



A PARENT'S GUIDE



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TO BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL

www.berlin.k12.wi.us

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BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Berlin High School families,

On behalf of the students and staff, I would like to welcome you to Berlin High School. As a 2003 BHS graduate myself, my pride and passion for this school and community runs deep. Berlin has been my home for the vast majority of my life. My wife, Jessica (also an educator), and I are raising our two children, Zoey and Zander here because we appreciate the small-town values and the diverse learning opportunities this school district and community offer. I am excited to be in a position to give back to the place that has meant so much to me.

Pride and tradition are at the foundation of who we are and what we do at Berlin High School. We take pride in our facilities. The high school itself is over 20 years old, but those who visit will note that it is still in pristine condition thanks to the hard work and dedication of our custodial and maintenance staff. Come see our facilities yourself by taking in a competition at any of our beautiful athletic complexes or watch our students perform in our state-of-the-art auditorium. Our classrooms and laboratory spaces are top-notch and allow our students to participate in a variety of rich learning experiences. Our hallways display our tradition of success as they are lined with plaques celebrating the teams and individuals who have done great things during or after their time at BHS. The high school is a vital building in our community and we take pride in both the bricks and the people that comprise it.

Berlin High School has a tradition of preparing students to be future contributors and leaders in society. We offer several dual-credit opportunities in almost every department to provide students with knowledge and skills that will serve them well whether they go directly into the workforce or continue their education at a technical school or university. The great relationships between our school and our community's business leaders allows for our students to learn and practice their skills while on the job. We have high expectations for all of our students and believe in providing diverse experiences that will develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. We recognize that a rich high school experience goes beyond the classroom so we offer dozens of opportunities for students to participate in clubs, organizations, and athletics.

On a personal level, nothing is more important to me than family. Berlin High School feels like a family. We take pride in how we carry ourselves inside and outside of the school setting. We value relationship building, celebrate diversity, and strive to ensure that everyone feels safe and connected at school. Every student brings value to our school and the safety and well-being of our students is our top priority. We have a highly-trained staff that supports our students in a variety of ways to ensure they can be successful.

There is a lot to be proud of at Berlin High School. If you ever have any questions or would like more information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Bryant Bednarek
BHS Principal



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1. Why does parental involvement in schools change after elementary school?

Almost all parents ask this question when their son or daughter reaches middle school age. So why does this happen? It is common knowledge that parental involvement at the elementary grade levels is quite high. Many elementary parents are actively engaged in volunteering at school, helping with school-wide projects, or participating in P.T.O. initiatives. While other parents help their children with homework, attend school events, and attend parent/teacher conferences. Studies support that this involvement whether it is active or passive in nature is beneficial for student academic achievement. (Cotton & Wikelund, 2002).

So why does this parental involvement begin to diminish in sixth grade and continue in to the high school years? There are many factors involved but the biggest change occurs when students switch from having one classroom teacher to a different teacher for each subject. This happens as content materials get more difficult and require more specialization by teachers. As a result there is no one teacher that is in charge of your child and from the teacher's perspective they no longer have just 20 or so students. The teacher in middle and high school may have upwards of 100 students a day. This results in less individual attention and begins the process of putting more responsibility on the student to handle their school work on their own.

It can be frustrating for parents to not be able to talk to just one person about their child. At the same time certain natural maturation changes are occurring with adolescents that can lead to other concerns. Part of the natural development for children that begins at the middle school age and continues through high school involves the growing need for independence from their parents. Adolescents become more social at this age and friendships become paramount to some youth. As this development continues teens sometimes prefer their parents not know about their social life and what happens at school. This is much different than when they were in elementary and came home each night excited to show you what was in their backpack.

This push for independence is a natural process which usually culminates after graduation from high school, but as we all know children develop at different rates and in different ways so it is not the same for every child.

As mentioned earlier, teenagers can develop some very strong attachments to their friends. This change results in some students losing focus on school unless they have been taught intrinsic motivation for the work they undertake. This means they need to understand the work they do in school will help them achieve their future goals in life. These values have to be developed early in a child. It is common practice to try to draw students who lack these intrinsic values back to successful practices through the use of extrinsic rewards. These practices include rewarding students with increased allowances, more freedoms, etc. Teachers often reward students with parties, stickers, or other strategies. These methods work with some students but not with others. When students do not have the intrinsic drive to succeed and extrinsic motivators do not work, it often leads to academic struggles.

2. Understanding the high school setting

When teens enter high school they enter with wide ranges of abilities, skills, motivation, and maturity levels. Berlin High School strives to provide a wide variety of opportunities for students to explore and experience. To better serve students Berlin High School is structured with a seven period day. Each period is approximately 52 minutes in length. The day provides many opportunities for teachers to get to know their students, but even with this, teachers still see more students per day than their counterparts, the elementary teacher.

Teachers at the high school level push for students to learn independent skills which will serve them after high school. This is often in direct contrast to the wishes of parents who want to keep informed and long for communication similar to what they received in the elementary school years. These conflicting wishes sometimes lead to unnecessary mistrust between school personnel and parents. When this is coupled with the teenagers' yearning need for privacy it can result in poor communication between the school and home.

We must remember parents and teachers want what is best for children, and if this similarity in motivation is built upon a strong foundation a successful school can be developed. For Berlin High School to be a high achieving school that provides rigorous training for all students according to their needs, a three-way partnership must be struck between the school, parents, and students to better prepare our children to be college or career ready.

3. What should a high school parent's role be for Berlin High School?

When our children are in elementary school it is easy for parents to assist their children with homework. As the years go by and the content of courses become more difficult and specialized, it often becomes difficult for parents to assist with homework. Parents can still help, however, by supplying students the materials they need for success, a proper environment to work, and a regularly scheduled time slot for study. When these kinds of assistance are combined with nurturing and support students will succeed. Do not worry if your child struggles with a difficult math problem or chemistry concern; urge them to seek help from the teachers the next day. Teachers are the content experts and want students to learn what they are teaching. They will help.

Parents can also help by being interested in what goes on at school and by attending school activities. Teens may try to discourage you from attending, but by being at events you send the message to your children you value what they do and what happens at school. This sends the right message for school success. Even if we did not have the best experience in school, we owe it to our children to give them the skills they will need for success in this highly technical world.

4. How can I get involved at Berlin High School?

There are many ways to get involved at our school. By just supporting teachers and encouraging your child, you are involved in the learning process. Even this level of involvement is proven to help students achieve at higher levels. Active engagement in school can be expressed in different ways. The following areas are great ways to get involved at Berlin High School:

1. Be involved as a volunteer for your child's extracurricular groups.
2. Chaperone events or field trips.
3. Volunteer to help monitor entrances for security purposes.
4. Help with music or athletics booster events.
5. Inquire about our advisor positions.

All volunteers are expected to clear background checks in advance. Volunteer forms can be found on the school's website.

5. What if my child needs help with course work or personal issues? Who do I contact?

The first contact for help with an individual class would be the teacher. Our website has a staff directory with emails and phone extensions. If you are seeing struggles outside of just one class, your child's guidance counselor would be a good person to reach out to. Every student at BHS is assigned a guidance counselor to help with academic and career planning. Ms. Ragus is the counselor for students with last names starting A-L, and Mr. Willett is the counselor for students with last names M-Z.

If your child is needing help is struggling with personal issues such as their mental health there are many places to go. Our guidance counselors, while not experts in mental health, can be a great resource for our students. If we cannot provide you with the service your child needs in-house, we can connect you with outside organizations who can meet your needs.

6. The benefits of getting involved.

Entering high school is exciting. It can be even more exciting by getting involved with one of the organizations and/or athletic programs offered to all students. Studies suggest involvement in extracurricular activities:

- Helps students in their academic performance
- Develops skills such as time management and teamwork which can be applied outside the school setting
- Provides real-world experiences that cannot be provided in the classroom
- Provides a wider network of peers who share common interests
- Connects students to adult mentors who can positively impact their lives.
- Increases confidence and self-esteem
- Improves stress management

While the benefits to extracurricular activities are clear, how will your student know which to choose? Students should choose activities that:

- Interest them
- Are fun
- Will develop skills that provide benefits to the students' long-term goals

7. Parent's Role and Responsibilities

The ultimate goal of K-12 education is for the student to learn how to be independent and successful in their future. This means high school is a time for practicing advocacy skills and for students to learn how to navigate their way through problems that arise. It takes trial and error to reinforce and learn new skills. Furthermore, we aren't expecting you to remember how to do Algebra II or Chemistry. Our teachers are here to support the academic content. What you can really do to help your child is to promote prioritization, time management, discussing and reminding your child about important deadlines, and giving feedback on quality of work. Here are a few additional ways for you to support your child in their endeavor of gaining these necessary skills:

1. Encourage your child to do their best.
2. Give your student the autonomy to ask for help themselves.
3. When an issue arises, ask your student to talk with his/her teacher directly. A follow-up phone call/email may be helpful for communication purposes.
4. Attend parent/teacher conferences and monitor your child's progress through the Powerschool app.
5. Support regular attendance. Make an attempt to schedule vacations and appointments outside of the school day.
6. Be there to "coach" your student through academic concerns, but let your student take the lead.

