
September 18, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope that your initial weeks of the school year have been smooth and that your children are adjusting to new schedules, new teachers, and new friends, all while learning in actively engaging classrooms.

Student Attendance

There is no greater determinant of student achievement than a thoughtful teacher (and we are filled with them here). However, we've found that in Somerset Hills, to access our great teachers and outstanding instruction, families need to be aware of how crucial regular school attendance is to their child's learning.

At the District level, and through the NJ Department of Education, we make efforts to monitor student attendance to ensure that they are being exposed to the most challenging instruction and curriculum available - all of which help promote student achievement. The Board has an attendance policy for its students; I can simplify it. Please come to school.

If students are absent more than 10% of the school year (up to 18 times) for any reason, we will develop support plans to ensure regular attendance. However, before attendance matters reach that level, we will remind you through communication (e.g., phone calls, meetings, and letters) if absences accumulate at a rate that becomes concerning. Ultimately, we want your children to succeed academically and be surrounded by their peers.

Please prioritize regular attendance at school. And please connect with our school nurses as early as possible if particular health matters persist for your child that require additional consideration.

Referendum 2026

The Board of Education has approved and forwarded a Long-Range Facility Plan to the New Jersey Department of Education in advance of a public vote on March 10, 2026, where it will ask the community to raise funds to execute capital projects at all schools in areas including, but not limited to, security, science instruction, culinary arts, roofwork, media center instruction, television broadcasting, and podcasting.

Financial Impact

The Board has debt expiring and seeks to replace all expiring debt with an equal amount of debt spread over 20 years. Additionally, the Board will receive direct state aid in the form of annual payments from the New

Jersey Department of Education to help defray the costs of the proposed capital improvements. The current tax impact for residents in Bernardsville, Far Hills, and Peapack-Gladstone will be \$0.

What You Can Do Now

The District seeks to thoroughly prepare you to become informed voters between today and March 2026. Please refer to the ways to become acquainted with the capital projects supported by Referendum 2026.

- Review the [District website](#)
- Follow the Referendum 2026 Instagram account ([shsd_referendum2026](#))
- Follow the Referendum 2026 Facebook account ([Somerset Hills School District Referendum 2026](#))
- Attend public events posted to our Referendum website and social media feeds
- [Request a personal or small group presentation](#)
- Ask questions by emailing referendum@shsd.org

I look forward to seeing you all around Somerset Hills in the meantime. If you have questions or would like to discuss any items, please contact me at bbrotschul@shsd.org.

Sincerely,



Brian Brotschul, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools