

2024-2025



FAMILY INFORMATION GUIDE

CAMPUS COMMUNICATION

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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 any adjustments during the online registration process. During the school year, changes can be made directly in the Veracross Parent Portal by clicking "*Update Family Profile*" on the main page.

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 PM on weekdays and on weekends**, ask one of the following to deliver the message:
 - your child's advisor
 - your child's dorm 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 Parent 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 PM) or after 11:00 PM. Phones will be confiscated for violations of the cell phone policy, as listed in the *Student/Family Handbook*.
- New students are sent their Berkshire email address over the summer via the email address* that we have on file for them. (**If this email is from a prior school, please update with a personal address as the previous school may disable the account.*)

COMMUNICATING WITH THE SCHOOL

Communication between the School and families is very important. The following procedures and phone numbers are provided to help families contact the School. This information will allow you to contact 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.

Dorm Faculty

The house head and dorm parents 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 be sure to keep the advisor informed of your concerns.

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.

Duty Administrator

The Duty Administrator is the point person for permission requests on weekends and after 4 PM on weekdays.

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 AM - 4:00 PM Monday through Friday.

For information about:	Call:	
Academic Policy	Dean of Academics or Form Dean	413-229-1262
Academic Support	Kenefick Center for Learning (KCL)	413-229-1039
Activities, Student	Activities 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	Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life	413-229-1259
College Counseling	Director of College Counseling	413-229-1252
Counseling	Director of Counseling	413-229-1226
Day Students	Day Student Coordinator	413-229-1165
Discipline	Dean of Students	413-229-1241
Emergencies (during the day)	Student Life Office	413-229-1219
Emergencies (after 4:00 PM 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)	413-229-1267
	Student Bank (Bookstore)	413-229-1217
Health Services/Illness	Student Health Services	413-229-1275
Housing	Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life	413-229-1259
International Students	Director of International Student Program	413-229-1260
Late Return to School (and changes to travel plans)	Student Life Office (weekdays before 4:00 PM)	413-229-1219
	Duty Administrator (weekends and after 4:00 PM weekdays)	413-429-6132
Lost and Found	Bookstore	413-229-1217
Technology Help	Technology Help Desk	413-229-1803
Transcripts	Academic Office	413-229-1261
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

DRESS GUIDELINES AND APPEARANCE

Berkshire School's guidelines for dress are used to help students present themselves in a way that aligns both with the School's community standards and values and allows for individual expression and comfort. Any questions about what is appropriate should be referred to the Student Life Office and/or Student Council Representatives. Students should expect to engage with adults in conversations about dress guidelines. If a student is asked by a faculty or staff member to change their attire because they are not in accordance with the dress guidelines, they should do so immediately. Students are responsible for any commitments missed while changing, including being marked late to or absent from class. **Insensitive, disrespectful, and offensive attire is inappropriate at all times. The dress guidelines are subject to change at any time.**

Classroom Dress:

- required in academic and community spaces (including Allen Theater, dining hall) during the academic day (8:30 AM-3:00 PM) and during community dinner;
- tops and bottoms without tears or rips;
- clothing and footwear that is appropriate for an active classroom environment in any given season (fingertip length for skirts, dresses and shorts, navel covered);
- Berkshire quarter zips, sweatshirts (without hood), and team-issued tops (no t-shirts or jerseys) are allowed;
- clothing must cover undergarments; shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front and on the sides (under the arms);
- no t-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, sweatpants, joggers, yoga pants, loungewear, athletic wear (unless a Berkshire top), cut-off jean shorts, mesh shorts, team jerseys, slippers, shower shoes, or other notably casual apparel;
- no hats in the classroom during the academic day, dining hall during meals, Berkshire Hall, Morgan-Bellas-Dixon, and Allen Theater

Formal Dress:

- required at Senior Dinner, Prize Night, Commencement, other formal presentations, and events as determined by the School;
- tops may include: collared shirts with blazers and ties or bowties, blouses, dress shirts;
- bottoms may include: dress pants, khakis, skirts, dresses, formal jumpsuits

Dress Down:

- dress down attire is permitted on certain days such as an extended break and other days communicated in advance;
- clothing worn on these special days must not be ripped or torn, and it must adhere to our community standards;
- sweatpants, hooded sweatshirts, t-shirts, and other athletic wear are permitted

Athletic Dress:

Berkshire School's indoor and outdoor athletics facilities allow students to enjoy physical exercise options and competitions. In this environment, students should adhere to the following:

- shirts, jerseys, or other team-issued tops, covering the midsection;
- sleeveless shirts are permitted but may not reveal the torso;
- being shirtless is strictly prohibited in any communal space on campus;
- bathing suits, swimsuits, and tank tops revealing the torso are only permitted on the softball field, while other School teams and programs are not using the field.

Students are asked to use common sense in choosing their attire and may be asked to change clothes if they are inappropriately dressed or their garments do not promote community standards. Clothing that advertises banned substances or hateful speech or ideology is not permitted at any time and could result in disciplinary action. If you have any questions about the guidelines for dress, please call the Student Life Office at 413-229-1219.

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.

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

ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING

The Athletic Department provides uniforms, protective equipment, and practice clothing called "Green and Grays" which includes shorts, t-shirts, 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. **Students and families are encouraged to wait until they see and spend time in their assigned rooms before making decisions surrounding purchases as room sizes and layouts vary.**

Since students spend a great deal of time studying in their rooms, **families are asked to consider carefully which personal belongings 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/Family Handbook* for additional information regarding dorm guidelines and/or reach out to the Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life.

The School provides for each student:

A bed frame, standard twin mattress, window shade, dresser, desk, desk chair, and trash and recycling bins.

Each student's family should provide:

Sheets (1-2, **standard twin sheet sets; deep pockets fit well if paired with a large mattress topper**), bedspread/blankets/comforter (**electric blankets are not permitted**), pillow(s), pillowcases, bath towels, washcloths, laundry bags (if not using laundry service), and an 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
Lockable storage: Small (not more than 20" x 30" x 15")
Room decorations: Peel and stick wallpaper, pictures, and posters; LED light strips are permitted if hung with Command strips/hooks
Refrigerator: Each room is allowed one refrigerator, no larger than 3.2 Cubic Feet
Other: Desk lamp, mattress topper, shower caddy

The following items are **not** permitted in student dorm rooms:

- Cloth decor (including flags) hanging from ceilings, around beds, and over windows
- Extension cords (beyond approved surge protectors)
- Additional furniture (ex. bedside tables, couches, chairs, ottomans, etc.) must be approved by the Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life and cannot be wider/longer than 60 inches
- Televisions or computer monitors larger than 32 inches
- Gaming consoles are not allowed in rooms of Third Formers
- Heat-emitting cooking appliances, personal space heaters, air conditioners (electrical or other), and halogen lights
- Pictures, posters, and decor depicting drugs, alcohol, nicotine, or nudity
- Pets

****Please note: The post office will begin accepting packages on August 12; please avoid shipping items before this date.****

OTHER USEFUL ITEMS

- Appropriate footwear for fun on the Mountain
- Bicycles, non-motorized skateboards/scooters, rollerblades, or other such equipment; must also bring a bicycle helmet and/or protective gear for their own safety. A bicycle/scooter lock is recommended.
- Cell phone case/sleeve to hold dorm key card
- Storage bins (ex. food and snack storage, seasonal clothing, extra toiletries, etc.)
- Travel mug and reusable water bottle (refillable water stations are accessible across campus)
- Umbrella

ROOM KEYS AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

All exterior doors and individual dorm rooms have secure lock systems. The School can access residential spaces for the safety and supervision of all students. Students are issued a personal key card during registration to gain access to their own room and other approved spaces on campus. Students who lose their key cards should go to the Student Life Office for a replacement; there is a \$25.00 replacement fee.

Students are advised not to bring valuables to School. Families may want to consider a lock box for small electronics and/or other valuables. 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/guardians are asked to report by phone to Student Health Services (413-229-1275) before 8:00 AM each day if your child is not attending classes due to illness or a medical appointment. When your child cannot get to School for other reasons 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. VEHICLES 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 vehicle at all times while on campus. Day student vehicles are to be parked in the lot adjacent to the Soffer Athletic Center. Day students are to use the access road that passes in front of the Jackman Stewart Athletic Center to travel to and from the parking lot. Day student drivers may not travel along the main driveway. Day student vehicles 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 vehicles 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/guardians 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 may excuse day students from subsequent requirements.

4. ATTENDANCE FOR SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

Day students are required to attend special programming, 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 academic lockers are located in Berkshire Hall for the 2024-25 school year. Showers and locker room space are 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 Amber West, Day Student Coordinator, at 413-229-1165 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 (BDL) in Connecticut whenever possible. *See the Travel Arrangements section for more detailed information.*

Please arrange return flights that land at Bradley International Airport before 4:30 PM and before 2:30 PM for flights landing at JFK International Airport. 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 4:30 PM (BDL) or 2:30 PM (JFK) and 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 4:30 PM (BDL) or 2:30 PM

(JFK), you will be responsible for arranging your child's transportation back to School from the airport if they miss the 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 directly to Bradley International Airport, New York City (Pennsylvania Station), and Logan Express Bus Station (Framingham, MA) at the beginning of Thanksgiving Recess, Winter Recess, Spring Recess, and long weekends. **(There is no bus transportation leaving School on Fall Family Weekend.)** Return transportation from these destinations is also provided at the end of vacations and all long weekends. The School also runs a van to/from JFK Airport for Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring Recesses.

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*).

Vehicle Travel

Boarding students are not permitted to have vehicles 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 vehicle to campus is a violation of a Major School Rule. Please do not send your boarding student to School with a vehicle, 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

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

The school uses the **REACH Boarding System** application for weekend and vacation student travel off campus. This is an online form that students complete which generates emails to parents/guardians for permission. Parents should check the dates and times for accuracy before granting permission.

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

- **Weekend Overnight Leave Forms** are available to students on the REACH Boarding application. Students wishing to take an overnight leave must complete the form by **12:00 PM on Thursday**. Parents and hosts (if applicable) will receive an email from the REACH Boarding application from which approval is given or denied. Permissions must be approved via the received email by 12:00 PM on Friday. If parent and/or host approval is not obtained by this time, the request will be denied. Student overnights begin *after* their last commitment on Friday or Saturday and run through Sunday at 7:45 PM. A three-point penalty will be assigned to students handing in late forms. Failure to submit a form before departure may result in a student being placed on restriction or be found in violation of a Major School Rule violation concerning Permissions.
- **Vacation Travel Forms** are made available to students on the REACH Boarding application two weeks prior to the start of school recesses and long weekends. Every boarding student must fill out a travel plan before vacation. Students can sign up for school-chaperoned bus services through this leave request.
- **Athletic Special Request Forms** are located in the Athletic Office and must be turned in to the Student Life Office **three days prior** to the departure date. Students must first obtain the signature of the Director of Athletics, followed by their teachers, coach, advisor, and form dean. Parent permission is required and can be given by approving the REACH Boarding email received. **Please Note:** Any request to participate in a club program, event, or showcase that will result in missing an academic class, athletic commitment, or any Berkshire School event, must be submitted in writing to the Director of Athletics two weeks prior to the beginning of each athletic season. Requests will be reviewed by the Director of Athletics, Dean of Students, and Dean of Academics and will be decided upon before tryouts have been completed for said season. After approval from the Director of Athletics is received, an Athletic Special Request leave form must be submitted for each leave request where obligations will be missed. A three-point penalty will be assigned to students handing in late forms. Failure to submit a form prior to departure may result in a student being placed on restriction or be found in violation of a Major School Rule violation concerning Permissions.
- **College Visit Request Forms** are located in the College Counseling Office and must be turned in to the Student Life Office **three days prior** to the departure date. Students must first obtain a signature from their college counselor, followed by their teachers, coach, advisor, and form dean. 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. Students taking a college visit are responsible for all missed work. Parent permission is required for all college visits and can be given by approving the REACH Boarding email received. A three-point penalty will be assigned to students handing in late forms. Failure to submit a form prior to departure may result in a student being placed on restriction or be found in violation of a Major School Rule violation concerning Permissions.

