

November 20, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The District is engaged in multiple operational initiatives that you should be aware of.

Regionalization Study

In October, the Somerset Hills Board of Education and Bedminster Township Board of Education held a joint meeting to learn about a regionalization study that the two Boards have been considering. [HERE](#) is a video from the meeting.

Last evening, the Somerset Hills Board of Education approved the Sweeney Center for Public Policy School Regionalization Institute to conduct a regionalization study in partnership with Bedminster Township School District at its Regular Public Meeting. The two districts will begin performing this work in earnest; I expect it to be completed within 12 months.

School regionalization and shared services, driven by voluntary initiatives such as the study being conducted in Somerset Hills and Bedminster, examine the possibility of making education for our children more efficient and cost-effective, with a particular eye on both financial and student achievement outcomes.

Somerset Hills and Bedminster have elected to explore potential regionalization options that provide the best possible education for students while also ensuring cost savings for taxpayers. I look forward to conversations with our collective public and the Bedminster Township School District to examine whether regionalization makes sense for both Districts to consider.

The study will explore how the two districts could merge and whether a merger would result in cost savings or other efficiencies, benefiting students and taxpayers.

The Steve Sweeney Center for Public Policy was created to fill the need for an independent, bipartisan public policy center that conducts research and develops pragmatic solutions to complex policy issues through data-driven analysis, rigorous academic research, and the convening of working groups that bring together policy experts, stakeholders, and advocates to reach consensus.

I am pleased that the study is in the capable hands of the Sweeney Center for Public Policy, and I'll reinforce that the only expected outcome is that for the first time since 2003, both school districts have up-to-date information regarding the concept of regionalization & shared services, and if there is any benefit for further consideration.

Referendum 2026

Last evening at its Regular Public Meeting, the Somerset Hills Board of Education approved an election question that will ask the communities of Far Hills, Peapack-Gladstone, and Bernardsville to raise funds to improve district facilities. The ballot question that residents will receive will read exactly as below.

The Board of Education of the Somerset Hills Regional School District in the County of Somerset, New Jersey (the "Board") is authorized to (a) undertake various improvements, alterations, renovations, and upgrades at Bernards High School, including acquisition and installation of fixtures, equipment, and any site work; (b) undertake various improvements, alterations, renovations, and upgrades at Bernardsville Middle School, including acquisition and installation of fixtures, equipment, and any site work; (c) undertake various improvements, alterations, renovations, and upgrades, and to construct an addition at Bedwell Elementary School, including acquisition and installation of fixtures, equipment, and any site work; (d) appropriate \$38,024,257 for such improvements; and (e) issue bonds in an amount not to exceed \$38,024,257.

The final eligible costs for the projects approved by the New Jersey Commissioner of Education are \$33,367,203 (consisting of \$19,373,306 for Bernards High School, \$6,277,941 for Bernardsville Middle School, and \$7,715,956 for Bedwell Elementary School). The projects include \$4,142,445 (consisting of \$2,589,449 for Bernards High School, \$557,000 for Bernardsville Middle School, and \$995,996 for Bedwell Elementary School) for school facility construction elements in addition to the facilities efficiency standards developed by the Commissioner of Education or not otherwise eligible for State of New Jersey (the "State") support pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-5(g). The State debt service aid percentage is equal to 40% of the annual debt service due with respect to the final eligible costs of the projects. The Board is authorized to transfer funds among the projects approved at this election.

The communities have an opportunity to learn more about the Board's intent through public information sessions on November 25, December 18, and January 27, all taking place in the BHS Media Center at 7:00 pm. Additionally, a public vote is scheduled for March 10, 2026.

School Calendars for 2026-2027 and 2027-2028

Last evening at the November Regular Public Meeting, the Somerset Hills Board of Education approved school calendars for the [2026-2027](#) and [2027-2028](#) school years. Those calendars reflect the following:

- *Extended School Year Program: Increased from 4 weeks to 5 weeks*
- *New Staff Orientation moved from the last week of August to the week prior*
- *First day for students prior to Labor Day features advanced instructional time before standardized testing to*

be multiplied over time (NJSLA, K-12, and Advanced Placement)

- *Back-to-School Nights are announced in advance for alignment with Bedminster K-8 students*
- *Winter Break around Presidents' Day (Monday/Tuesday) for students*

Additional details can be found in the November Superintendent Report.

If you have any questions regarding the above matters, please feel free to contact me. In the interim, I look forward to seeing you around the District and wish you a Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,



Brian Brotschul, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools