

2020-2021



PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE

CAMPUS COMMUNICATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

It is **CRITICAL** that the school be able to reach a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) at all times. Please assist us in keeping home addresses, emails, and phone numbers up to date by making adjustments during the online registration process. During the school year, changes can also be made directly in the Veracross Portal by clicking "*Update Family Profile*" on the main page.

In addition, families who are not within a 48-hour driving (not air travel) distance are required to identify a domestic caretaker in the event of an emergency. The caretaker should be able to come to the School within 48 hours or sooner in the event that the student needs to leave the campus for health or safety reasons. Please add this person as a Caretaker under Contacts via the *Update Family Profile* button in Veracross.

In the event you are traveling during the school year (vacations, business trips, etc.) and you would like us to have *temporary* contact information, please contact the Student Life Office at 413-229-1219.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR ON-CAMPUS CHILD

In an emergency:

1. **During the class day**, call the Student Life Office (413-229-1219) and ask to have a message delivered to your child.
2. **After 4:00 p.m. weekdays and on weekends**, ask one of the following to deliver the message:
 - your child's advisor
 - your child's dormitory parents
 - the Duty Administrator (413-429-6132)

Send mail and packages to: Student's Name
Berkshire School
245 North Undermountain Road
Sheffield, MA 01257-9672

Send faxes to your child at: 413-229-1028

To reach your child by telephone and e-mail:

- Students should bring their own cell phone. **Students are required to have a phone number with voicemail on file with the Student Life Office.** Please be sure to add/update this number under your child's contact information in the Veracross Portal.
- Please refrain from calling or texting your child on their cell phone during the academic day, during evening study hall (8:00-10:00 p.m.) or after 11:00 p.m. Phones will be confiscated for violations of the cell phone policy, as listed in the *Student/Parent Handbook*.
- New students are sent their Berkshire email address over the summer via the email* we have on file for them. (**If this email is from a prior school, please update with a personal address as the previous school email may get deactivated.*)

COMMUNICATING WITH THE SCHOOL

Communication between the School and families is very important. The following procedures and phone numbers are provided to help parents contact the school. This information will allow you to reach the most appropriate person to answer your questions or concerns.

Advisor

The Advisor is your first contact for general information about your child. New students are assigned an advisor in August. Students may change advisors during the school year as they establish and build relationships with other adults on campus. You should contact your child's advisor if you have any questions about any aspect of your child's overall well-being and progress in any area of school life. Assignments will be made over the summer, and you will be contacted by your child's advisor prior to the start of school.

Dormitory Faculty

The house head and dorm parents in charge of your child's dormitory are responsible for supervising the residential life of your child. They will know about your child's social habits, study skills, and sleeping patterns. You can contact them with questions or concerns about this aspect of your child's school life, but please keep the Advisor informed of your concerns. You should also contact these people if you cannot reach your child or their Advisor.

Form Dean

Form Deans oversee the well-being of an individual form, with an emphasis on issues of class leadership, communication, and academic achievement. They spend much of their time monitoring the academic progress of students. They are responsible for academic schedules and course changes. They work closely with the Dean of Academics, Dean of Students and Advisors.

WHO TO ASK...

In most cases, the list below will help you find the right person to offer help and information.

During the school year, offices are generally open from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For information about:	Call:	
Academic Policy	Student's Advisor or Form Dean or Dean of Academics	Advisor-TBA 413-229-1262
Academic Support	Kenefick Center for Learning (KCL)	413-229-1039
Activities, Student	Student Life Office	413-229-1360
Admission	Admission Office	413-229-1003
Advancement/Alumni	Advancement and Alumni Office	413-229-1907
Advisors	Student Life Office	413-229-1219
Athletic Programs/Policy/Schedule	Director of Athletics	413-229-1292
Boarding Policy	Dean of Students	413-229-1241
College Counseling	Director of College Counseling	413-229-1252
Counseling	Director of Counseling	413-229-1226
Day Students	Day Student Coordinator	413-229-1159
Discipline	Dean of Students	413-229-1241
Emergencies (during the day)	Student Life Office	413-229-1219
Emergencies (after 4:00 p.m. and weekends)	1. Call the Duty Administrator 2. Call the Student's Advisor 3. Call the House Head/Dorm Parents	413-429-6132
Finance	Business Office (Student Accounts) Student Bank (Bookstore)	413-229-1232 413-229-1218
Health Service/Illness	Student Health Service	413-229-1275
Housing	Dean of Students	413-229-1241
International Students	Director of the International Student Program	413-229-1260
Late Return to School (and changes to travel plans)	Student Life Office (during the day) Duty Administrator (after 4:00 p.m. and weekends)	413-229-1219 413-429-6132
Lost and Found	Bookstore	413-229-1217
School Transcripts	Registrar	413-229-1263
Travel	Student Life Office	413-229-1219
Weekend Permission	Student Life Office	413-229-1219

E-mail Contact

Faculty and staff e-mail contacts can be found in the website directory. Most addresses use a combination of the first initial with last name @berkshireschool.org.

WHAT TO BRING TO BERKSHIRE

GUIDELINES FOR CLASSROOM DRESS

Berkshire students are required to dress in a neat, clean and appropriate manner. The dress code is based on students wearing a “second layer.” Articles of clothing that constitute a second layer are listed below. The student’s dress is a reflection of the School and the seriousness of purpose when attending class and other events that require a dress code. Students should keep in mind that the spirit of neatness and orderliness is at the heart of the code. **Provocative or revealing attire is inappropriate at all times.**

Classroom Dress:

- Required during the entire class day (including lunch) in all academic buildings and Benson Commons/Rovensky Student Center.
- Button-down collared shirts; blouses. No t-shirts, no flannels, no turtlenecks. Shirts must be tucked in when wearing pants.
- A required second layer can include the following: blazer, cardigan, scarf, sportscoat, sweater, or tie. No fleece, no vests, no sweatshirts, no athletic jackets or pullovers.
- Tailored pants, khakis, skirts, and kilts. No jeans. A belt is required when wearing pants with belt loops. Both skirts and kilts must be no shorter than fingertip length.
- Dresses, with appropriate length (fingertip length) and suitable cut, shall be considered one “layer” and must be accompanied by a second layer.
- No leggings unless they are under a dress or skirt. No denim.
- All clothing must be free of tears and patches.
- Dress shoes, boat shoes, dress sandals, solid color lace-up shoes, loafers, boots. No athletic shoes.

Formal Dress:

- Required at select Community Dinners, Prize Night, Graduation, other formal presentations and events as determined by the School.
- Collared shirts with blazers and ties; blouses; dress shirts.
- Dress pants, khakis, skirts, and dresses.

Bear Wear:

- Worn at times determined by the School.
- Collared shirts and blouses.
- Tailored pants, khakis, Bermuda shorts, skirts, dresses.
- Dress shoes, boat shoes, dress sandals, solid color lace up shoes, loafers, boots. No athletic shoes.

General Expectations:

- Shoes must be worn in all academic buildings and Benson Commons/Rovensky Student Center.
- No sweatshirts during the academic day.
- No headwear in any academic buildings or Benson Commons/Rovensky Student Center, except when required by religious custom.
- Hair must be well-groomed and students must be clean-shaven.
- Undergarments may not be visible at any time.
- Winter boots may be worn only during the winter term.
- Informal dress may be worn after the class day. All clothing must be neat and in good taste.

Footwear: Dress shoes, dress boots or dress sandals are required for classroom dress. Bare feet, beach or bath sandals, flip-flops, slippers (or slipper-like shoes) and athletic shoes are not acceptable during the academic day.

Students are asked to use common sense in choosing their attire and may be asked at any time to change clothes if they are inappropriately dressed or their garments are insufficiently clean and neat in appearance. Skirt and dress length should always fall below the fingertips. At all times, clothing must be clean and without rips. Cut-off shorts or skirts, hospital pants, painters' pants, cargo pants, army fatigues, sweatshirts and denim clothing are unacceptable during the classroom day. Boots, other than dress boots, may be worn only between Thanksgiving and Spring Recess and during inclement weather. While in dress code, body-piercing jewelry should be worn on the ears only. Extreme or excessive piercings are distracting and not permitted. If you have any questions about the standards for dress, please contact the Dean of Students.

SUGGESTED CLOTHING

- Students should plan to **bring a two-week supply of clothing** to ensure they will have sufficient clothing available while other garments are in the laundry.
- **All linens, clothing, and furnishings should be clearly marked with the student's name**; they should be kept neat, clean, and in good repair.

The following suggestions of the quantity of clothing to pack for school is based on individual preferred dressing style. For example: if one tends to wear a tie or sport coat/blazer as a second layer, they will not need as many skirts or dresses.

Clothing suggestions:

Cloth face masks (5)
Dress jackets or appropriate sport coats/blazers (1)
Dress shirts or blouses (8-10)
Sweaters (3-5)
Skirts of suitable length (3-6)
Dresses of suitable length and design (2-3)
Slacks: khaki, corduroy, wool, tailored, etc. (8-10)
Casual jacket or windbreakers (1)
Casual shirts, t-shirts, and active wear (8-10)
Neckties (6)
Rainwear, including boots and hat
Heavy winter coat and/or ski parka
Underwear and socks
Warm bathrobe, pajamas, and slippers
Sneakers, winter, hiking and/or rain boots, casual shoes and dress shoes

Laundry Service is available through E&R Laundry www.EandRCleaners.com or 800-243-7789 and can be accessed through a link on the Berkshire website.

OTHER USEFUL ITEMS

- Students bringing bicycles on campus must also bring a bicycle helmet and lock.
- Similarly, students bringing non-motorized skateboards or scooters, rollerblades or other such equipment must bring a helmet and protective gear for their own safety.
- Travel mug and reusable water bottle
- Cell phone case/sleeve to hold dorm key card
- Shower caddy
- Cloth masks, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes

ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING

The Athletic Department provides uniforms, protective equipment and practice clothing called "issue wear" which includes shorts, t-shirt and socks. Mouth guards, when required, will be issued by the School and billed to the student's account. **Students are held responsible for all issued equipment. Equipment not returned will be charged to the student's account.**

For fall sports, students must provide the following:

Field Hockey

Sticks
Shin Guards
Face Mask
Cleats

Soccer

Shin Guards
Cleats

Football

Girdle pads
Hand and Arm Pads
Gloves
Cleats

ROOM FURNISHINGS

- The School encourages the purchase and use of environmentally-sound and recycled materials. Please consider purchasing the following: room furnishings, such as rugs and lamps, made from recycled materials; biodegradable laundry detergent; power strips that automatically turn off when not in use; CFL light bulbs and other environmentally-friendly consumer products.
- Since students spend a great deal of time studying in their dormitory rooms, **students and parents are asked to consider carefully which personal belongings and room arrangements will encourage effective study habits.** While the School respects students' desires for comfortable, attractive rooms that express individual tastes, the Berkshire community expects its members to make their academic commitment central to their home-away-from-home. Please see the *Student/Parent Handbook* for additional information regarding dormitory guidelines.
- Desk lamps, a critical study aid, must be provided by students.

Based on our experience from the 2019-20 school year when Berkshire had to close during the spring, please consider bringing only what is essential. If we need to end on-campus classes and close Berkshire, families will be responsible for the costs associated with the packing, storing and shipping of all personal items if they cannot be picked up in person.

The School provides for each student:

A bed, standard 80" twin mattress, window shade, dresser, straight chair, table/desk, and wastebasket.

Each student's family should provide:

Sheets (4-6, standard twin sheet sets will fit all dorm mattresses), mattress pad, bedspread/blankets/comforter (**electric blankets are not permitted**), pillow, pillowcases (4), bath towels (6), washcloths (3), laundry bags (2, if not using laundry service), alarm clock with battery backup (a student's phone should not be their only alarm).

Families may also wish to provide:

- A carpet: small rug in good condition (**no larger than 7' x 9'**) with a non-skid backing and short pile for easy cleaning
- A foot locker/chest: small (not more than 20" x 30" x 15"), lockable and usable as storage
- Room decorations: Pictures and posters (**those depicting drugs, alcohol, tobacco or nudity are not allowed.**) The use of empty liquor bottles and posters of questionable artistic value as room decorations are not permitted.
- Refrigerators: each room will be allowed one refrigerator, no larger than 2.5 Cu.Ft.

The following items are not permitted in dormitory rooms:

- Cloth hanging from ceilings, around beds, and over windows
- Cooking appliances and air conditioners (electrical or other)
- Televisions, computer monitors larger than 24 inches, video projectors, television monitors (both LCD and plasma) or any other type of video projecting devices
- Gaming consoles are not allowed in rooms of third-form students
- Halogen lights
- No furniture wider than 36 inches (**no couches or futons**)

ROOM KEYS AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

- All dormitory exterior doors and rooms have locks. Students will be issued a key card during registration.
- Students who lose their key cards should go to the Student Life Office for a replacement (\$25.00 fee).
- The School retains a key for access, safety and supervision. Students who abuse the privilege of having a lockable room can expect disciplinary consequences.
- Students are advised not to bring valuable jewelry to School because it is often misplaced or lost. Families may want to consider a lock box for small electronics and other valuables.
- Students have more valuable personal property than ever before. Parents should consider covering their child's belongings under their homeowner's policy.

Berkshire School is not responsible for the loss of personal property.

GUIDELINES FOR DAY STUDENTS

1. ILLNESS OR LATENESS

Parents are asked to report by phone to the Student Health Service (413-229-1275) before 8:00 a.m. **each day if their child is not attending classes due to illness or a medical appointment.** When your child cannot get to School or may be coming in late, please call the Student Life Office (413-229-1219). **All day students who leave early must sign out at the Student Life Office.**

2. CARS ON CAMPUS

Day students are required to register their vehicle with the Student Life Office and will receive a Parking Permit that must be displayed in the car at all times while on campus. Day student cars are to be parked in the lot adjacent to the Soffer Athletic Center. Day students should use the access road that passes in front of the hockey rinks to and from the parking lot. **Cars should not travel along the main driveway and are only allowed to be used for traveling to school in the morning and leaving at the end of the day, except with special permission from the Dean of Students.** (Boarding students are not allowed to have cars on campus or within 30 miles of school.)

3. INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OVERNIGHT STAYS ON CAMPUS

Day students are to make every reasonable effort to attend classes. As Berkshire holds classes regardless of weather, parents and day student drivers are to use their discretion and not take any unnecessary risks due to inclement weather. Also, if weather is a concern during the day, the school will excuse day students. **Given the current restrictions on dorm occupancy and social distancing, day students will not be allowed to stay overnight on campus.**

4. CONVOCATION ATTENDANCE

Day students are required to attend all evening convocations, such as guest speakers, held several times during the year as part of their school experience. Exceptions or conflicts must be cleared by the Dean of Students.

5. LOCKER ASSIGNMENTS AND SHOWERS

Locker assignments will be issued at registration. Day student lockers are located in Rovensky Student Center. Showers and locker room space will be available to day students in the Soffer Athletic Center.

