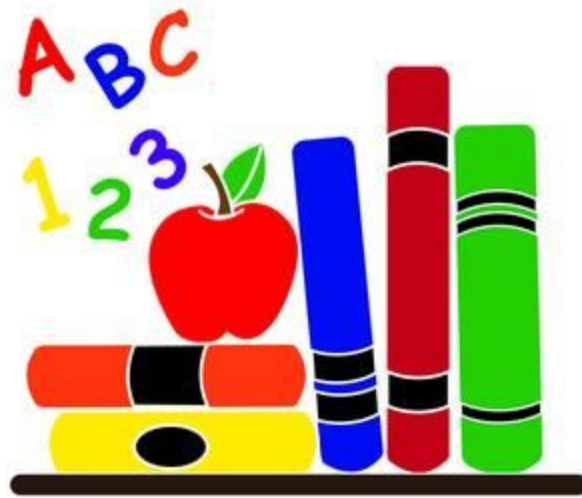


Berlin Elementary School

Family Handbook

2018-2019



*53 School Street
Berlin, NY 12022*

Mrs. Tracy Kent, Principal
tkent@berlincentral.org

Phone: 518-658-1500, press 3 Fax: 518-658-0482

Updated September 2018



Dear Parents,

Welcome to Berlin Elementary School! We are excited to work with you and your children to make this an enjoyable school year. We have prepared this handbook to assist you with the details of our school; we hope that you find it helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact the school with any questions you might have. We want to work with you to make your family's experience a positive one.

We look forward to working with you this school year, and encourage you to get involved. We have a wonderful PTO that does so much to support the school community. Please consider attending the monthly PTO meetings. We become better each year because of the contributions of our families and staff!

Sincerely,

Tracy Kent, Principal

Berlin Elementary School Staff Directory

Name	Position	Email Address
Erin Jenkins	Pre-K	ejenkins@berlincentral.org
Kimberly Macica	Pre-K	kmacica@berlincentral.org
Kasey Hannigan	Kindergarten	khannigan@berlincentral.org
Katie Hooks	Kindergarten	khooks@berlincentral.org
Fran Mason	Kindergarten	fmason@berlincentral.org
Deanna Hansen	Special Education	dhansen@berlincentral.org
Kelly Berkau	First Grade	kberkau@berlincentral.org
Dan Dobbins	First Grade	ddobbins@berlincentral.org
Tracie Heinrichs	First Grade	theinrichs@berlincentral.org
Nancy Bielas	Special Education	nbielas@berlincentral.org
Stephanie Henry	Special Education	shenry@berlincentral.org
Karyn Healy	Second Grade	khealy@berlincentral.org
Lauren Nichols	Second Grade	lnichols@berlincentral.org
Courtney Bersaw	Special Education	cbersaw@berlincentral.org
Bill Bourquard	Third Grade	wbourquard@berlincentral.org
Jessica Rontey	Third Grade	jrontey@berlincentral.org
Tracy Peter-Hoen	Third Grade	tpeter@berlincentral.org
Vivian Healy	Special Education	vhealy@berlincentral.org
Stephanie Kneer	Fourth Grade	skneer@berlincentral.org
Megan Laz	Fourth Grade	mlaz@berlincentral.org
Gretchen Ruebel	Fourth Grade	gruebel@berlincentral.org
Kristopher Moseley	Special Education	kmoseley@berlincentral.org
Matt Turetsky	Fifth Grade	mturetsky@berlincentral.org
Laura Witbeck	Fifth Grade	lwitbeck@berlincentral.org
Brenda DeMagistris	Fifth Grade	bdemagistris@berlincentral.org
Danielle Wilson	Special Education	dwilson@berlincentral.org
Christine Walsh	Science K-5	cwalsh@berlincentral.org
Michele Doyle	Reading Specialist	mdoyle@berlincentral.org
Colleen Foody	Reading Specialist	cfoody@berlincentral.org
Adriana Rizzo	Math Specialist	arizzo@berlincentral.org
Stephanie Scanlon	Math Specialist/Special Education	swinner@berlincentral.org
Kat Labnon	General Music/Chorus	klabnon@berlincentral.org
Kasson Sauer	Physical Education	ksauer@berlincentral.org
Stacy Sausville	Physical Education	ssausville@berlincentral.org
Michelle MacDonald	Art	mmacdonald@berlincentral.org
Bethanie Keem	Instrumental Music	bkeem@berlincentral.org
Jennifer Mitchell	Library Media Specialist	jmitchell@berlincentral.org
Heather Riccardi	Speech/Language Therapist	hriccardi@berlincentral.org
Kim Wynants	Speech/Language Therapist	kwynants@berlincentral.org
Ryan Steller	School Counselor	rsteller@berlincentral.org
Amy Donohue	Response to Intervention	adonohue@berlincentral.org
Rachel Teplitsky	School Psychologist	rteplitsky@berlincentral.org
Jeffrey Williams	Instructional Technology	jwilliams@berlincentral.org
Samantha Brewer	Director of Exceptional Education	sbrewer@berlincentral.org
Fred Hutchinson	Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	fhutchinson@berlincentral.org

Main Office

Toni Dolan
Heather Barto

Teaching Assistants

Sue DiNova
Sherry Homiak
Angela Hartshorn
Linda Meyer
Mandy Bailey

Occupational Therapy

Stephanie Hover
Hillary Ferris

Custodial Staff

Cindy Hanger
Carol Jones
Peter Jones
Beulah Saunders

Buildings & Grounds

Cyril Grant - Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds
Lori Christian
Daryl Maxon
Bill Osterhout

Health Office

TBD - RN
Kathy Mason-Wager - LPN

School Monitors

Brandi Yerdon
Alisha Garhartt
Liz Nichols
Jennifer Bushway

Physical Therapy

Megan Ortolano

Cafeteria Staff

Nancy Bowman
Jennifer Yerdon
Beth Oakes

Attendance

Daily attendance in school is directly related to a student's ability to benefit from instruction through class participation and completion of required assignments. Good attendance is essential for steady student progress.

In the event that your student is absent, please call the school to notify us of the absence. When the student returns to school, they **must** have a note stating the reason for the absence or it will be considered unexcused. The school will make phone calls to follow up on students who are not present in school each day. Absences are considered excused only for the following reasons:

- Personal illness
- Sickness or death in family

- Medical Appointments
- Court Appearances
- Religious Observance
- Quarantine
- Supervised Education Project
- Approved cooperative work program
- Impassable Roads or Adverse Weather Conditions
- Military Obligation
- Pre-approved college visits for high school juniors and seniors
- Such other reasons as may be approved or permitted by the Commissioner of Education

Chronic unexcused absences and tardiness are disruptive to the educational process. The following procedures have been established by the Board of Education to address such situations.

1. 5 days absent - letter to parents
2. 10 days absent – letter to parents
3. 15 days absent – letter to parents, meeting with school counselor and principal to discuss circumstances of the absences if needed
4. 20 days absent – letter to parents advising that Child Protective Services (CPS) may be contacted
5. 25 days absent – Referral to Child Protective Services

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Bus Arrival:	8:40 - 9:00 AM
Breakfast:	Upon Arrival
School Day:	9:00 – 3:00 PM
Parent Pick Up:	3:00 PM
Bus Dismissal:	3:05 - 3:15 PM

Students begin to arrive at 8:40 AM. Please do not drop students off at school prior to 8:40 AM, as there is no supervision. Students that arrive prior to 9:00 AM will not be considered tardy and do not need to be signed in. Classes begin at 9:00 AM. Any student arriving after 9:00 AM is considered tardy and must be signed in at the Main Office.

Dismissal for students that are being picked up begins at 3:00 PM. Parents must send in a note to indicate that their child will be picked up and the student must be signed out in the Main Office.

New Procedure for Parent Pick ups - All students who are being picked up will be called to the Main Hallway at 3:00 PM and must check in with the teacher on duty and be seated. Students may only be dismissed by the teacher once their parent has arrived and signed them out. This procedure is being implemented to improve the safety of our students during this busy time. Thank you for your cooperation.

Any change to a student's dismissal routine (early dismissal or bus change) **must be communicated to the Main Office by note or phone call before 2:00 PM**. The office gets very busy at the end of the day, and we appreciate your cooperation with this matter.

All drop offs and pick ups must be done at the front entrance to the building. **Cars are not permitted behind the building during school hours for safety reasons.** Thank you for your cooperation.

Art

Students in grades Pre-K through 5 attend Art class once per week. Student art work is collected throughout the school year and stored in a portfolio which will be sent home at the end of the school year.

It is recommended that each student bring in an old shirt to be used as a smock. Extra help is often needed to assist with art projects and prepare supplies. If you are interested in helping with the art program, please email Michelle MacDonald at mmacdonald@berlincentral.org.

Band

Playing a musical instrument is an important milestone in your child's life! Instruments are a healthy and creative outlet of expression, a new adventure in learning and growing, an individual and team endeavor, and a gift that keeps on giving!

Our Instrumental Music Program at BES is offered to students in grades 4 and 5. Students in this program are matched with a Band instrument of their liking, and learn to play their chosen instrument during their 4th and 5th grade years. Students receive 1 small group half hour lesson per week, and 1 full group Band rehearsal per week. Students showcase their growing skills and talents in 2 concerts per year, and have other showcase opportunities available as well (such as Parade Band, special events, etc.). Most instruments are provided by the school for a modest \$10 CareKit fee per year, or your family may rent, purchase, or use an instrument you may already have in your family.

Music is for everyone to enjoy, and this program is open to ALL 4th and 5th graders! Please join us on our exciting musical adventure! For questions about the program, please contact Bethanie Keem at bkeem@berlincentral.org.

Emergency Contact Information

Please be sure to notify the Main Office of any changes in your contact information. This is especially important in the event of an emergency or illness.

Dress Code

We encourage students to take pride in their attire as it relates to the school setting. Students are to dress in a manner that, in addition to the following guidelines, takes into consideration the safety, health, and welfare of self and others, and does not disrupt the learning environment.

Clothing Guidelines

- Sneakers or sturdy form fitting shoes are recommended for the school day. Backless or high-heeled shoes are not permitted.
- Undergarments should be covered at all times.
- Extremely brief shorts and short skirts are not appropriate for school.
- Halter and thin strapped tops are not permitted.
- Hats, caps, hoods, and other headwear may not be worn during the school day unless for school-sponsored activities.

If students do not adhere to the guidelines above, they may be asked to modify their appearance by covering, removing, or replacing a garment.

Electronics

Students may **not** bring personal electronic devices to school. This includes cell phones, tablets, ipads, MP3 players, and gaming devices. Such devices create a disruption to the learning environment. If a student is found to have an electronic device, they will be asked to keep it at home. If they continue to bring it to school, the teacher may take the device and ask that a parent pick it up at school.

Student Emergency Contact Profile Sheet

On the first day of school, students will receive a Student Emergency Contact Profile Sheet. Please be sure to complete all necessary information and return to school as soon as possible. **Please notify the school of any changes.**

Field Trips

Each year many of our classes are able to take field trips. Such trips are considered an extension of the school program being offered. Field trips are a privilege, students may lose the privilege of a field trip if their behavior is not appropriate. Individual classroom

teachers are responsible for planning these trips. Parents must sign a permission slip for their child to attend any field trip.

Students must ride the district provided transportation to/from all field trips. Siblings may not attend field trips.

Food Service Program

Berlin Elementary School operates a food service program to provide a nutritious well-balanced breakfast/lunch for students. The cost of breakfast is \$ 1.60 and the cost of lunch is \$ 2.30. Milk is available for .60 cents.

Children from households that meet federal income guidelines are eligible for free meals or reduced price meals. The cost of reduced breakfast is \$.25 and the reduced price for lunch is \$.25. To apply for free or reduced priced meals, submit a Direct Certification letter from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance OR complete a 2018-2019 application for Free and Reduced Price Meals. Applications are available on the school website as well as the Main Office.

The district utilizes a point of sale system called Nutrikids. The system tracks all purchases made by students and allows parents access to their child's transactions. For more information, please visit the District's web page or go to www.mynutrikids.com.

Health Office

Welcome to the Health Office.

School Nurse: Michele Corsey, RN Health Office Assistant: Kathy Mason-Wager, LPN

Phone Numbers:

BES 518-658-1500, ext. 3007 or 3008

MS/HS 518-658-1500, ext. 1060 or 1061

Attendance Policy - Attendance at school is extremely important and necessary for success in school. However, please keep your child home if he or she is experiencing any of the following:

1. Temperature of 100 degrees or higher
2. Vomiting or diarrhea
3. Has an uncontrollable cough or green discharge coming from their nose
4. An unexplained rash that is itchy, appears to be spreading, and or it has appeared on other family members or friends

Your child should be without symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. If a student is not well enough to remain in school, a parent or guardian will be contacted to provide or arrange transportation home.

When to expect a call home - The health office sees many children throughout the day for a variety of reason. YOU should expect a call home when,

1. Your child has a fever greater than 100 degrees, has vomited or is generally sick.
2. Your child is injured and the health office feels further evaluation is needed, or the health office has determined you, as a parent may want to be informed.
3. Lice or nits are found in your child's head - This is a common, but pesky situation. The health office has information that can be sent home on best treatment options if needed. If you receive a call because lice or nits have been found, please make sure to have your child treated before returning to school.
4. Your child visits the health office frequently with the same complaint.
5. The health office does not call home for minor cuts, scrapes, bruises or bumps.

Medication Guidelines

Children may need medication for headache, pain, fever or general discomfort during the day while at school, either over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol or cough drops, or prescription medication.

All medication **MUST** be brought to school by the parent/guardian. Students are not permitted to transport medication on the bus. Exceptions are Epipens and inhaler with self-carry orders.

Over the counter medications - The health office stocks Tylenol, Ibuprofen, cough drops and Benadryl. In order to administer any medication to your child, the health office must have a written doctor's order AND your signed consent to administer medication at school. Parents are requested to have a doctor sign and complete the medication consent form found on the district's website and return to the health office with the parent's signature.

Prescription medication must meet the following conditions:

1. Must be delivered to school by a parent or guardian.
2. Must be in the original pharmaceutical container.
3. Must have a prescription label indicating name of medication, child's name and date of birth, dosage, time to be administered, and physician's name and date.
4. Must be accompanied by a signed and dated physician's order that includes instructions for administering the medication in school. Parents must also provide a written note of consent for administration of the medication.
5. Must be kept in the Health Office unless otherwise specified by the physician's order. If your child has a self-carry order, he or she may be allowed to carry an inhaler, Epipen, or diabetic supplies.

Regulations regarding medication are a requirement of New York State law and apply to all medications, including inhalers, and over the counter medication such as Tylenol, cough drops, and cough syrups.

Health Appraisals/Physical Exams

Education Law and Article 19 and Regulations of the Commissioner of Education require physical examination of public school students:

1. Entering the district for the first time

2. Students in grades Pre-K or Kindergarten, 1,3,5,7,9, and 11
3. To participate in strenuous activity, such as interscholastic athletics
4. Upon student's request for an employment certificate
5. When conducting an initial evaluation or reevaluation of a student suspected of having a disability or a student with a disability

Physical exams are valid for a period of one year. Any student who has not had the required grade level physical will be provided a health examination at school by the school's physician.

School physicals will be offered on:

BES: Tuesday, December 11, 2018 and Tuesday, May 14, 2019

MS/HS: Tuesday, September 18, 2018, Tuesday, November 13, 2018. Tuesday, March 5, 2019 and Tuesday, May 14, 2019. Dates are subject to change.

Students are encouraged to receive their physical from their private physician. Once your child has had his/her physical completed by a private physician, please send documentation to the health office so our records can be updated. **Physicals obtained by your private physician are accepted for sports participation.** Effective for the 2019-2020 school year, documentation of exam must be completed on the form approved by the Commissioner of Education. This form can be found on the district's website. This will be the only form the district can accept as documentation.

Parent may be present during the physical exam if desired.

Parents of students receiving physical exams in the grades mentioned above are also requested to submit written documentation that your child has had a complete dental examination by a licensed dentist. The certificate should be within the last twelve months and should include the dental health condition of the student and state whether or not the condition of dental health is such that it permits his or her attendance at school.

All required health forms are available on the district website.

Immunizations

NYS Public Health Law states all students must be up to date on immunizations to remain in school. Any student not in compliance with Public Health Law will be excluded from school until documentation of the required immunizations are provided to the Health Office. For families new to the area or who do not have a family doctor, immunizations can be obtained through the Rensselaer County Department of Health, 1600 Seventh Avenue, Troy, NY 12180. Please call 518-270-2655 for clinic hours.

A link to the required immunizations can be found on the district's website.

Please remember that this is a NYS Public Health Law and not a district policy. If you have any questions regarding your child's immunization status, please call the Health Office.

Homework

It is our expectation that parents check their child's planner or homework folder each night. The planner/folder is a useful tool to not only communicate with your child's teacher, but also to be aware of what assignments are due and when. In most grade levels, homework will be assigned daily. Homework is used to practice skills taught that day in class. Depending on the grade level of the child, the time homework should take, the subject areas of homework, and the type of homework will vary. Individual teachers will share their specific homework policies with you. Homework completion is important in order to help your child to succeed.

Intramurals

Berlin Elementary offers morning intramurals for boys and girls in grades 4 and 5. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of intramural sports including soccer, tennis, volleyball, and endurance running to name a few. Intramurals take place on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 8:00 am. Parent drop is required. Our PE teachers, Mrs. Sausville and Mr. Sauer will be coordinating the program with an emphasis on skill development, teamwork and sportsmanship. Additional information and a permission slip will be sent home at the start of the school year.

Library

Students in grades Pre-K through 5 attend a minimum of one library period per week. During this time students engage in lessons on literature, technology, and research skills. At the end of the class they may borrow books to take home and read. Overdue notices will be sent home monthly.

Lost and Found

The lost and found table is located in the main hallway outside of the Health Office. Please check the table regularly. Items not claimed will be donated to charity twice a year.

Music

Students in grades Pre-K through 5 attend General Music class once per week. Students learn basic theory, history, and a variety of musical repertoire through singing, dancing, creative movement, and Orff percussion instruments. Students in grades 4 and 5 have the additional opportunity to choose to learn how to play an instrument as part of the instrumental music program.

Students in grades K-3 perform one choral concert in the spring. Attendance is encouraged and spring attire is suggested. Fourth and Fifth graders are invited to join chorus. They perform one concert in the spring. Chorus members are expected to attend the concert and spring attire is suggested.

New York State Assessments

Students in grades 3-5 will participate in the New York State Testing Program in ELA and Mathematics. Additionally, students in grade 4 will participate in the Grade 4 Science Exam. Exams are administered in the spring and parents will receive additional information as the testing approaches.

Party Invitations

If your child is having a birthday party, please do NOT hand out invitations in school unless your child is inviting the whole class, or all girls, or all boys in the class. If you can only invite a small number of children, we ask that you please distribute the invitations outside of school. This helps to eliminate hurt feelings.

Physical Education

All students in grades K – 5 participate in PE class three times per week as mandated by New York State. Pre-K students receive PE twice a week. Physical Education is a learning environment that encourages psychomotor development in a play or movement exploration setting to promote health and wellness.

Students must be prepared for class with proper footwear in order to participate in PE class. Proper footwear consists of sneakers or tennis shoes which provide sufficient ankle support for running and safe physical activity. Students in grades K-5 are graded based upon their effort in class. Students without proper footwear will be considered unprepared for class. Keeping an extra pair of sneakers in your child's backpack or locker is a great way to ensure they are always prepared for class.

PTO

The PTO brings many wonderful programs and opportunities to our students. Meetings are typically held on the first Tuesday of each month in the Berlin Elementary Library beginning at 6:30 PM. If you would like to become involved in the PTO, please join us at a meeting. There are many opportunities to become involved in the school community.

2018-2019 PTO Officers

Elaine Smith – Co-President
JoAnna Maxon – Co-President
Amy Ovitt – Vice President
Erika Killeen – Secretary
TBD – Treasurer

Recess

Students participate in a 30 minute outdoor recess daily. In the event of inclement weather, recess will be held indoors. Inclement weather refers to rain or temperatures that fall below 20 degrees.

Please send your child properly dressed for outdoor play. During the winter months, children must have a warm coat, hat, mittens, snow pants, and boots. Students are expected to adhere to the rules of the playground in order to ensure their safety.

Report Cards

Students will receive report cards three times per year. The first report card will be given to parents at Parent/Teacher Conferences. The remaining two report cards will be sent home with students. Teachers will schedule individual conferences as needed. Parents are always welcome to contact their child's teacher at any time to schedule a conference.

Safety

Student safety is a priority at Berlin Elementary School. Therefore, we will routinely participate in safety drills to ensure that we are prepared in the event of an actual emergency. These drills include fire drills, lockdowns, duck & cover drills, and emergency evacuations.

School Cancellations/Delays

In the event of inclement weather or other emergency, school may be canceled or delayed. The district will utilize an automated calling system known as School Messenger to notify parents of such delays or closings. You may also consult your local TV station for updated information.

Special Education At Berlin

Special education means specially designed individualized or group instruction or special services or programs to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. The goal of special education is to remove barriers by providing accommodations, modifications, and individualized services that a student with a disability needs to access the general education curriculum. This is done by developing an Individualized Education Plan or IEP.

The services on New York State's continuum include:

- resource room
- consultant teacher (direct and/or indirect)
- integrated co-teaching
- special class
- related services

The disability classifications in New York State are:

- Autism
- Emotional disturbance
- Learning disability
- Other health-impairment
- Traumatic brain injury
- Deafness
- Hearing impairment
- Multiple disabilities
- Speech or language impairment
- Visual impairment (which includes blindness)
- Deaf-blindness
- Intellectual disability
- Orthopedic

If you believe your student may have a disability *that adversely affects their educational performance*, please contact the Office of Exceptional Education. A parent may make a referral for initial evaluation for their student in writing. Someone from the school will then contact the parent regarding the referral and will discuss the options of other general education supports or a consent for evaluation.

Every student with an IEP will have a case manager who will oversee the implementation of the student's IEP. Special education case managers and the Office of Exceptional Education are available as a resource to students, school staff, and families.

The Office of Exceptional Education can be reached at: 518-658-1500 ext. 1148.

Additional Resources:

Berlin Pupil Services website:

<http://berlincentral.org/services/pupil-services/>

New York State education Department Office of Special Education:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/>

NYSED Office of Special Education Publications for Parents:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/parentpubs.htm>

Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD):

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/> - coordinates services for people with developmental disabilities, including school-age children

Transportation

Parents and students have the right to expect safe bus transportation to and from school. The driver's primary concern is student safety. Therefore, violations of appropriate school bus behavior are taken seriously. Students who consistently misbehave and cause the driver to be distracted will be given a referral. The referral is completed by the driver and sent to the building principal. Possible consequences may include a verbal warning, parent notification, or loss of recess. In the event of a serious infraction of the bus rules, a student

may be suspended from bus transportation. A suspension of riding privileges **IS NOT** a suspension from school. Students who are removed from the bus have the obligation to attend school.

Student Expectations on the Bus

	Responsible	Safe	Respectful
Bus Voice Level 0-2	-Keep your bus clean -Wait for the driver to signal you to cross -Help one another	-Stay seated at all times -Walking feet to and from the bus -Wear your seatbelt if asked by your driver -Keep the aisle clear	-Listen to the driver and monitor -Stay in your own personal space -Keep your hands, feet and personal belongings to yourself

The transportation department determines bus routes and bus stops. Students are assigned a bus route based on the location of their home. A new daycare form must be completed each year if your child is to be picked up or dropped off at a location other than home.

Visitors

We greatly appreciate the time and effort of our volunteers to support the students and programs at Berlin Elementary School. We ask that all volunteers agree to follow the safety procedures implemented at BES to ensure the safety of all.

- Upon arriving at BES, please ring the buzzer (located to the right of the front door) to gain access to the building.
- Please report directly to the Main Office to sign in and receive a visitor tag
- The classroom you are visiting will be notified of your arrival
- While working with students, volunteers must be under the supervision of the classroom teacher at all times
- Please sign out in the Main Office at the end of your visit