for any needed updates.</i>
<u>Transportation</u>	You should have your bus passes by 8-28-15. For instructions on how to deal with a concern please see this link.
<u>Student Registration or Withdrawal</u>	If you are receiving this document you have probably already registered your child but did you know the state requires us to file paperwork when a child leaves the district? This link explains the process.
<u>Emergency School Closing & Honeywell Instant Alert System</u>	Sign up here for the Honeywell Instant Alert system to receive automated phone calls, emails, and texts about school closings. Check out this link for complete information on school closing and for the Emergency Weather Guide.
<u>District Calendar</u>	Our <i>district</i> calendar is posted here. Variations are possible in individual school calendars for activities such as half day in-services or parent-teacher conferences.
<u>Lunch Program</u>	Here you can access information on how to sign up for the online lunch payment portal and you can find out about how to apply for free or reduced lunch pricing.
<u>District Curriculum Documents</u>	Our searchable archive of each content area's curricula.
<u>Guidance</u>	Here are rich resources for students in grades 6 – 12 to assist parents with scheduling and college and career planning.
<u>Special Services</u>	Content here is specific to services for our special education students.
<u>Athletics</u>	At this location parents will find a wealth of information associated with our high school athletic programs.
<u>DynaCal</u>	Major school and district functions are posted on this electronic calendar.
<u>Before & After Care</u>	Before school and after school care program enrollment and documentation is provided here.
<u>Student Accident Insurance</u>	Student accident insurance is available by working directly with this third party provider.
<u>Voluntary Random Drug Testing Program</u>	Parents of children in grades 6 to 12 may choose to enroll their children in this program, please do so by September 29 th .

2015 – 2016 PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

With our electronic communication initiative, we are saving time, money, and the environment by not mailing you the mandatory annual notifications. Instead, we are sending them to you with this memo; simply click the links to our website where all of the documents are posted for your review.

No Child Left Behind

In accordance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, we are required to advise you of certain parental rights. We are also required to provide additional statements mandated by state and/or federal law. You may review all of this information under the “Parents” section of our website (www.bernardsboe.com). If you would like to respond to any of the NCLB notifications, simply download, sign, and return them to your child’s school.

Nutrition Statement

The Board of Education recognizes that child and adolescent obesity has reached epidemic levels in the United States and that poor diet combined with the lack of physical activity negatively impacts on students’ health and their ability and motivation to learn. The Board is committed to:

- Providing students with healthy and nutritious foods
- Encouraging the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, low fat milk and whole grains
- Supporting healthy eating through nutrition education
- Encouraging students to select and consume all components of the school meal, and
- Providing students with the opportunity to engage in daily physical activity.

Experiments Involving Animals

Legislation now permits public school students to choose not to participate in certain experiments involving animals. Public school pupils from kindergarten through grade 12 may refuse to dissect, vivisect, incubate, capture or otherwise harm or destroy animals or any parts thereof as part of a course of instruction. The law requires schools to provide alternative education projects for those students who choose to “opt out” of these activities. Schools are required to notify pupils and their parents or guardians of a pupil’s right to decline to dissect, vivisect, incubate, capture or otherwise harm or destroy animals or any parts thereof as part of a course of instruction.

If you wish to have your son or daughter “opt out” of these experiences you must notify the principal of your child/children’s school, in writing, within two weeks from the date of this notification. Please be aware that no exceptions can be made to this date, due to issues with the coordination and purchasing of materials for alternate lessons on a district wide level.

Statement of Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying

The Board of Education believes that harassing, intimidating and bullying activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and the board prohibits all such harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior at any time on school premises, at any school-sponsored function, or on any school bus.

Any person who believes that he or she has been the victim of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment, intimidation or bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official. The building principal is the person responsible for receiving reports of harassment, bullying or hazing at the building level. Any person may report harassment, intimidation or bullying directly to the Affirmative Action Officer or the Superintendent.

The District Anti-Bullying Coordinator is Sean Siet. Mr. Siet's contact information is:

Board of Education Office
101 Peachtree Road
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
(908) 204 – 2600
ssiet@bernardsboe.com

To review the complete policy and procedures of the Board of Education, please visit the district website at www.bernardsboe.com.

Pupil Code of Conduct

A safe and secure school environment is critical for the orderly operation of schools so that the educational mission can be accomplished with the highest degree of success possible. To view the complete pupil code of conduct please refer to Policy and Procedure M5600 posted on the district website [here](#).

Student Handbook

Each school publishes a student handbook containing critical information such as bell schedules, school rules, academic integrity policies, regulations regarding locker searches etc. Please refer to each school's website through www.bernardsboe.com to reference individual school student handbooks.

Electronic Communication Between Students and Staff Members

Recent legislation has made this a mandatory policy for all school districts. Please review this policy (number 3283) in the policy section under "Board of Education" on the district website www.bernardsboe.com.

Health Services

The district's substance abuse prevention program and a NEW guide for parents regarding allergies are posted among other documents [here](#).

Emergency Medical and Contact Information

PLEASE REVIEW your Home Access Center account medical and contact information. If any updates or corrections are needed it is imperative that you contact your school so that the necessary changes can be made. Parents should verify that updates are complete and accurate by checking the Home Access Center.

Asbestos Information

In accordance with 40CFR Part 763, the Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools Rule (commonly referred to as "AHERA" regulations), the Bernards Township Board of Education periodically inspects all buildings throughout the district to re-evaluate the condition and change of asbestos-containing materials. Any required work is conducted when the buildings are unoccupied. Additionally, a written Respiratory Protection Program has been established for all employees, as required by the New Jersey Public Employee Occupational Safety and Health regulations.

The Asbestos Management Plans for each school building are available for inspection by employees, parents, and the public at no charge during the regular school hours. A copy of the Plan is maintained at each school site as well as at the Board Office. If you wish to review the plan or have any other questions, please call the Board Office at 908-204-2600 x 106.

Bias Incidents

Students and staff members in Bernards Township Public Schools are expected to treat one another with respect regardless of gender, color, race, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Inappropriate behaviors such as: touching of a sexual nature, gender based or sexual comments, jokes or name calling of any kind by students or staff are not permitted. For students, this also includes traveling on the way to or from school or on school property.

Liaisons

Jean O'Connell is Liaison for the Education of Homeless Children and Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, **Lisa Vitale (K-5) and Maria Mensinger (6-12)** are the Public Law 504 Coordinators, **Sean Siet** is the Affirmative Action Officer and Title IX Coordinator; **Rod McLaughlin** is New Jersey State Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, Attendance Officer, Public Agency Compliance Officer, Open Public Records Act Officer, Public Employees Occupational Safety, Health Act Coordinator, Purchasing Agent, and Indoor Air Quality Coordinator; and **David Harding** is Asbestos Management Officer, and Right-To-Know Coordinator.

Child Find Ages 3-21

The Bernards Township Public Schools annually seek to identify children, residing in Bernards Township, from the ages of 3 through 21 who may be at risk for learning disabilities.

Children in this age group who exhibit developmental delays in language, cognition, physical and/or emotional development, may be eligible for services from the public schools as a preschool disabled youngster. If your child is determined to be potentially eligible for services, the local public school district will evaluate your child. Should the evaluation show that he/she has a potentially disabling condition; services will be provided to your child by the public schools of Bernards Township. For those children who are determined to be eligible, services begin on their third birthday. Parents should contact the district, if they have concerns, when their child is 2 years six months of age.

If you suspect that your child has a disabling condition or you would like further information, please call the Office of Special Services at (908) 204-2565 extension 131. All public school districts in the state of New Jersey are required to provide these services.

Homework During Religious Holidays

The Bernards Township Board of Education is aware that during the school year, religious holidays may fall on school days. The Board wishes to work with our students and their families in accordance with applicable law to allow students to participate in observance of these holidays. It is therefore the policy of the Board to permit students an excused absence for observance of a religious holiday. In order for an absence to be considered excused, parents or guardians must provide the student's school with a written excuse explaining that the absence is due to the observance of a religious holiday. The absence may be excused only if it is taken on the actual date of the holiday in question.

The Board is also aware that tests, academic competitions and deadlines may be scheduled on religious holidays. In these situations, the Board has a policy of providing the student a reasonable accommodation, so that the academic activity will not interfere with their religious observance. This means that the teacher or the school will reschedule the test date for any student who is out on the actual exam day, due to a religious holiday. For academic competitions, where students are eligible for awards, alternative arrangements will be made to allow the student to take part in the competition. Similarly, when assignment due dates correspond with a religious holiday, teachers will provide an accommodation regarding such deadlines.

Please take special note that when an accommodation is needed, it is the student's and their parent's responsibility to inform the school that they will be observing a religious holiday. A written note, signed by a parent or guardian, requesting an accommodation, must be provided to the school or teacher prior to the religious holiday, in order for the school to make the requested accommodation. Under such circumstances, new test dates, dates of competitions and other deadlines will be set by the staff member having responsibility for the activity in question.

School Contact Directory for Official Use

School personnel are required to provide information from the school contact directory for official use only to judicial, law enforcement, and medical service providers who are currently providing services to the student in question. In order for the parent or adult student to exclude any information from the school contact directory for official use the parent or adult student shall notify the district board of education in writing that wish to complete the requisite form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

Acceptable Use Policies

The use of school district owned technology and the school district computer network is a privilege. Students and parents must be aware of their responsibilities in this area as improper use of the technology may result in the loss of these privileges. Please refer to board of education policies 2361 and 5516 [here](#).

Integrated Pest Management

This notice is being distributed to comply with the New Jersey School Integrated Pest Management Act. The Bernards Township Board of Education has adopted an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy and has implemented an IPM Plan to comply with this law. IPM is a holistic, preventive approach to managing pests that is explained further in the schools IPM Policy included with this notice.

All schools in New Jersey are required to have an Integrated Pest Management Coordinator (IPM Coordinator) to oversee all activities related to IPM and pesticide use at the school.

The IPM Coordinator for Bernards Township Board of Education is:

Name of IPM Coordinator: Roderic McLaughlin

Business Phone number: (908) 204-2600

Business Address: 101 Peachtree Road, Basking Ridge, New Jersey. 07920

The IPM Coordinator maintains the pesticide product label, and the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) (when one is available), of each pesticide product that may be used on school property. The label and the MSDS are available for review by a parent, guardian, staff member, or student attending the school. Also, the IPM Coordinator is available to parents, guardians, and staff members for information and to discuss comments about IPM activities and pesticide use at the school.

As part of a school pest management plan Bernards Township Board of Education may use pesticides to control pests. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) register pesticides to determine that the use of a pesticide in accordance with instructions printed on the label does not pose an unreasonable risk to human health and the environment. Nevertheless, the EPA and the DEP cannot guarantee that registered pesticides do not pose any risk to human health, thus unnecessary exposure to pesticides should be avoided. The EPA has issued the statement that where possible, persons who are potentially sensitive, such as pregnant women, infants and children, should avoid unnecessary pesticide exposure.

The following items must be included with this annual notice:

- A copy of the school or school district's IPM policy.
- The date, time and place of any meeting if one is to be held for the purpose of adopting or modifying the school integrated pest management policy or plan.
- Lists of pesticides that are in use or that have been used in the past 12 months on school property.

Bernards Township Board of Education Integrated Pest Management Policy M7422:

The New Jersey School Integrated Pest Management Act of 2002 requires schools to implement a school integrated pest management policy.

The law requires the superintendent of the Bernards Township Board of Education, for each school in the district, to implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) procedures to control pests and minimize exposure of children, faculty, and staff to pesticides. The Bernards Township Board of Education has developed and maintains an IPM plan as part of the school's policy.

The Business Administrator shall be designated as the district's Integrated Pest Management Coordinator (IPMC) and is responsible for the implementation of the school integrated pest management policy.

Integrated pest management procedures in schools

Implementation of IPM procedures will determine when to control pests and whether to use mechanical, physical, cultural, biological or chemical methods. Applying IPM principles prevents unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economical means and with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment.

Each school shall consider the full range of management options, including no action at all. Non-pesticide pest management methods are to be used whenever possible. The choice of using a pesticide shall be based on a review of all other available options and a determination that these options are not effective or not reasonable. When it is determined that a pesticide must be used, low impact pesticides and methods are preferred and shall be considered for use first.

Development of IPM plans

The Superintendent, in collaboration with the school Building Principal(s) and the IPMC, shall be responsible for the development of the IPM Plan for the school district. The school district's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan is a blueprint of how the school district will manage pests through IPM methods. The school district's IPM Plan will state the school district's goals regarding the management of pests and the use of pesticides for all school district property. The Plan will reflect the school district's site-specific needs and a description of how each component of the school district's Integrated Pest Management Policy and Regulation will be implemented for all school property.

Education /Training

The school community will be educated about potential pest problems and IPM methods used to achieve the pest management objectives.

The IPM Coordinator, other school staff and pesticide applicators involved with implementation of the school IPM policy will be trained in appropriate components of IPM as it pertains to the school environment.

Students, parents/guardians will be provided information on this policy and instructed on how they can contribute to the success of the IPM program.

Record keeping

Records of pesticide use shall be maintained on site to meet the requirements of the state regulatory agency and the school board. A logbook will be kept in the Main Office.

Records shall also include, but are not limited to, pest surveillance data sheets and other non-pesticide pest management methods and practices utilized.

Notification/Posting

The Principal of each school is responsible for timely notification to students' parents or guardians and the school staff of pesticide treatments pursuant to the School IPM Act.

Re-entry

Re-entry to a pesticide treated area shall conform to the requirements of the School IPM Act.

Pesticide applicators

The IPM coordinator shall ensure that applicators follow state regulations, including licensing requirements and label precautions, and must comply with all components of the School IPM Policy.

Evaluation

The Superintendent will report annually to the Board on the effectiveness of the IPM Plan and make recommendations for improvement as needed. The school district's Integrated Pest Management Plan, Policy and Regulation shall be implemented not later than June 12, 2004. The Board directs the Superintendent to develop Regulations/Procedures for the implementation of School Integrated Pest Management Plan.

N.J.S.A. 13:1F-19 through 13:1F-33

ADOPTED: November 24, 2008