- **Special Request Forms** need to be completed when missing School obligations for any outside commitments other than athletic events or college visits. Special Request leave forms are located in the Student Life Office and must be turned in **three days prior** to the departure date. Students must first obtain a signature from the Dean of Students, followed by their teachers, coach, advisor, and form dean. Parent permission is required and can be given by approving the REACH Boarding email received. A three-point penalty will be assigned to students handing in late forms. Failure to submit a form prior to departure may result in a student being placed on restriction or be found in violation of a Major School Rule violation concerning Permissions.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS 2024-2025

Berkshire School arranges charter bus transportation with faculty chaperones for school vacations. Fares are charged to the student's account. Chartered buses to and from Bradley International Airport, Framingham, and New York are available at vacation times.

Students in need of ground transportation to or from airports or bus stations should make arrangements through the Student Life Office. Local taxi companies provide travel services for a fee and accept cash or credit cards; students are not permitted to charge taxi fares to the School. Students may not call taxis or car services for local day leave permissions. The School provides weekly van service to nearby Great Barrington.

If a student misses a connection or has a change of plans, transportation must be canceled through the Student Life Office during regular school business hours to avoid the charge for any ground transportation that has been ordered. After school hours, parents/guardians are asked to report changes in plans to the Duty Administrator at 413-429-6132.

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

- Bradley International Airport (Hartford, CT), baggage claim area downstairs, Terminal A
- Framingham, MA (Logan Express Bus Station), 11 Burr Street Extension
- JFK Airport (for Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Recesses only), baggage claim area, Terminal 1
- New York City (Pennsylvania Station), West 34th Street at the corner of 8th Avenue by the Hotel New Yorker

Departure date and time	Leaves	Available Buses
November 22, Friday	8:30 AM	Bradley, Framingham, JFK, and NYC
December 20, Friday	8:30 AM	Bradley, Framingham, JFK, and NYC
February 6, Thursday	11:30 AM	Bradley, Framingham, and NYC
March 7, Friday	8:30 AM	Bradley, Framingham, JFK, and NYC
May 29, Thursday	8:30 AM	*Students must notify the Student Life Office if transportation assistance is needed

For 8:30 AM departures from School, do not make plane reservations before 11:30 AM (domestic), 1:00 PM (International) at Bradley International Airport or 2:00 PM (domestic), 3:30 PM (International) at New York and Boston Airports. All buses depart campus from the main driveway near de Windt and Eipper Dormitories.

Return date and time	Bradley	Framingham	JFK	New York City
October 22, Tuesday	6:30 PM	5:30 PM		1:30 PM
December 2, Monday	6:30 PM	5:30 PM	5:00 PM	1:30 PM
January 5, Sunday	6:30 PM	5:30 PM	5:00 PM	1:30 PM
February 10, Monday	6:30 PM	5:30 PM		1:30 PM
March 26, Wednesday	6:30 PM	5:30 PM	5:00 PM	1:30 PM

For 5:00 PM pick-ups at JFK International Airport, plan to have flight land no later than 2:30 PM. For 6:30 PM pick-ups at Bradley International Airport, plan to have flight land no later than 4:30 PM.

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 airfare, 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 the trip. If you do use NYC airports, you may want to look into your child using the shuttle to Grand Central Station to ride the Metro North train line to the Wassaic 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
Executive Livery	Salisbury, CT	860-435-8000	
Morning Star Car Service	Amenia, NY	845-493-0211	http://www.morningstarcarservice.com/

*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 *About Us (Places to Stay)*.