



BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

238 KENSINGTON ROAD □ BERLIN, CONNECTICUT 06037-2648
OFFICE 860-828-6581 □ FAX 860-829-0832

BRIAN J. BENIGNI
SUPERINTENDENT
OF SCHOOLS

ERIN K. MCGURK, Ed.D.
ASSISTANT
SUPERINTENDENT

LINDA HOLIAN
DIRECTOR OF PUPIL
PERSONNEL SERVICES

JEFFREY P. CUGNO
DIRECTOR OF
BUSINESS OPERATIONS

DENISE M. PARSONS
DIRECTOR OF
HUMAN RESOURCES

June 12, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we conclude what is surely an unforgettable year, we want to extend our wishes for good health to all members of the Berlin community. This update will provide the latest information regarding the closeout of this year and the opening of next school year. Please note that, due to the fluidity of the current situation, we cannot provide final guidance at this time for the fall. We will continue to communicate with you throughout the summer to provide new information as plans are finalized.

School Closure/School Reopening

We do not yet know the details of school reopening in the fall. Guidelines from the state are due to be released by July 6. We have convened a school reopening committee to provide feedback and to guide our efforts as we plan for the fall. At this time, we are making draft plans for the following scenarios:

- a. School reopens for in-person classes in the fall, with health and safety precautions in place.
- b. School reopens for in-person classes in the fall, with health and safety precautions in place, but schedules are modified to reduce the number of students in the buildings/reduce class sizes.
- c. Schools begin in distance learning mode at the start of the year.
- d. Schools begin with either scenario a. or b., but we are ordered to close schools and resume distance learning at some point in the year.

Regardless of the scenario that plays out in the fall, we are committed to providing an optimal learning experience for our students.

Our teachers have been working collaboratively and will continue to share information across grade levels to communicate what important skills and concepts have been taught during distance learning.

We know that some parents and students are worried about the fall. We want to offer our reassurance that our highly capable teachers will meet students where they are in the fall, and move them forward from there. Our teachers will assess student learning needs and work to accelerate their learning. Please don't worry that your child is "behind." Students around the world experienced the effects of the pandemic this spring. Our Berlin students are strong and capable learners. We will all pull together and work for each and every student to have a successful year in 2020-21.

Breakfast and Lunch Distribution

- To ensure that every child in Berlin has access to breakfast and lunch daily, we will provide food three days a week for pick-up at Willard Elementary School. The schedule will be every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7:00-9:00 a.m.
- **Food distribution will continue as scheduled through June 30.**
- If you continue to need support after June 30, please contact Berlin Social Services at 860-828-7059.

Surveys

- Look for surveys next week for families and for students in Grades 6-12. We are seeking your feedback on distance learning this spring, suggestions for improvement, and gathering some additional information on your plans for the fall.

Student Belongings/Return of School Materials

- Our administrative team has been in contact with families to let you know the process for picking up items that your child may have left at school, including cleaning out desks, lockers, gym lockers, band lockers, and picking up medicine from the nursing offices.
- Students in Grades K-11 will keep their school issued devices (iPads and Chromebooks) through the summer months. We want to ensure that we are continuing to provide access to digital learning opportunities through the summer months. ***If your child will not attend Berlin Public Schools next year, please return your school-owned device to your child's school.***

Transition Events

- Kindergarten welcome is postponed in hopes that health guidelines will allow us to hold this activity in August. If we are able to proceed, email invitations will be sent to all families with registered kindergarteners.

Distance/At Home Learning

- Literacy resources for summer learning can be found at these links:
 - Elementary [Summer Reading @ the Library](#)
 - Middle School [Summer Reading](#)
- Elementary and middle school summer math packets have been scheduled for pickup at individual schools. Additional resources will be made available on school websites.
- High school summer math packets have been set up electronically this year. Students have been given the necessary information to access their assignments. Additional information can be found on the BHS website by clicking on the link: [BHS Summer Learning Experiences for All Students](#).

On behalf of the entire staff of the Berlin Public Schools, I want to thank you for your ongoing support throughout this spring. We know that the challenges of supporting student distance learning were many. Most of you are not professional educators, and those who are educators were doing double duty working with their students from school and their children at home. We want to thank you for all of the gracious ways you have extended care to each other and to the community. Berlin is a special place, and each one of you contributes to the success of our students. We wish you a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Benigni
Superintendent of Schools