
July 31, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am hopeful that this summer has presented you with some opportunities to relax with your families. I am writing to keep you informed of certain matters around the District as we transition from July to August in advance of the 2025-2026 school year.

Olcott Field Lighting Project

The 2025-2026 budget approved by the Somerset Hills Board of Education includes an allocation to install LED lights on Olcott Field. We expect that work to begin shortly, and to be completed in time for the fall athletic season at Bernards High School. [HERE](#) is the presentation made to the Bernardsville Planning Board on February 13, 2025, to learn more about the project.

Bernards High School Performing Arts Center Upgrades

The 2025-2026 budget approved by the Somerset Hills Board of Education includes an allocation to continue a multi-year plan to upgrade sound and lighting in the Bernards High School Performing Arts Center. The arts are certainly alive and well in the Somerset Hills School District! We are wrapping up our 2nd summer dedicated to this work and believe the students will experience a higher quality level of lighting and sound when performing in the Performing Arts Center.

Information Technology Maintenance Projects

The IT Department is undertaking several key projects this summer to ensure a smooth and secure start to the upcoming school year. Below is an overview of the major initiatives:

- Chromebook Preparation
- Staff Email Migration: Google Workspace to Microsoft 365
- Authentication Redirection for Google Workspace (Staff): Implement secure authentication for staff using Microsoft and Duo Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for Google Workspace.
- Clever to ClassLink Migration for Account Synchronization
- iPad Preparation
- Windows 10 to Windows 11 Upgrade

District Website

Our District Website is in the final stages of a refresh! This work, being led by long-time SHSD and Bernards High School graduate Connor Flynn, is moving along nicely. We expect that by the middle of August, before the Genesis Parent Portal is opened, our new website will be launched.

Accessing Genesis

Just before August becomes September, the Genesis Parent Portal will be opening. July allowed us to “roll over” the Parent Portal to the 2025-2026 school year for many of the features of Genesis. However, the schedule and transportation routes are not yet available in Genesis. We will examine the date for the Genesis rollover in the coming weeks and inform parents and students when to expect student schedules and student transportation information to be available. We thank you for your patience and understanding.

Communication Calendars

Below is information regarding when you can expect to receive information from the District and each particular school.

- Superintendent letters (Third Thursday of every month)
- Board Briefs (Monday following each Board Meeting)
- Pathways (Every other month)
- School Friday Folders (Every Friday, except winter/spring break)

Funding Secured to Study Regionalization between SHSD and Bedminster

The District applied for grant funding and serves as the lead applicant to conduct a regionalization study through a third party. This study will examine all necessary components that impact efficiency between the Somerset Hills School District and the Bedminster Township School, which sends its students to Bernards High School.

To underscore the intent of the regionalization study, both Districts seek to assess the landscape of their operations, which are not bound by any outcomes outlined in the study, as a way to make an impartial assessment of their District by a third party who specializes in this work. Akin to examining certain processes in your own homes and/or organizations, both Districts elected to do the same to guide their work on behalf of their respective communities.

Capital Projects - Planning for the Future

The Board has been working with the administration and their engineers and architects from *Solutions Architecture* to develop a capital improvement program that enhances facilities at Bedwell Elementary School, Bernardsville Middle School, and Bernards High School.

Specifically, the capital improvement program will address the following areas: science labs (BMS and BHS), STEM labs (District-wide), college and career initiatives (District-wide), TV and podcasting (BHS), roofing (District-wide), student and staff security (District-wide), Media Center (BES), and Kindergarten renovations (BES), amongst other improvements.

In the coming months, the District will expand discussions regarding our plans. However, we seek to enhance our programming in these areas across the District and are in a position to bond for these investments in our facilities at no additional cost to the taxpayers. I've always found a unique level of support and positive energy regarding education in Somerset Hills and appreciate the opportunity to establish and continue discussions regarding our facilities and a budget-neutral tax impact.

Be on the lookout for opportunities starting in September to learn more about our future together here in Somerset Hills.

Head Baseball Coach at BHS

Phil Mahlik has been named Head Baseball Coach at Bernards High School. He served as Head Baseball Coach at BMS for three years and has coached numerous youth and travel baseball teams, as well as coached soccer, tennis, basketball, and hockey at the middle school and high school levels. His leadership and experience, coupled with core values, have resulted in a coaching philosophy built around developing relationships and emphasizing hard work, trust, and passion for the game. He is ready to take on this role and will set high standards for the program to win on the field and to develop fine student-athletes off the diamond.

I ask you to contact me with any questions and, above all, enjoy the remaining days of summer with your families. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,



Brian Brotschul, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools