

BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT DISTRICT NEWS

FALL EDITION - OCTOBER 2026



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RWB'S SPECIAL SEPTEMBER 11TH CEREMONY (PHOTO: MS. HEGEL)



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DISTRICT NEWS



BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT | 225 WEST CLINTON AVENUE | BERGENFIELD, NJ 07621

District Central Administration

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JoAnn Khoury-Frias, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Darlene Markman, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum
Shane Biggins, Director of Personnel

Board of Education

Deborah Podwin, President
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Fanny Cruz-Betesh, Trustee
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FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

By Christopher M. Tully, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools



Superintendent Tully

As we move just over a month into the 2026-27 school year, I am thrilled to share that we are off to another outstanding start! Our schools are filled with excitement, energy, and endless possibilities. I could not be prouder of our students, staff, and school community.

We have even more reasons to celebrate as our district continues to earn recognition for its commitment to educational excellence!

- U.S. News & World Report ranked Bergenfield High School 16th in Bergen County and 1,480th nationally, moving our high school from the top 6% to the top 5% of high schools in the nation!
- Niche.com ranked our district 16th in Bergen County and 61st in New Jersey, further highlighting the quality of our schools.
- The New Jersey Department of Education designated our district as "High Performing" following its 2026 New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) review.

These accomplishments reflect the extraordinary dedication of our educators, the hard work of our students, and the unwavering support of our families and community. We have much to celebrate!

While our achievements are exciting, I also want to share an important financial challenge facing our district.

We recently learned that premiums for the state-managed School Employees' Health Benefits Program (SEHBP) will increase by 34% effective January 1, 2027. This increase is nine percentage points higher than anticipated in our budget and will require us to reduce current-year expenditures by \$825,000.

Unfortunately, these substantial annual increases are simply unsustainable. They place tremendous pressure on our finances and could impact programs, staffing, services, and—ultimately—property taxes next year.

How can you help? I encourage community members to stay informed about this issue and contact their state elected officials to share their concerns about rising health benefit costs and learn more about proposed reforms aimed at stabilizing premiums and local property taxes. Your engagement and partnership are important as we navigate these challenges together.

Despite these financial pressures, my optimism for our district's future has never been stronger. Our greatest strength continues to be the remarkable people who make up our school community.

Thank you for your continued trust, partnership, and support. Together, we are creating opportunities that inspire our students to dream big, aim high, and truly reach for the stars! I cannot wait to see the incredible accomplishments this school year will bring. The best is yet to come!

HIGH SCHOOL RANKED IN TOP 5% IN AMERICA



BHS has been recognized for 11 straight years.

For the eleventh year in a row, Bergenfield High School has been ranked among the top high schools in the nation by U.S. News & World Report. BHS was recognized as 1,480th in the nation, 82nd in the state, and 16th in Bergen County in the "[2026-27 Best High Schools](#)" rankings.

The "2026-27 Best High Schools" rankings include data on nearly 27,000 public high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Nearly 18,000 schools were ranked on six factors based on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college.

The criteria and weights used for ranking schools this year included college readiness, college curriculum breadth, state assessment proficiency, state assessment performance, underserved student performance, and high school graduation rate.

Thank you to the entire Bergenfield Community for your support!



DISTRICT NEWS

NJDOE RECOGNIZES DISTRICT AS HIGH PERFORMING



The Bergenfield Public School District is proud to announce that we have once again been recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education as a High Performing School District! This prestigious designation follows a comprehensive evaluation through the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC), and reflects our district's continued commitment to educational excellence.

NJQSAC is the New Jersey Department of Education's comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system designed to promote accountability, continuous improvement, and excellence in public education. The evaluation examines five essential areas of district performance: Instruction and Program, Fiscal Management, Governance, Operations, and Personnel.

BACKPACK GIVEAWAY BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER



Volunteers at the giveaway (photo: Ms. Calle).

Roy Brown Middle School helped students start the new school year on a positive note by hosting a Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway on September 1st. Organized by School Counselor, Kim Stevenson, this wonderful event brought together school staff, students, local organizations, and community members to ensure students were prepared for a successful year.

Thanks to the generous contributions by Costco, the Bergen Prevention Coalition, Books and Badges, the Bergenfield Domino Club, and Lupe Ruiz-Catala, more than 200 backpacks were filled with school supplies

Achieving high-performing status demonstrates our district's strong performance across these critical areas and our ongoing dedication to providing students with an exceptional educational experience.

This outstanding achievement is a reflection of the hard work, dedication, and collaborative spirit of our entire school community—from our talented educators and dedicated staff to our hardworking students, supportive families, and committed Board of Education. Everyone plays an important role in making Bergenfield a district of excellence.

We are incredibly proud of this recognition and grateful to everyone who contributes to our district's continued success. Together, we will build upon this achievement, embrace new opportunities for growth, and remain focused on providing the very best educational experiences for all of our student.

and distributed to students.

The event's success was made possible by the dedication of numerous volunteers who generously gave their time to fill and distribute the backpacks. Special thanks to Kim Stevenson, Debra Calle, Veronica Gollihue, Angelica-Lee Aspiris-Liristis, Atira George, Adriana Rodriguez, Mike Merlo, Dominick Rotante, William Oakley, Melanie Hinds, and Bergenfield Domino Club member Mike Perez. Several middle school students and the Bergenfield High School Incorruptible Us Club also volunteered, demonstrating the spirit of kindness and service that makes our school community so special.

We extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who donated, volunteered, and helped make this event such a tremendous success. This initiative is another wonderful example of what can be accomplished when our schools and community work together to support our students. What a fantastic way to begin the school year!

RWB'S "TWIN TOWERS"



Two twin pines at RWB (photo: Mr. Rotante).

RWB marked the 25th anniversary of September 11th with a special assembly on the lawn of the school.

Two pine trees were planted on the front lawn by students and staff over 24 years ago. These two pines represent the "Twin Towers" and serve as a reminder that we will never forget what occurred on that date.

Retired teachers Pat DiLorenzo and Rebekah Zelman, who participated in the original planting, came back to speak to students about the significance of RWB's "Twin Towers."

HANDS-ON TRAINING



Students working at the ETA (photo: Dr. Tully).

Bergenfield High School has partnered with the Electrical Training Academy (ETA) to offer a hands-on electrical training program for juniors and seniors.

Students spend three hours per day learning the basic skills necessary to become an electrician. Students will earn their OSHA 30-hour Department of Labor safety card, be eligible for an apprenticeship program, and receive job placement support upon completion.

Five BHS students have enrolled into the program—located at River Dell High School in Oradell—for the 2026-27 school year.

DISTRICT NEWS

TRANSPORTATION MANAGER FINISHES SECOND IN STATE



Ms. Langschultz, Mr. Estevez, Mr. Koprowski, and Ms. Salcedo with the second place trophy (photo: Dr. Tully).

Congratulations to Transportation Manager, Jorge Estevez, for earning an outstanding second-place finish at the annual NJSTS/NJSBCA School Bus Driver Safety Competition!

This statewide event, jointly hosted by the New Jersey School Transportation Supervisors (NJSTS) and the New Jersey School Bus Contractors Association (NJSBCA), challenges school transportation professionals to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through a series of school bus safety events.

Competing against representatives from more than 60 school districts, Jorge's impressive achievement reflects the skill, professionalism, and commitment to student safety that define our Transportation Department.

Congratulations to Jorge and the entire team on this well-deserved recognition!

EXPLORING THE ARTS



The students attended NYCC (photo: Mr. Melendez).

Last spring, four BHS students were selected as winners of a competitive art contest. The prize was a trip to New York Comic Con for an immersive look into the creative arts industry.

The trip provided these talented seniors with real-world context, inspiration, and networking opportunities.

VISIONARY PRINCIPAL



Mr. Fleming (center) receives award (photo: Dr. Tully).

The New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association presented Mr. William Fleming with its 2026 Visionary Principal of the Year Award.

Mr. Fleming has served as Principal of Hoover School since 2013, and has consistently demonstrated outstanding leadership and commitment to student success.

'27 BEST SCHOOL DISTRICTS



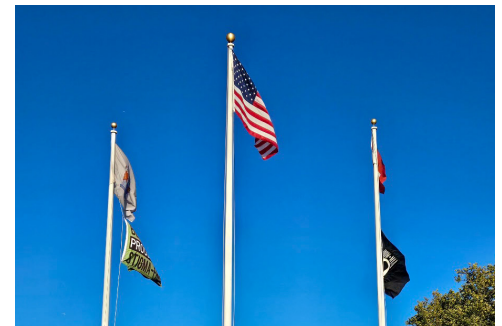
Bergenfield was ranked among the top 9% in America.

The district has been ranked among the top school districts in the nation by Niche.com. Bergenfield was recognized as 1,056th in the nation, 61st in the state, and 15th in Bergen County in the "[2027 Best School Districts in America](#)" rankings.

The "2027 Best School Districts in America" rankings include data on over 11,500 public school districts in 50 states and the District of Columbia. School districts across America were ranked based on seven factors.

The factors considered for the 2027 ranking were academics, culture & diversity, parent/student surveys on overall experience, teacher, clubs & activities, resources & facilities, and sports.

CALLING ALL VETERANS



Flags on display at BHS (photo: Dr. Tully).

Calling all Bergenfield military veterans: The annual Veterans Appreciation Day Ceremony will take place on November 11, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. on the BHS Athletic Field, located at 80 S. Prospect Avenue, Bergenfield, NJ. Veterans should contact Kristi Hamilton at 201-385-8020 or khamilton@bergenfield.org to RSVP.