6. EVENING STUDY HALL ON CAMPUS

Day students who are on campus on school nights after 7:45 PM must follow the evening study hall expectations for their Form. All day students, with the exception of third-form students assigned to evening structured study hall, may be in the library at night without a pass. Students should contact their Form Dean with any questions.

Please reach out to Jen Gaenzle Smith, Day Student Coordinator, 413-229-1159 with questions or for additional information.

TRANSPORTATION, TRAVEL AND VACATIONS

Berkshire School believes that it has committed an appropriate number of days for vacation from school. **We do not allow students to miss classes to leave early for vacations or weekends.** Students will not be allowed to make up missed assignments because of early departures or late arrivals.

It is very important that the School have accurate travel information for all students to ensure safe travel to and from campus. **Students are expected to fill out travel forms for all overnight leaves from campus including vacations.**

Flights and Airport Information

If your child will be flying to or from a nearby airport, parents must provide flight information to the Student Life Office. Students are required to complete the vacation form, but they rarely make their own flight arrangements and therefore do not have complete and accurate travel information. Please make all airline travel arrangements into and out of Bradley International Airport in Connecticut whenever possible. *See Travel Arrangements section for more detailed information.*

Please arrange return flights that land at Bradley International Airport before 5:00 p.m. With the number of delays in air travel and the unpredictable weather, especially in the Northeast, it is important to be able to get your child back to school at a reasonable hour. If the flight is scheduled to land by 5:00 p.m. or is delayed later than our last bus, we will make sure your child gets back to School. If you book a flight that lands later than 5:00 p.m., you will be responsible for arranging your child's transportation back to school from the airport if they miss the 6:30 p.m. bus. We will not hold buses for late arrivals.

Bus Information

Depending on the demand for transportation services, the School runs buses and vans at the students' expense to/from Bradley International Airport, New York City (Pennsylvania Station), Logan Express Bus Station (Framingham, MA), and JFK Airport (*Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring Recesses only*) on the dates indicated in the *Travel Arrangements* section of this document.

Train Information

The Wassaic train station at the northern end of the Metro North line from New York City is the closest station to School. Families should use car services for transportation needs to and from Wassaic (*see Travel Arrangements section for Transportation Resources*).

Car Travel

Boarding students are not permitted to have cars on campus or within 30 miles of School. Although it is always more convenient for a family, it is very inconvenient for the School. Bringing a car to campus is a violation of a major school rule. Please do not send your boarding student to School with a car, or disciplinary consequences may result. We may make special exceptions for college visits when public transportation is not possible. All college visits and permissions must first be authorized by the College Counseling Office and the Dean of Students.

The transportation permission form for boarders allows parents to identify people with whom they will allow their children to ride. Please fill out the form carefully during online registration. There is no "blanket permission" that allows students to ride with anyone they choose. Permission cannot be taken over the phone.

Travel Forms and Dates

All travel dates and information are listed on the last page of this document. Please read the section in the *Student/Parent Handbook* on motor vehicles, permissions and sign-out procedures. Dates and times for bus travel are also included in the *Student/Parent Handbook 2020-2021*.

The school uses **REACH Boarding System** for student travel off campus and overnight, including vacations. This is an online form that students complete which generates e-mails to parents for parental permission. Parents should check the dates and times for accuracy before granting permission.

Please note that all weekends for the first semester will be closed until health and safety protocols allow. In the event of a special request, students must submit a petition to the Student Life Office to request approval for any departures from campus.

Listed below is a description of the different travel forms that students must fill out when leaving campus.

- **Overnight Forms** are available through a link to REACH in the Student Portal on the school website. Students wishing to take an overnight must complete the form by 8:00 a.m. on Thursday. Parent permissions must be received via phone or email by 12:00 p.m. on Thursday. Student overnights begin after their last commitment on Saturday and run through Sunday at 7:30 p.m.
- **Vacation Travel Forms** are made available online in the Student Portal two weeks prior to the start of school recesses and long weekends. Every boarding student must fill out a travel plan before vacation. The school offers chaperoned bus service to Bradley International Airport, New York City (Pennsylvania Station) and Logan Express Bus Terminal in Framingham, MA. The school also provides a van to/from JFK Airport at Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Recesses.
- **Special Request Forms** are available in the Student Life Office and must be completed three days in advance of departure. No student will be granted a special request to miss class without the approval of the Dean of Academics. Students taking a special request are responsible for all missed work. Students must obtain signatures from their classroom teachers, coach, form dean and advisor. Parent permission is required for all special requests and should be emailed to lmiller@berkshireschool.org.
- **College Visit Forms** are available in the Student Life Office and must be completed three days in advance of departure. No student will be granted a college visit without approval of their college counselor. Students taking a college visit are responsible for all missed work. Students must obtain signatures from their college counselor, classroom teachers, coach, form dean and advisor. Parent permission is required for all college visits and should be emailed to lmiller@berkshireschool.org. Students are limited to four days of college visits during their Berkshire career. Exceptions to this limitation must be approved by the College Counseling Office.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2020-2021

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic conditions, we have made adjustments to the chartered buses offered during vacations to reflect the school academic calendar. We expect restrictions on the number of students we can transport, and adjustments will be made during the school year as state and national guidelines dictate. We expect that families may need to arrange their own transportation given the current restrictions on vehicle capacity.

Bus Travel

Berkshire School arranges charter bus transportation with faculty chaperones for school vacations. Fares are charged to the student's account.

Buses or vans run to and from (see schedule below):

- Bradley International Airport (Hartford, CT), baggage claim area downstairs, Terminal A
- New York City (Pennsylvania Station), West 34th Street at the corner of 8th Avenue by the Hotel New Yorker
- Framingham, MA (Logan Express Bus Station)
- JFK Airport (*for Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Recesses only*), baggage claim area, Terminal 1

Departure date and time for buses/vans Leaves campus

November 21, Saturday

8:00 am

For 8:00 a.m. departures from School, do not make plane reservations before 11:00 a.m. at Bradley International Airport or 2:00 p.m. at New York and Boston Airports.

Return date and time for buses/vans

January 4, Monday

New York City

1:30 pm

Framingham

5:30 pm

JFK Airport

5:00 pm

Bradley Airport

6:30 pm

For 5:00 p.m. pick-ups at JFK International Airport, plan to have flight land no later than 2:30 p.m. For 6:30 p.m. pick-ups at Bradley International Airport, plan to have flight land no later than 5:00 p.m.

**** Additional travel information will be added for second semester travel dates. ****

We recommend that parents and students use Bradley International Airport (BDL) in Hartford, CT. It is located approximately one hour from campus and allows for much faster and easier travel for your child. Landing at JFK or other New York City (NYC) airports may be a less expensive air fare, but the cost of reaching campus from there can offset your perceived savings. It can also add an additional three to four hours of travel to your trip. If you do use NYC airports, you may want to look into using the shuttle to Grand Central Station to ride the Metro North train line to the Wassauc station.

Transportation Resources

For transportation needs at times other than vacations, the following livery service contacts are provided for your convenience in arranging travel needs:

Abbotts Limousine Service	Lee, MA	413-243-1645	www.abbottslimo.com
Berkshire Driving Services	Great Barrington, MA	413-362-5587	danieg26@gmail.com
Lakeville Livery	Salisbury, CT	860-435-8000	
Michael's Limousine Service	Agawam, MA	413-583-6392	www.michaels-limo.com
Taxico	Great Barrington, MA	413-528-0911	

The transportation companies listed above are provided for general informational purposes only. Use of any of these companies is at your own risk. Berkshire School does not arrange private transportation.

Accommodations near Berkshire School

There is a detailed list of hotels, motels and inns on the school's website under *Admission, Visit Us*. Some sites offer a discount to Berkshire School guests.