



# Employee Handbook

**Bergen County Technical Schools District  
Bergen County Special Services School District**

[www.bergen.org](http://www.bergen.org)

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## **DISCLAIMER**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide descriptive information and practical guidance to new and current District employees. It supersedes any prior handbook. This handbook is not a contract of employment. No information contained in this handbook should be construed as a contract of employment or guarantee of continued employment.

This handbook does not supersede any individual employment contract or collectively negotiated agreement. Neither this handbook nor any other guideline, policy or practice of the Board of Education creates an employment contract.

No one is authorized to provide any employee with an employment contract or special arrangement concerning the terms or conditions of employment unless the contract or arrangement is in writing and signed by the Superintendent of Schools and is formally approved by the Board of Education.

This handbook does not create an express or implied contract or guarantee employment for any length of time or under any particular condition or any special arrangement.

This notice applies to employees of the Bergen County Technical Schools District and Bergen County Special Services School District regardless of date of hire.



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BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOLS/SPECIAL SERVICES

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District Administrative Office

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**Howard Lerner, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

Dear Staff Member,

Welcome to the Bergen County Technical Schools and Special Services School Districts. It is my pleasure to wish you every success in your new position with us. You are now a member of an educational institution with a proud history and a bright and promising future.

As a component of our success, we depend on the dedicated efforts of all employees working together to provide the best possible education for our students. Both Districts are committed to the principles and values expressed in their Vision and Mission Statements. We are all working together toward the common goal of providing our students with excellent educational services and opportunities. Our focus is on the important role that each and every employee has in the development of self-fulfilled and accomplished students.

At the Bergen County Technical Schools and Special Services School Districts we are extremely proud of the special type of education that our employees provide. The fine reputation we enjoy has been achieved through a strong sense of teamwork with respect for the rights and feelings of fellow employees, our students and their families. The contribution of each employee, regardless of position, is vital to our continued success.

Our employee handbook is designed to provide you with an overview of the Districts that will help you during your term of employment. The information about the policies, benefits, procedures and opportunities available will guide you in performing to the best of your abilities and developing and realizing your potential as one of our valued employees. Please be sure to read this handbook carefully. If you have any questions the Human Resources Department or your supervisor will be happy to assist you.

I look forward to meeting you and wish you good luck and success.

Very truly yours,

Howard Lerner, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## **PURPOSE**

The District developed this handbook to provide all employees with information concerning mutual expectations and the District educational community. It is based on policies and regulations adopted and issued by the Board, which are governed by federal, state and local laws. Please read the handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. Your supervisor or a member of the Human Resources Department will be glad to help you if you need more information.

The provisions of this handbook apply to all employees of the Bergen County Technical Schools and Special Services School Districts unless stated otherwise. A portion of each District's employees is covered by various collective bargaining agreements. To the extent that the terms of a collective bargaining agreement differ from the terms contained in this handbook, the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement will take precedence with respect to employees covered by it.

The District reserves the right to add, delete and/or revise any policies, regulations or other provisions set forth in this handbook. The District also reserves the right to add, delete or revise programs, plans, benefits or administrative guides as may be deemed appropriate at any time without reissuing any portion of this handbook. It is the responsibility of each employee to remain informed as to all such changes.

The Employee Handbook is available online on the District's website at [www.bergen.org](http://www.bergen.org).

## **GOAL**

### **Excellence in Educational Service**

Realizing the mission of the Bergen County Technical Schools District and the Bergen County Special Services School District is to exceed the expectations of our community in the educational services we deliver.

### **The Districts' Commitments**

- Maintaining the highest level of educational service performance by seeking the best qualified teaching and student support staff available;
- Maintaining the highest level of process/system needs to support educational service excellence; and
- Maintaining the highest level of managerial skills necessary to provide educational service excellence.

## STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

### **Personal and Professional Excellence**

Follow the goal of the District – Exceed Expectations.

