



BBRSD Family and Student Update **September 11, 2020**

Superintendent's Office

Dear Families and Staff,

Today marks an important milestone in history as we recall and remember with sorrow and reverence the fateful day in which 9-11 changed our lives forever. Since then, we have sought to rebuild our nation with resilience and great resolve, always reminded that *we are all in this together*.

In that spirit, we will go forward with the reopening of our schools on Monday, September 14th, knowing that our experience of school has been, and, will be changed significantly this year. With countless hours of planning and preparation, we *will* make this a positive first week for our students. I am truly excited, because I believe that it is the right thing to do, and that *we are all in this together*.

With that being said, I want to share with you some important information. First, please be sure to check our website, www.bbrsd.org, including our main site and individual school sites for ongoing updates as we near the start of the school year. Most logistical questions can be directed to the building principals, who are happy to answer your questions through email or a phone call.

Secondly, for those families in grades 6-12 who are participating in our remote learning platform, *Edgenuity*, we want to let you know that we received word today that our system has been built and completed for us. With that being said, we have immediately begun the necessary next steps to open the platform to our students as soon as possible next week. We will keep parents apprised of progress daily during this time. Please refer to the Curriculum Department Update below for additional information.

Finally, parents in the Berlin and Boylston communities may be aware that we have been working with parents throughout the summer on both the re-entry plans and communication. These parents have served as liaisons between the administration and the parent community, often sharing ideas, perspectives, and informing us of concerns and questions that have arisen on social media so that we may address them appropriately and in a timely manner. Most recently, the parents who serve on our Parent Communication Committee created an informative PowerPoint presentation whose purpose is to clarify confusion about language used for the re-entry plans, and to provide guidance on possible options for student learning.

This week, members of our Parent Communication Committee crafted a collaborative letter to all of our families as we near the start of the school year. I would like to publicly thank them and, in closing, share that letter with you:

Dear Parents,

Since late June, parents representing students across all Berlin-Boylston Regional School District (BBRSD) schools have been working with teachers and administrators on the school reopening plans for the academic year 2020-2021 amid the ongoing threat of COVID-19. Through this unique lens, we've not only watched, but have contributed and relayed parents' questions, worries, and observations as the BBRSD leadership team worked through the myriad of logistical, transportation, and school social distancing challenges to plan for September's re-opening.

Throughout the process, it has been clear that the health and safety of our children is the paramount concern as the district re-opens. Those of us in the Zoom meetings and chats have seen the district's attention and care in balancing effective education options with ensuring a safe learning environment.

The start of any school year can elicit anxiety but when we add this normal stress to a global pandemic, unprecedented school safety plans, and new remote/on-line learning methods it can sometimes feel like a recipe for frustration and chaos. While teachers and administrators have thought through the plans and some scenarios, we'll undoubtedly have questions as we work through the 'new normal'.

If you have questions, please submit them to: parentquestions@bbrsd.org. The administration is monitoring that mailbox and will direct your questions to the appropriate person/department to address it as quickly as possible.

Laura Williamson williamsonlk@gmail.com

David McNulty mcnultyb414@gmail.com

Karen Groccia kgroccial@gmail.com

Respectfully,

[Jeff Zanghi, Superintendent of Schools](#)

Department of Curriculum and Grants

Additional Technology Support for Students and Parents - If you are struggling with all things Google, please go to: www.bbrsd.org/tech where you will find videos and articles available. Thanks to Wes Swenson at Tahanto for providing these resources. Wes will be offering a virtual training session for parents on Thursday, September 24th at 7:00pm and Tuesday, September 29th at 4:00pm. Please come if you have questions or challenges in learning to navigate these tools!

Edgenuity Platform Sign-Up Deadline (Grades 6-12) - For students considering remote learning through the Edgenuity Platform in grades 6-12, the deadline for registration and withdrawals will be Friday, September 18th.

At this time, I would like to welcome back Mrs. Jessica Gallagher who will serve as the District Administrative Coordinator for the Berlin-Boylston School District. Mrs. Gallagher, who has served in previous years as our Tahanto Title I Tutor, will be responsible for coordinating efforts between the District and *Edgenuity*, maintaining attendance and participation data, serving as a contact person for students and parents, and ensuring that the program runs smoothly at all levels.

For students and parents using the *Edgenuity* platform, please be on the lookout this evening for an email and Zoom link to afternoon meetings with Mrs. Gallagher on Monday, September 14th. Mrs. Gallagher would like to meet with as many students (and their parents) as possible in order to introduce herself, the platform, and to learn more about all of you.

[Carol Costello, Director of Curriculum and Grants](#)

Business Office

Food Service Update

Following up on last week's update, below is the order form for "Remote Meals" meals for the 1st week of school for students during their remote learning days. This form will need to be completed weekly.

[Remote Meals Order Form](#)

For students that are remote on Monday-Tuesday, pickup is Monday from 12:00 to 1:00 pm. For students that are remote on Thursday-Friday, pickup is Wednesday from 12:00 to 1:00 pm. The pickup location is Tahanto for all schools, and there will be signage on site to direct you to where to go.

Please reach out directly to Director of Food Services, Lauren Staples if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Below are links to each school's web page for School Lunch, with menus and other info.

Tahanto: <https://www.bbrsd.org/domain/277>

Berlin Memorial: <https://www.bbrsd.org/Page/570>

Boylston Elementary: <https://www.bbrsd.org/domain/278>

Bus route update

A large number of requests have been received to add students to the bus routes after the preliminary routes were published. These are nearly all completed, with the remainder expected to be completed tomorrow AM. We will still be within the 25 student limit on each bus, however, it is taking time to process these additions, and delaying the review of other bus

inquiries, including requests to change bus stop locations. The majority of requests related to changing stop locations have not been reviewed yet by the bus company. I will be following up with the bus company next week on any pending bus related requests and a response will be sent to parents after those requests are reviewed.

The bus company is working to provide a revised list of route sheets for each bus and cohort, and the District expects to receive and post those by the end of the day Friday, September 10. Routes can be accessed via the link below.

[Bus Routes Web Page](#)

[Bob Conry, Director of Finance and Operations](#)

Pupil Personnel Department

SEPAC

Monday, September 21st at 6:30pm, the Berlin-Boylston SEPAC will hold an Online General Meeting to start the new school year. To join, send a message to: info.bbrsd.sepac@gmail.com for more details. For more information: [BBRSD SEPAC Website](#).

DESE Resources

In addition to the material for district leaders, DESE has posted back-to-school resources for parents at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/backtoschool/>, including a link to the same video as above, an [FAQ tailored to parents](#),

[Karen Molnar, Director](#)

Technology Department

If you have not yet done so, please fill out the Technology Form for your student (1 per student) which can be found here: <https://forms.gle/wXgwE6ekzo5nFz7g6>

[Paul Mara, Director of Technology](#)

Boylston Elementary School

Frequently Asked Questions:

We had a great town hall meeting last night! Lots of questions and hopefully lots of answers. If you missed it, there is a link to the video [here](#). A few questions that have come up since or were asked at the time but I didn't have answers for are below.

What am I supposed to know about Chromebooks? I know there has been confusion and questions around our plans for technology this year. My apologies for this. As a district, we pivoted to a 1:1 plan (a device for every student) as we saw the demand increase. The plan in a nutshell is - everyone can have a Chromebook. We started deploying them today for those who are fully remote and those in cohort B that expressed the need. Moving forward, students will receive their Chromebook when they come to school. These will be able to be transported home. In some of the lower grades, it may take a bit longer until they are deployed and there will be less need for them to routinely return to school. We will need parents to complete [this form](#) before they will be able to take the device home.

How can the kids (especially our youngest students) bring in all of those supplies if parents aren't coming in? I'd recommend sending things in a little at a time. They're not going to need all of it on the first day of school or even the first week. You may want to hold onto some of those extra glue sticks at home too for the remote days. I can't tell you a specific number, we're still figuring this out along with you. Use your best judgment and if the kids can't carry it, it can wait another day.

When should I keep my student home? We have a [link](#) for that. Every morning you should monitor your child for fever, cough, and other symptoms outlined in the checklist. If the answer to ANY of the questions is yes then you should keep them home.

If it is raining, will the bus windows still be open? Basically yes. If the weather is very bad the windows may be open just a sliver but priority will be given to maintaining airflow. I'd encourage kids to keep their raincoats on the bus. I'm sorry.

What is for lunch? Someone asked me at the town hall last night when the lunch menu would be posted. Turns out it already was! It can be found on the left-hand side of the website [here](#).

Can my child bring their lunch box to school? Yes. Students can bring anything they need to carry their lunch and snacks. They will be responsible for bringing it too and from the gym-teria...or cafe-nasium....lunchroom, so cross-contamination is not a concern.

If I'm using a school Chromebook can I buy a carrying case for it? Yes. You can but it isn't required. That is actually a great idea! For your shopping purposes, the Chromebooks are Dell and either 11.6" or 11".

What will it look like when kids are in the building? I'm glad you asked! Thanks to our wonderful staff, a few student volunteers, and WBAC we have a video for that:

BES Back to School from WBAC - Boylston, MA on [Vimeo](#).

We have put a lot of thought into preparing the kids to come back to school. Teachers spent the last few weeks planning and reaching out to families. We talked about how to help kids acclimate to new rules and expectations. The video above runs through a day, but this video below was a

fun staff collaboration reminding kids about social distancing. Remember, we are a PBIS school. That means we work to explain expectations and then reinforce them. This is a sample lesson on social distancing. All the parents from the '80s will recognize the tune and the kids from the '20s will recognize the teachers :)

On Sunday night around 6:00, the night before the first day of school, I am going to give a live read aloud. I'm doing this for two reasons. First, there is a great book, "A Little Spot Wears a Mask" by Diane Alber that might help prepare and educate students about the how and why of masks. Secondly, I am experimenting with YouTube streaming. On Monday, at around 8:40, or whenever we get all the students into the building I will start streaming our morning announcements each day using this method. We'll announce special events and birthdays. It's a great way for all the kids, even at home, to start off the day with a familiar routine. The school channel can be found [here](#).

- Monday 9/14
 - First Day in BES for Cohort A!
 - First Day remotely for Cohort B!
- Tuesday 9/15
 - Football season is coming and this year we will celebrate on Tuesdays and Friday! Patriots Day!
- Wednesday 9/16
 - First Day with everyone Remote!
- Thursday 9/17
 - First Day in BES for Cohort B!
- Friday 9/18
 - Celebrate the first week of school!
 - Patriots Day!

[**Ace Thompson, Principal BES**](#)

Berlin Memorial School

Opening Day is finally here!

Teachers and staff have been working hard to get us ready to finally have children back in the building. It has been WAY too long. Here are a few things you will need to know as we begin a new school year.

Morning Drop off

I know that bus routes are still being tweaked – I will send out an email as soon as we have a final draft of that. I think, just like every other first day – it will be safe to assume that buses will run a bit behind schedule the first couple of days. If you are dropping your child off, the traffic

pattern is the same, but we are going to have children enter the building just a few at a time, so please wait until an adult indicates it is your turn to leave the car. This too will probably take longer, so plan accordingly.

Afternoon Pick up

Buses will roll at dismissal time, and may well run *ahead* of schedule, so please keep an eye out for your child. Parent pick up, as you may already know, will be different as well. We will be sending kids out a few at a time, so please anticipate a bit of a delay. We are working out the final kinks in the School Dismissal Manager program but have a back-up plan just in case.

Lunch

Lunch will be served in our gym, so that students can be seated 6 feet apart, and will feature the usual options. Please remember to sign up for, or add money to, your child's [My School Bucks](#) account. You can find more information on that by clicking [here](#). You can also find the lunch menus for Cohorts A and B in the same spot.

Chromebooks

Students in grades 1-5 will be issued Chromebooks on the first day they come to school, as long as a parent has completed the form you can find [here](#). A charger will come with the device. A few things to remember:

- Because we are sending chargers home, there won't be many left here. Please remember to charge the Chromebook before it goes to school.
- Please let us know as soon as possible if there is a problem with your Chromebook so that we can resolve that issue.
- Cohort B kids (starting on Thursday) will not need a device for Monday – Wednesday this week. Teachers will be sending home a project to start the year.

We held a BMS Town Hall Meeting last Wednesday evening, and talked about a variety of topics related to our return to school. If you did not get a chance to attend, need to look back for information, or are just having trouble sleeping and are looking for something to lull you into unconsciousness, you can find the video replay of that [here](#). (You can skip the first minute or so if you aren't interested in my visit to family back in beautiful Buffalo)

Finally, we have a video that some of our staff and students participated in to give you a visual sense of what school will look like when we return. You can find that video [here](#).

The first day of school is always a challenge, and this year will be no different. Just know that everyone here is working as hard as they can so that your child can feel safe and cared for as the 2020-21 school year begins.

I'll be watching email all weekend, please don't hesitate to reach out if you need something.

[John Campbell, Principal BMS](#)

Tahanto Regional Middle High School



Tahanto Today September 11, 2020



Dear,

We want to welcome everyone to the 2020-2021 school year. Certainly, this school year will look very different than our “typical” school year but with change comes opportunities. Our faculty and staff have been working hard to prepare for the different modes of learning that will be taking place. The building is ready to welcome those that are choosing the hybrid model and we are in constant contact with our Edgenuity liaison to get our platform built for our all remote learners. Regardless of what learning model our families have chosen, we are here to support you!

Everyone has been working tirelessly to prepare for the re-opening and we want to thank everyone for their patience and understanding as we implement our re-entry plan. Patience, kindness, and adaptability will be keywords to live by this school year.

Here’s to a school year filled with health and positivity!

Go Stags!

Diane & Sally

Edgenuity Update

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For students and parents using the *Edgenuity* platform, please be on the lookout this evening for an email and Zoom link to afternoon meetings with Mrs. Gallagher on Monday, September 14th. Mrs. Gallagher would like to meet with as many students (and their parents) as possible in order to introduce herself, the platform, and to learn more about all of you.

The First Day of School is Monday, September 14th

School will begin for all hybrid students on Monday, September 14th at 7:35 a.m.

Week of 9/14/20-9/18/20 ODD WEEK (High School Only) *

Cohort A (Last name A-LeB) you are at Tahanto in person on Monday & Tuesday and remote Wednesday-Friday

Cohort B (Last name Lee-Z) you are remote Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and at Tahanto in person on Thursday & Friday

Hybrid Schedule

Times	Monday Day 1	Tuesday Day 2	Wednesday Day 3	Thursday Day 4	Friday Day 5
7:35-9:05	1	5	1 (7:35-8:23)	1	5
9:05-10:35	2	6	2 (8:28-9:19)	2	6
10:35-12:35	3	7	3 (9:24-10:12)	3	7
12:35-2:15	4	8	4 (10:17-11:00)	4	8
			5 (11:05-12:40)Class & Lunch		
			6 12:50-1:43)		
			7 1:46-2:15		

* Odd weeks are for high school classes that meet every other day and show on your schedule as meeting (2,3,5 or 1,3,4)

* Even weeks are for high school classes that meet every other day and show on your schedule as meeting (7,8,10 or 6,8,9)

Please remember that whether you are in person or remote your classes will follow the same schedule. The school day runs from 7:35 a.m. until 2:15 p.m.

Hybrid remote students on 9/14 should check their emails for Google Classroom invitations from their teachers. Each teacher will also have important information posted on their teacher's website.

How to Access Schedules

Select the www.bbrsd.org website

Under Tahanto - Select "For Students"

Select Powerschool Login

Username and password login will appear. If you forgot your username or password, please send Mrs. Esposito an email to have it reset at besposito@bbrsd.org.

Once you are logged in click "my schedule" located on the left side of the screen and choose Matrix view to view your schedule.

For Parents

Select the www.bbrsd.org website

Under Tahanto - Select "For Parents"

Select Powerschool Login

Username and password login screen will appear. If you forgot your username or password or need to create one, please send Mrs. Esposito an email to have it reset or setup at besposito@bbrsd.org.

Once you are logged in click "my schedule" located on the left side of the screen and choose Matrix view to view your schedule.

Scheduling Issues

Our school counselors are working hard to fix scheduling problems, however, they do have over 250 students on their caseloads and are working their way through their emails and phone calls. We are asking the following when requesting a schedule change.

- If you have a hole in your schedule, please wait until you are in person during that period to come to the counseling office.
- If your request is to drop a class you can email your counselor but please understand that it may take up to 2 days for your counselor to respond to your request.

What Do I Bring To School On My First Day?

In-Person:

- **Masks**
- **Charged Personal Laptop/Chromebook if you are not borrowing one from the school. Those in Cohort A who are borrowing a Chromebook for the school year need to sign the electronic form and will receive a Chromebook in school on Monday. Cohort B's Chromebook pick-up was today from 8-2 at Tahanto. If you missed it please contact Mrs. Boudreau at sboudreau@bbrsd.org**
- **Earbuds/headphones**
- **Filled water bottle(s)**

- **Backpack with a notebook and a pen/pencil**
- **Lunch if not buying one from school**
- **A HUGE SMILE**

Hybrid Remote

- **Check your school email prior to 7:35 a.m. for your Google Classroom invite from your teachers**
- **Charged Chromebook and/or computer ready to go!**
- **Earbuds/Headphones**
- **Follow your schedule throughout the day**
- **A HUGE SMILE**

Tahanto Safety Information Video

Please click on the link below to view the bus, hallway, classroom, nurses' office, and lunch safety information and changes for the 2020-2021 school year.

[Tahanto Safety Information Video 2020-2021](#)

Attendance

Following the guidance from DESE, attendance will be taken in each class every day. As in a typical school year, we understand that students may need to be "absent." We ask that parents follow the same protocol and call the Nurses office at 508-869-2333 ext. 2303 to report a student's absence. **This includes those students who are hybrid remote for the day if they cannot attend their remote classes.**

School Nurse Information

[Mandatory Daily Parent Screening Health Checklist](#)

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Tahanto Arrival and Dismissal Information



Please understand that these procedures for arrival and dismissal have been put into place based upon DESE and CDC guidelines for safe school re-entry.

Arrival (Students will not be allowed in the building until 7:20 a.m.)

7:20-7:35 Buses arrive at Tahanto

7:25-7:35 Student drop-off and students who have parking spaces

Please note that no student can be dropped off by a parent/guardian prior to 7:25

Once in the building students will report directly to their first scheduled class of the day

Dismissal

2:05-Seniors who drive personal vehicles

2:10- We will begin dismissing those students who are taking the bus by bus number

2:15-Students who are being picked up by parent/guardian (**parents/guardians will not be able to line-up for pick-up until 2:15**)

All students must leave the school campus (unless participating in fall athletics) by 2:30 p.m.

Athletics

Welcome back, everyone. Athletics in Central MA is set to begin at the end of next week. Soccer, Field Hockey, Cross Country, and Golf have been cleared for the Fall Season. Registration at Tahanto opened Labor Day and will continue through next Wednesday, September 16. There will be no middle school

sports this year. We will also hold off on athletic fees. They will be due after our teams are set through tryouts, and before the first contests.

The plan is to have tryouts begin on Friday, September 18, however, because of logistics, they may start on the following Monday. Athletics will look much different this year. There will be many different modifications put in place from various state health agencies to keep our athletes safe. These modifications will be strictly enforced in practices and games.

We are doing our best to get these kids involved and engaged out on the playing fields. This season will be different than any other we have seen. It is 100% about getting the student-athletes out there to have a positive experience and get back to some sort of normalcy.

The schedules still are yet to be completed. However, we do know that contests will begin the week of October 5th. Practice times for our sports are still being worked out. However, when it comes to games and practices, if you are remote, or at school, families will have to get their athletes to school for practice, home games, or the bus for away games. For golf, you will need to get your child to the course.

There will be more updates coming to you next week. Plus bear with us as we do our best to have a successful Fall season.

Matt Porcaro
Athletic Director
Tahanto Regional
mporcaro@bbrsd.org

For the latest information regarding fall athletics please click on the link below
[Tahanto Athletics](#)

[Diane Tucceri, Principal](#)
[Sally Stukuls, Assistant Principal](#)
