

Berkeley Heights Public Schools
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Dear BHPS Families,

We hope you enjoyed the summer! We are so excited to welcome you back on Tuesday, September 1st! We have been very busy this summer preparing for the new school year.

Referendum projects kicked off this summer with updates to the PA systems, clocks, and cabling for the security cameras. Updated security camera installation will be completed in the Elementary Schools by the opening on Tuesday, September 1st. CMS and GL camera upgrades will be completed by the end of September. We will continue with the design phase of the media centers, GL TV studio, and one of the CMS science labs this fall to be prepared for construction next summer. Construction in the building next summer may disrupt or relocate typical summer activities, so please be patient and flexible with us as we work to modernize the schools and provide for our students.

Important New Law: Beginning on the first day of the 2026–2027 school year, all of the Berkeley Heights Public Schools will be **free of personal internet-enabled devices such as cell phones, smartwatches, and smartglasses during the school day, bell to bell**. This change is required by New Jersey law and applies to every public school in New Jersey. While our K-8 schools have been phone-free for years and GL has been phones away during instruction, starting September 1, 2026 **all personal internet-enabled devices will need to be off and away during the school day, bell to bell**. Details will be provided by the buildings in the parent and student handbooks.

Thank you to those who have completed the *Student Information Verification* information. It is very important to complete the Student Information Verification so that you receive communication from the district. Without this information, we cannot appropriately keep you informed. If you've forgotten to complete this, please make time to do so.

We are excited to embark on the **strategic plan**. This summer our administrative team engaged in relational leadership training to support development of a strong team and strong community connections.

Over the next five years, the strategic plan transitions the district from teacher-delivered lessons to student-owned inquiry. When students learn to formulate their own questions, conduct independent research, and solve complex, real-world problems, they develop cognitive stamina required to excel on rigorous state exams.

As reported at the June 25, 2026 Board meeting, our first year is laying the foundation for shifting culture and mindset around the structures and supports for optimizing learning.

Goal 1: Whole Child Development: Focusing on executive functioning & learning readiness is a precursor to optimizing learning time. Teaching children emotional regulation and focus strategies (like the Zones of Regulation) reduces classroom transition chaos and behavioral disruptions, thereby increasing time on task and active learning.

Goal 2: Academic Excellence & Lifelong Learning: Tier 1 Instructional redesign via Universal Design for Learning (UDL) focuses on designing classrooms so that high-level, rigorous support is automatically built into the standard daily curriculum for all children, rather than waiting for students to struggle before providing help. UDL baseline initiatives dismantle structural learning barriers by design, raising the floor and the ceiling for everyone simultaneously. This results in gains across broad subgroups (including general education, special education, and multilingual learners) and narrows the achievement gap between subgroups.

Goal 3: Family & Community Engagement: focuses on strengthening community and family engagement. Look for a survey this fall so that we can gather which communication vehicles best serve your needs.

We want our families to be partners with us in promoting the success of their students. The Board cares about your concerns and is committed to supporting you, and we want to clarify when you should be reaching out to administration and when you should be reaching out to the Board.

When to Contact District Administration (Staff, Principals, Superintendent)

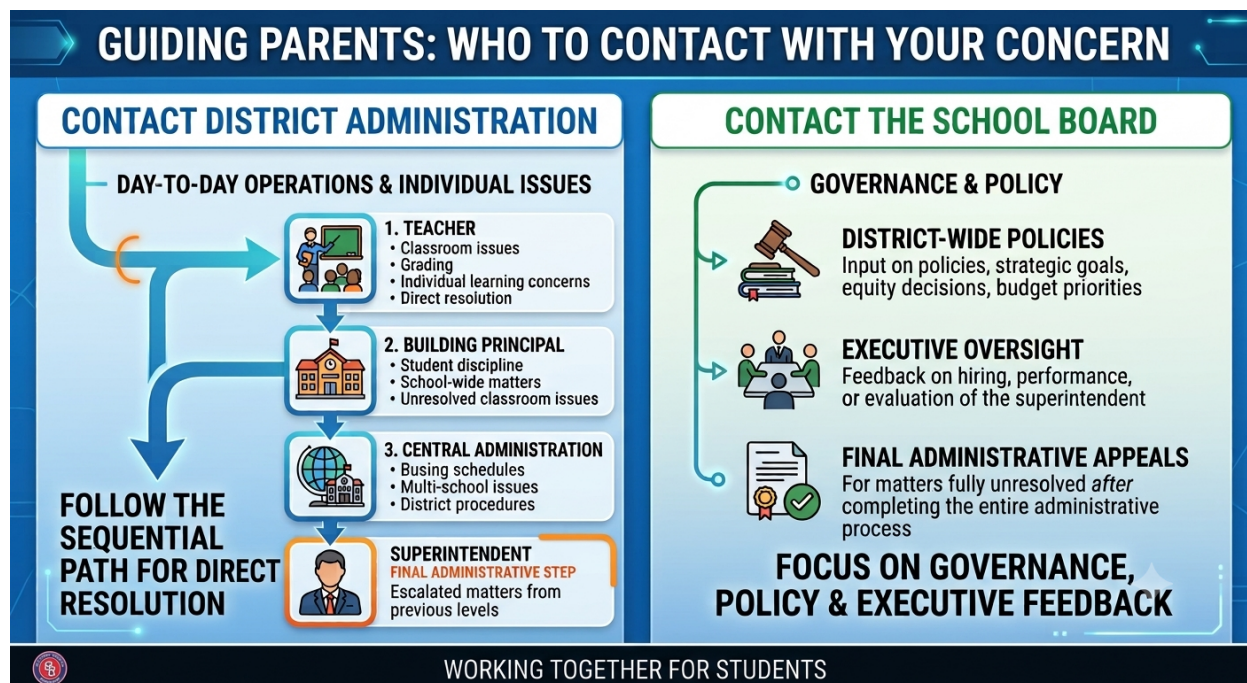
- **Day-to-day operations:** Classroom issues, grading, student discipline, busing schedules, or individual staff performance.
- **Direct resolution:** Matters requiring immediate context, operational intervention, or staff enforcement.
- **Sequential escalation:** Concerns that should follow the standard path of resolution—starting with the teacher, moving to the building principal, and escalating to central administration.

When to Contact the School Board

- **Governance and policy:** Input on district-wide policies, strategic goals, equity decisions, or annual budget priorities.
- **Executive oversight:** Feedback regarding the performance, hiring, or evaluation of the district superintendent.

- **Final administrative appeals:** Unresolved matters that have completed the entire administrative process without resolution.

Please do not be offended when Board members politely route or guide community members back to the appropriate staff member or principal when an administrative step was skipped. Doing so ensures you receive timely and accurate support. This also preserves impartiality for the Board. Refraining from investigating or resolving operational complaints early, protects the Board's legal ability to serve as an unbiased hearing body if a matter reaches a formal appeal.



Further details on the strategic plan can be found on the [Strategic Planning Webpage](#) of the BHPS Website.

With the start of the school on September 1st, we anticipate an influx of **traffic** in and around the schools, as well as **transportation** hiccups. Please remember that our precious commodities are our children and draw upon your grace and patience as we adjust and readjust to the traffic flow and transportation woes. Please direct any transportation questions to transportation@bhpsnj.org.

The Fall Edition of the BHPS Buzz should be available by the end of September. Be on the lookout for future “Coffee with the Superintendent” meetings as well throughout the year.

All staff returned today with an enthusiastic convocation and we are eager and excited to embrace the students as they return to school on Tuesday, September 1st. Have a wonderful weekend!

Dr. Kim Feltre
Superintendent of Berkeley Heights Public Schools