- Anticipate and be sensitive to the needs of the members of the District community and respond quickly to requests, inquiries or problems.
- Involve yourself and encourage others to actively participate in District-sponsored programs whenever possible.
- Conduct meetings and conferences in offices or conference rooms, not in hallways or other public areas.
- Orient and train new staff members. Be supportive by offering help and set an example of cooperation.
- Be aware of responsibilities and complete all assignments.
- Give and receive feedback in a private and constructive manner.
- Demonstrate poise and emotional control under stressful conditions.
- Schedule meetings realistically to eliminate waiting, and allow time for people to get to consecutive meetings. Start and end meetings as scheduled.
- Know and practice the Districts' principles of our educational services philosophy.
- Be cognizant of District services, programs, policies and procedures.
- Be responsible for actively contributing to performance improvement.
- Volunteer to share expertise.
- Ask, if you do not know.

### **Employee Relations Philosophy**

- You are responsible and accountable for treating all employees in a non-discriminatory manner. Each employee should be treated with dignity and respect; harassment will not be tolerated.
- You can expect to work in a positive work climate. All employees are responsible and accountable for contributing to this environment within their District.
- All employees are afforded a procedure for grieving management decisions thought to be unfair or unjust. Please see "GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE" in the Employee Information section of the Handbook.
- All employees should report any incident of discrimination or harassment to their supervisor.
- The Human Resources Department maintains an "open door" policy with respect to any problems and/or issues concerning District employment practices, policies and procedures.

## **Commitment and Responsibility**

Show trust and respect to and appreciation and support of all co-workers, students, family members and the community at large.

- Show appreciation for everyone's contributions to our students' education.
- Work as a team member, using initiative to help others.
- Follow through with issues and provide feedback to individuals concerned.
- Assume that your co-workers' time is as valuable as your own.
- Return phone calls and respond to inquiries within the same day.
- Be ready to work at the start of the assigned schedule and return from meals and breaks on time.
- Adhere to the District's dress code and display your ID badge visibly at all times.

## **Attitude**

Treat all individuals with respect and kindness regardless of personal likes or dislikes.

- Make eye contact, smile, greet and acknowledge people as you meet or pass them.
- Support, foster and maintain a friendly attitude and a polite manner.
- Represent the District in a positive manner when involved in community activities.
- Listen to and respect opinions that may differ from yours.
- Show self-control in dealing with difficult situations.
- Do not gossip about individuals or the District.
- Respect a family's right to advocate for students.
- Respect the educational community.

## **Communication**

Show interest and concern when speaking with staff, students, family members and the community at large.

- Listen attentively and respond effectively.
- Communicate directly and tactfully with colleagues to resolve specific issues.
- Use names whenever possible; address persons appropriately, e.g., Dr., Mrs., Mr.
- Maintain a moderate tone of voice; never use inappropriate language.
- Be aware of and use positive body language at all times.
- Be aware of and know how to access interpreter services.
- Always identify yourself.

## **Telephone Etiquette**

- Demonstrate appropriate and courteous telephone etiquette; answer promptly, identify yourself and your position.
- Get the caller's permission before putting him or her on hold; thank the caller for holding when you return to that line.
- Do not leave callers on hold for an extended period of time; ask if they wish to remain on hold.
- Use speakerphones only when necessary.
- Offer a caller the option of using the voice mail option if the respondent is unavailable.

## **Caring and Courtesy**

Always offer assistance to students, visitors and staff.

- Escort individuals to their destinations whenever possible.
- Be considerate by minimizing noise levels throughout all District facilities.
- Apologize for problems and inconveniences and/or unmet expectations.
- Stop a non-student activity to fulfill a student need.
- Use common terms of courtesy such as "Please," "Thank You" and "Excuse Me".
- Estimate the duration of any delay and apologize when an individual is kept waiting.
- Take pride in the environment. Promote safety, neatness and cleanliness by reporting hazardous conditions and maintenance problems.
- Place trash and recyclables in appropriate receptacles.

## **Privacy**

Respect the privacy and confidentiality of students, family members, visitors and staff.

- Never discuss student information in the presence of others or in any public areas.
- Knock on the door before entering any room and identify yourself.
- Refrain from intruding on sensitive discussions concerning student matters.
- Confidential information is to be discussed only with appropriate individuals.
- Speakerphones are never to be used when talking with students or family members or discussing other confidential information.



# **BERGEN COUNTY SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Bergen County Special Services School District is to effectively address the unique social, emotional, physical, intellectual and career needs of students by creating positive, stimulating and encouraging learning environments in schools, homes and communities. Through dynamic collaborations with families and partnerships with community resources, the District will enable each learner to realize his or her highest potential and to become a self-directed and contributing member of society.

## **OVERVIEW**

Bergen County Special Services (BCSS) is a unique county-wide public school district that was established through an act passed by the New Jersey Legislature in 1971. Distinguished as the first special services school district in New Jersey, Bergen County is now one of eight such districts funded by the county, state and sending schools.

Students are placed in the least restrictive environment according to developmental and chronological levels. Flexible and highly individualized learning environments are designed to meet individual needs. BCSS offers local school districts a wide range of programs incorporating the most effective and up-to-date technology available to meet the needs of students with diverse learning disabilities. The District also offers an extensive array of services to facilitate the transition from school to adult life, including employment and/or postsecondary education. A team of qualified professionals conducts individual assessments to develop personalized, holistic plans to ensure each student's successful integration into full community living.

The school programs at BCSS are organized into five (5) separate divisions known as continuums. Each continuum includes a broad range of special education classifications, and is designed for students in pre-Kindergarten through the secondary grade level. These include:

### **Autism Continuum**

The Autism Continuum is designed to meet the academic, social, behavioral and vocational needs of students who are classified with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified. Students range in age from three (3) to 21. Learners attending the programs are provided with highly individualized instructional formats based upon the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). These empirically-based teaching methodologies are the most effective educational interventions for learners with autism according to ongoing research efforts. Services include occupational, physical and speech therapies; educational technology; family training; home program coordination; and augmentative communication assessment. Programs include language, social, behavioral,

and academic development. Students enrolled in these programs are usually authorized to substitute the state's Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) for state-required standardized tests.

The secondary program utilizes the support services of a job coach and an industrial arts teacher to assist students with internships and employment in local communities. BCSS holds membership in Autism New Jersey, Inc. (formerly COSAC), and maintains professional connections with the Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center at Rutgers University.

Schools in this continuum include Washington Elementary (Pre-K – 6), Washington @ Emerson (7 – 12), New Bridges Middle School/High School (7 – 12).

### **Behavioral Skills Continuum**

Programs within this continuum are designed for students with emotional and/or learning disabilities who require educational, supportive, and/or ongoing counseling to develop positive social and emotional interactions and ultimately, the ability to self-monitor their personal growth and development. Students learn to assume responsibility for their actions by understanding consequences of behavior, predicting outcomes of behavior, and exercising control of behavior.

Psychological education-oriented sites emphasize that achievement helps to improve self-concept, which in turn leads to greater achievement. Behavior management sites utilize specific external factors such as behavior modification tools. A system of positive behavior management is used to motivate students to gain inner control. A clearly defined behavior monitoring plan establishes baseline behaviors, charts progress and provides systematic intervention.

Several of these programs are located in public schools; therefore, in addition to providing counseling and inclusion options, these settings lend themselves to alternative interventions such as peer tutoring, contracting, student publications, and sports programs. Some of these programs are structured to provide intensive therapeutic intervention, work-based learning experiences, and alternative strategies for learning. Curriculum in these programs is aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards; students participate in all state-mandated testing.

Schools in this continuum include Brownstone School (Pre-School – 8), Evergreen Program (9 – 12), Gateway High School (9 – 12), NOVA Elementary (3 – 6), NOVA North (7 – 12), North Street School (9 – 12), and Venture Program (5 – 12).

### **Communications Continuum**

The Communications Continuum offers programs in Midland Park and Hackensack, and is the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in New Jersey. Children from grades Pre-K through 12 are educated either through an Auditory-Oral or a Total Communication approach. The Auditory-Oral track focuses on the development of listening and oral speech skills, while the Total Communication track incorporates sign language and finger spelling in addition to speech, speech-reading, and auditory amplification. Both approaches

emphasize the development of communication skills through intensive speech and language training in conjunction with the use of residual hearing.

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing programs are located in public schools within Midland Park and Hackensack. This arrangement offers students various levels of mainstreaming participation appropriate to each student's needs. Mainstreaming may include collaborative teaching, participation in lunch and recreation periods, or a full spectrum of academic and extracurricular activities. All of our students are eligible to participate in physical education, sports, music, art, and library instruction. In addition, a variety of cultural enrichment activities are offered throughout the year such as performances by the National Theater of the Deaf.

Schools in this continuum include Elementary Hearing Impaired Program/Midland Park (HIP) (Pre-K – 6), Elementary Hearing Impaired Program/Union Street School in Hackensack (HIP) (Pre-K – 4), and Secondary Hearing Impaired Program/Midland Park High School (SHIP) (7 – 12).

### **Life Skills Continuum**

Programs within the Life Skills Continuum offer education and related services to students who exhibit cognitive and/or physical disabilities. Emphasis is placed upon intensive instruction in age-appropriate independent living skills, generalization of skills across multiple environments, and community-based functional instruction. Career education and development of social skills enable students to become contributing members of society. Job coaches assist students in obtaining and maintaining employment. All students and families are linked to adult service providers so they can continue to receive the supports needed to succeed in life. Students in these programs typically participate in the alternative assessment, Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM).

Programs in this continuum include Blesham Regional Day School (Ages 3 - 21), Visions Paramus Elementary (K – 4), Visions Paramus Middle School (5 – 8), Visions Emerson (7 – 12), Transition Center @ Wood-Ridge (10 – 21), Project SEARCH, Career Crossroads (Grades 11, 12, 12+, and Springboard North and Springboard South.

The Springboard Program offers a full-time program for students with disabilities who have completed four years in a comprehensive high school program, either mainstreamed or self-contained and who may benefit from intensive instruction related to their transition outcomes. Instruction emphasizes the skills and abilities that a student with a disability will need to work and live as an independent adult. The curriculum addressed in the Springboard Program includes independent living skills, occupational guidance, career preparation, personal and social skills development and self-advocacy skills. The Springboard Program uses extensive community-based instruction as well as business and industry participation to give students opportunities to use skills in real-life environments.

All students in the Springboard Program are required to participate in Community-Based Instructional internship rotations and have the added personnel resources of job coaches, job developers, teachers and case managers. In addition, the Springboard faculty works collaboratively with adult support agencies to ensure that each student has the support for a successful transition from school to adult life.

Project SEARCH is a full time program located at the Bergen County Administrative Offices at One Bergen County Plaza in Hackensack. In partnership with Bergen County Project SEARCH and the Bergen County Workforce Development Board, BCSS will offer students with disabilities full immersion in a variety of work settings during their last year of school in order to increase students' employment opportunities. The program provides full day services for up to 12 students. The site is staffed with one (1) appropriately certified teacher and one job coach. The goal of the program is to prepare students to obtain and maintain employment, establish linkages to adult supports, and utilize public transportation including Access Link as needed.

### **Preschool Continuum**

Bergen Early Learning Alliance (BELA) Integrated Pre-K. The BELA program educates preschool through kindergarten students in a typical day care center. This integrated program offers students who are classified pre-school disabled the opportunity to be fully included with age appropriate peers. The supports of a special education teacher and teacher assistants provide students with direct instruction, in-class supports and general education teacher consultation. A structured curriculum, Curiosity Corner, related services and enrichment activities in physical education, art and music are all components of this program. Parents also have the option of accessing before- and after-school day care services.

### **Consultant Model Programs**

In order to serve a greater number of students with disabilities, BCSS developed Consultant Model Programs. These programs involve partnerships with local school districts that have identified a cadre of students with similar educational needs and BCSS, which provides the staff and services needed to appropriately serve these students within their home districts. Currently, there are seven (7) programs operating under this model.

Bogota Program educates academically challenged 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with multiple disabilities who require additional support in a mainstream setting.

Manchester Program educates 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students with multiple disabilities.

Washington @ Hanover educates students between the ages of seven and nine, who have been classified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Asperger's Syndrome (AS), Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD), and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).