8. Bell Schedule

REGULAR BELL SCHEDULE	
PERIOD	TIME
Homeroom	7:50 - 8:00
1	8:04 - 8:58
2	9:02 - 9:56
3	10:00 - 10:54
4	10:58 - 11:52
LUNCH	11:52 - 12:26
5	12:30 - 1:24
6	1:28 - 2:22
7	2:26 - 3:20
ELT SCHEDULE	
PERIOD	TIME
1	7:50 - 8:42
ELT	8:46 - 9:34
2	9:38 - 10:26
3	10:30 - 11:18
4	11:22 - 12:10
LUNCH	12:10 - 12:44
5	12:48 - 1:36
6	1:40 - 2:28
7	2:32 - 3:20
TWO HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE	
PERIOD	TIME
1	9:50-10:26
2	10:30-11:06
3	11:10-11:45
4	11:49-12:26
LUNCH	12:30-1:05
5	1:09-1:50
6	1:54-2:35
7	2:39-3:20
EARLY RELEASE SCHEDULE	
PERIOD	TIME
1	7:50-8:21
2	8:25-8:55
3	8:59-9:29
4	9:33-10:03
5	10:07-10:37
6	10:41-11:11
7	11:15-11:45
LUNCH	11:45-12:20

9. Important Documents and Resources

WEBSITE

www.berlin.k12.wi.us

Nearly all information can be found on our school website including calendars, documents, and forms.

For Berlin High School specific information, click on **SCHOOLS** and then **BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL** from the district page. Please see below for other important areas of our website.

APP

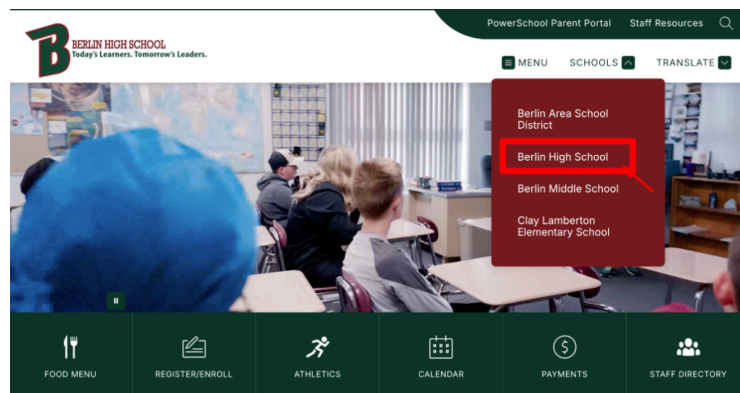
You can download the BASD app from the app store by searching “*Berlin Area School District*”. Look for the Berlin Area School District Logo:



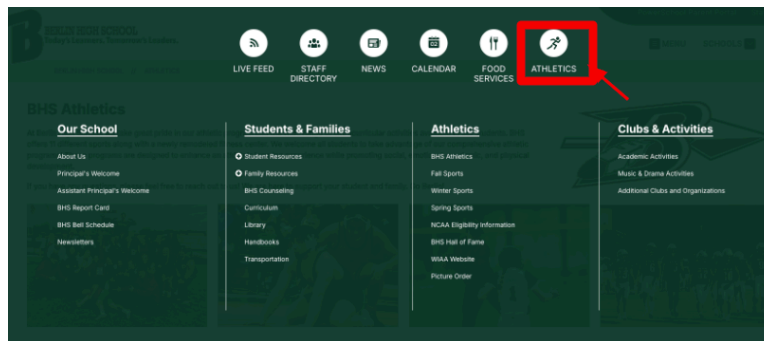
The app has many of the features of our desktop website, but in an easy to read, mobile format.

ATHLETIC SCHEDULES AND ACTIVITY CALENDARS

- 1) Go to www.berlin.k12.wi.us and select Berlin High School from the ‘schools’ menu.



- 2) Click on the  MENU in the upper right corner of the High School Website, and then choose **Athletics**.



- 3) Here, you can find the BHS Athletic Calendar as well as the link for events that are live streamed through the Hudl platform.

POWERSCHOOL

Powerschool is the program that Berlin Area School District uses for information such as student grades and attendance. Parents have access to their child’s grades and attendance through the Powerschool Parent Portal. This can be accessed on a desktop by going to www.berlin.k12.wi.us and clicking on the link in the top right corner of any page of the website. Once on the Powerschool Student and Parent site, parents can enter their username and password to view grades, attendance, lunch balances, and set email notifications.

If there are any issues with your username or password, please feel free to contact the high school office.

HANDBOOKS

There are several handbooks that students and parents should be familiar with and know how to access.

- BHS Student Handbook
- BHS Extra-Curricular Handbook
- BASD Secondary Code of Conduct
- BHS Course Registration Handbook
- BASD Attendance Manual

All of these documents, as well as the digital version of this parent guide, can be found on our school website (**Berlin High School>Students & Families>Handbooks**)