Washington @ Passaic Valley Regional High School is designed to meet the academic, social, behavioral, and vocational needs of high school students who are diagnosed with ASD, AS, PDD, and PDD-NOS. The program offers students highly individualized instructional formats based upon the principles of ABA. Services include occupational, physical, and speech therapies; family training; home program coordination and augmentative communication assessment. Programs include language, social, behavioral, and academic development. Washington @ PVRHS utilizes the support services of a full-time job coach to assist students with internships, as well as employment experiences within local communities.

Visions Becton educates students with multiple disabilities in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).

Washington @ Tri-Valley operates in six different school locations, providing academic, behavioral, social and vocational services to students ages 3 through 21 who are classified with ASD, AS, PDD, PDD-NOS.

NOVA @ Ridgewood Program opened in September 2018 at the Somerville Elementary School in Ridgewood. It is designed to serve students in grades K – 4 who exhibit emotional, behavioral and/or attentional difficulties. This program includes core academic instruction and counseling, as well as behaviorist intervention, psychiatric consultation, and mainstreaming opportunities within the general education program.

### **Adult Day Programs**

The Paramus and Wood-Ridge Adult Training Centers are designed for individuals with intellectual disabilities who benefit from facility-based and community-based instruction in the following areas:

- Prevocational Training/Volunteerism
- Social Competency
- Skill Development
- Community Inclusion

Careers Through Technology (CTT) is a technology-based program for adults aged 21 and older with physical and/or intellectual disabilities residing in Bergen County. Funded by the Division of Developmental Disabilities, the program utilizes a person centered planning approach to locate job sampling and volunteer opportunities. This dynamic program offers an instructional blend of technology instruction, employment preparedness skills, career exploration, travel training, advocacy, time management, social skills in the work setting, critical thinking skills, community linkages, and transitioning-to-independence discussion groups.

The Progressive Paths program provides a positive and nurturing environment for individuals that benefit from a higher staffing ratio than the BCSS Adult Training Centers. This program provides individual and small group instruction in prevocational skills, skills of daily living and community-based instruction. The program focuses on increasing independence and the ability to connect with others, as well as the ability to effectively respond to tasks and challenges and follow a daily routine.

BCSS has developed a highly structured program called Stepping Stones for adults with intellectual disabilities who benefit from instruction in small sequential steps, multiple opportunities for reinforcement, and a higher level of staffing for behavioral supports.

The Stepping Stones program provides instruction in prevocational skill development, skills of daily living, leisure-based activities and community inclusion activities.

## **Specialized Services**

Services for Students in Non-Public Schools are provided under Chapters 192/193 of New Jersey State law. Students may receive compensatory education, supplemental instruction, English as a Second Language, speech services, evaluation and classification and home instruction from certified teachers employed by the Bergen County Special Services School District. Specialized services are provided to eligible students through 192/193 and the federal IDEA statutes.

Hospital Instruction Program provides unique educational services to students from Kindergarten to senior high school who are in confined settings. These environments range from day treatment to inpatient and residential placements. The individual length of instruction is dependent on the medical, emotional or substance abuse treatment services provided. Students are prepared academically and emotionally to ensure successful return to the home, school and community.

Suspension Alternative Program (SAP) provides students with a therapeutic alternative to a more traditional suspension. The program is operated in collaboration with the Bergen County Division of Family Guidance. The program's goal is to provide students who are in grades 5 to 12 with proactive interventions prior to an out-of-school suspension. The three major components of the program address students' emotional, behavioral and academic functioning by providing academic remediation, intensive counseling and mentoring. A family assessment is used to assist families in linking with social and support services agencies.

## **Educational Enterprises**

This is a division of Bergen County Special Services. The inclusion of students with disabilities in their local schools and communities is a legislative mandate and a new and challenging direction for all educators. Bergen County Special Services provides services to local school districts that are cost-effective and customized to the specific needs of each local district, enabling those districts to maximize their educational resources.

Some of the services provided to students in their home district by a team of highly qualified professionals include:

- Adaptive equipment;
- Transition Services;
- Assistive Technology;
- Autism Behavioral Services;
- Occupational, Physical, and Speech Therapy;
- Therapeutic Adventure;
- Sound Solutions; and
- Inclusion, Classroom Management, Behavior Intervention Strategies, Teachers and Paraprofessionals.

The District's services represent the most effective and up-to-date technology available in the nation, resulting in student achievement that surpasses the expectations of parents and local school districts. Students are placed in the least restrictive environment according to



individual needs. A meaningful partnership among staff, parents, local district, and other agencies ensures enhanced opportunities for individual student achievement. The District offers many opportunities for communication involvement and representation at all levels. Parents and staff work together to ensure that student needs are identified and addressed.

### **Bergen County Special Services Career Crossroads Vocational Programs**

The Bergen County Special Services School District offers shared-time vocational programs at its Paramus campus for students in grades eleven (11), twelve (12), and twelve plus (12+). Students are currently enrolled in Sales & Customer Service and Hospitality & Food Service training programs. Additional research regarding the employment outlook for various occupations will determine additional programs that BCSS will develop and implement over the next two years.

Sales & Customer Service is designed to prepare participants for entry-level retail sales and customer service-related positions; this comprehensive program provides support for successful entry and advancement in service-related careers. Customer service, sales, and literacy standards have been integrated into a fully-developed Sales and Service Curriculum based on the National Retail Federation Foundation (NRFF)'s Sales and Service Learning Program. A unique component of the program, the new Crossroads Gift Shop, will allow students to work in a retail setting and provide opportunities for hands-on experience in marketing, merchandising, inventory, and customer service.

Hospitality & Food Service is a comprehensive program is designed to prepare participants for entry-level hospitality and food-service related positions, and provide support for successful entry and advancement in food service and hospitality-related careers. Food service, preparation, and hospitality coursework have been integrated into a fully-developed Hospitality and Food Service Curriculum. This program encompasses food specific areas including food prep, food sanitation and safety, hospitality, and workplace readiness. Students study aspects of the field through direct application and development of skills in practical situations.

### **Bergen County Special Services CAPE (Collaboration, Access, Planning, and Education) Resource Center**

The CAPE Resource Center further expands the District's services by offering access to educational opportunities for families, individuals and service providers serving the special needs population in the greater Bergen County area. Over thirty years of experience has shown us that one of the greatest challenges facing families and individuals is learning to navigate the system of services for people with disabilities throughout their lifespan. As a result, we created a one-stop information and assistance center that is open to everyone who is involved in the special needs community. The center serves as a "clearinghouse" of information related to disability resources located throughout the greater Bergen County region, and promotes awareness of and linkages to services, information and resources. We offer informational, educational, professional development and networking opportunities to professionals and parents to enhance service coordination, information sharing and skills building. As a one-stop information and assistance center, we partner with other service providers to conduct workshops, trainings, educational seminars and other meetings related to client services directly at the CAPE.

# **BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOLS DISTRICT**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Free public education for all children is a cornerstone of a democratic society that values the worth and dignity of each individual. The primary goal of this Board of Education shall be to offer each child in this District the educational opportunity that will enable him or her to function politically, economically, and socially in that democratic society.

The Board, as the agent responsible for the education of the children of the District, will provide a planned program of learning that incorporates into its curriculum the lessons and experiences, within and without the classroom, needed to realize the educational goals of this District. The Board appreciates the need for constant improvement of the instructional program and will strive unremittingly to provide an educational system that assists each student in becoming a self-respecting individual who can function effectively and satisfyingly. It is the expectation of this District that all students achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all grade levels.

The Board will seek out and work cooperatively with the available resources of home and community including business and industry, in the improvement of the educational program. The Board will endeavor to employ a high caliber, well-prepared staff of adequate size and size-ranging abilities. Moreover, the Board will provide students and staff, as needs dictate and means permit, with adequate educational supplies, equipment, and facilities.

The purpose of education in the schools of this District is to facilitate the development of each child to his or her greatest potential. The school staff shall recognize individual differences among students and encourage their achievement and progress, not only in basic skills but also in the ability to think independently and critically. The school staff shall help students to understand our democratic society; to believe in it and to act fairly in their relationships with others; to develop in themselves attitudes of respect and helpfulness toward others; to want, and to be able to perform well, some portion of the work, of the world; to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to do this with satisfaction to themselves and society; to understand and use effective methods in framing the questions and tackling the problems that they encounter in their lives to the end that they may function politically, economically and socially in a democratic society.

## **OVERVIEW**

The Bergen County Technical Schools District provides full- and part-time technical instruction to over 20,000 secondary and adult students on campuses in Hackensack, Teterboro, and Paramus. Secondary programs include the Bergen County Academies on the John Grieco Campus in Hackensack, comprising seven magnet high school programs with a career focus; Bergen County Technical High School-Teterboro Campus, a full-time program with nine (9) technical concentrations; Bergen County Technical High School-Paramus Campus, a secondary program with a full time option for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and a shared-time option for students from local



sending districts with or without an IEP; and Applied Technology High School, a full-time program located on the campus of Bergen Community College combining academic and technical training with dual-credit college courses in two technical concentrations. Postsecondary programs include the Adult and Continuing Education Division and the Bergen Workforce Center.

The District traces its beginnings to the late 1940s, when it served as a training center for adults. Because technical and vocational schooling is always closely tied to the job market, the cornerstone of the Bergen County Technical Schools District's success has been its ability to adapt to the changing needs of local industry.

## **BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES – DR. JOHN GRIECO CAMPUS**

A model of excellence and reform in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Bergen County Academies (BCA), located in Hackensack, offers seven specialized programs with a career focus. The Academies prepare students to live, work, and lead in a global community through a special blend of rigorous professional, technical and academic courses. Through a selective admissions process, the Academies accept students from towns throughout the County. Bergen County Academies continues to be recognized for its outstanding academic programs, and was awarded a “2015 Blue Ribbon School of Excellence” by the United States Department of Education and recently recognized by U.S. News & World Report as the #3 STEM High School in the nation.

The campus boasts an impressive array of research labs, which allow students to discover their passion in the following areas: Agriscience, biotechnology, chemical engineering, computer science, electrical engineering, interactive design, nanotechnology, microscopy, robotics, and optics. Graduates attend a wide range of prestigious national and international universities and colleges.

### **Recent Accolades**

- Recognized as one of the Top High Schools in New Jersey and the Nation.
- Member of the NCSSS - The National Consortium of Secondary STEM Schools.
- Over 70 National Science Talent Search Semifinalists since 2002.
- Home of 8 National Science Talent Search Finalists since 2002.
- Home of a member of the 2019 Canadian Math Olympiad Team.
- Home of the 2017 winner of the Regeneron National Science Talent Search.
- Home of a member of the 2015 U.S. International Math Olympiad Team.
- Home of a member of the 2013 U.S. International Biology Olympiad Team.

### **Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology (AAST)**

AAST is designed for students who have a strong interest in mathematics, science, and technology. Students in AAST have a passion for science and a curiosity to explore modern scientific questions through a comprehensive, hands-on curriculum. The AAST core curriculum incorporates classes taken with other academy students while emphasizing its own academy focus. For example, AAST students take multiple courses in biology,

chemistry, and physics while completing studies in chemical engineering, microscopy, organic chemistry, and modern physics. Graduates from AAST are prepared to continue studies a wide range of scientific disciplines or to pursue areas such as medicine, law, and public policy, which will continue to be informed by the sciences as the 21<sup>st</sup> century progresses.

### **Academy for Engineering and Design Technology (AEDT)**

AEDT is designed for students who have an interest in the engineering sciences, including design technology, electrical engineering, electronics and biomedical engineering. AEDT focuses on general engineering disciplines and prepares students for entrance into college engineering programs. Projects include product development, civil or architectural designs, robotic competitions, and much more. Students must have a strong desire to solve problems using math, science, and technology, like to work with their hands, and apply their creativity to engineering. Articulation agreements with several universities enable AEDT students to receive college credit for some of the core courses taken in this program.

### **Academy for Business and Finance/International Baccalaureate (ABFIB)**

ABFIB seeks to provide students a comprehensive introduction into the theories and real-world applications of business, finance, and economics as well as a thorough academic program in mathematics, humanities, foreign language, and the arts. Students learn basic and advanced business principles in multiple high-level core courses such as accounting, corporate finance, financial markets, money & banking, management, marketing, entrepreneurship, and economics. Students have the opportunity to learn and apply financial concepts using real-world tools such as the Bloomberg Terminal located in our financial Markets Lab; students also have the unique opportunity to obtain Bloomberg certification. ABFIB students participate in a number of competitions related to their field of study and interests such as the Federal Reserve Challenge and DECA, which help them develop and apply competencies in business and finance. ABFIB students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade may enroll in the internationally respected International Baccalaureate Diploma Program.

### **Academy for Culinary Arts and Hospitality Administration (ACAHA)**

Students in this academy demonstrate a strong interest and passion for culinary arts as well as restaurant/hotel administration. ACAHA students train in a sophisticated culinary facility that rivals many professional restaurant cities. The curriculum includes the study of entrepreneurship and business aspects of hotel and restaurant management. Electives in marketing, culinary enterprises and the hospitality industry are emphasized. Culinary students who are more interested in the business aspect of the food trade industry, rather than food preparation, may focus on that aspect of study. The program offers an honors-level core curriculum augmented by elective options in all facets of food preparation, facility management, customer service, and entrepreneurship. The course of study at ACAHA leads to certification from the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation. ACAHA students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade may enroll in the internationally respected International Baccalaureate Diploma Program.

### **Academy for Medical Science Technology (AMST)**

The AMST program is intensive and professionally grounded in medical science and technical courses not generally offered to students at the secondary school level. The AMST addresses complex medical issues through academic research infused with technology. A dual approach involving basic and applied scientific strategies is utilized to investigate and evaluate current areas in medical research. Professionals from both the medical and educational communities are brought together to create a collaborative environment utilizing a variety of innovative educational methodologies. Through its “Mini Med School” Project, students enjoy affiliations with a number of prestigious organizations in the region, including Valley Hospital, Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, Hackensack University Medical Center, and Englewood Hospital and Medical Center.

### **Academy for Technology and Computer Science (ATCS)**

ATCS offers a curriculum that provides students with a strong foundation in the core concepts of computer science, experience in a broad variety of programming skills and paradigms, and a focus on the application of programming to practical challenges. ATCS students develop a strong foundational understanding of programming, computer architecture, data structures and algorithms, and program analysis. Students extend their skills in computing through projects and electives of their choice, often including processor design, web application development, robotics, cybersecurity, and mechatronics. The program is oriented around underlying ideas that will never become obsolete even as technologies change. ATCS students will be prepared for college majors such as computer science, computer engineering, or information systems.

### **Academy for Visual and Performing Arts (AVPA)**

AVPA offers three areas of concentration: visual arts, music, and theater arts. Students choose from a wide array of required and optional electives that augment a strong honors level academic core. Ideal candidates demonstrate an ability and interest in either visual/graphic communications or theater/music arts. The AVPA Music Program offers an academic, honors-level curriculum that includes Advanced Placement Music Theory and Advanced Problems in Music Theory, which go beyond AP Theory curriculum. Theater students interested in pursuing a college major in theater or film are offered a rigorous training program with core courses that include sequences in acting, voice and speech, theater history and direction and writing. The visual arts concentration is a college preparatory program specializing in technology, art, animation, publishing, multi-media and interactive design. The curriculum embraces new technology while emphasizing traditional skills and principle of design, and offers classes that focus on the melding of technology, art, and printing.

## **BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL – TETERBORO CAMPUS**

A model of excellence and reform in the 21st century, the Bergen County Technical High School – Teterboro (BCTHS – Teterboro), is located within ten (10) miles of New York City. Prospective students from seventy towns in Bergen County are selected through a

rigorous admissions process that evaluates middle school grades, standardized test scores, teacher recommendations and assessments in writing and math. The school's enrollment is 675 students and mirrors the diversity of Bergen County.

### **National Recognition**

Recently surpassing the 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first graduating class, BCTHS – Teterboro has emerged as one of the premier schools both at the state and federal levels. Recent accolades include:

- Ranked #3 in New Jersey, #58 nationally, and #21 nationally in STEM high schools by U.S. News & World Report's in 2018
- Ranked #4 in New Jersey School Performance Report 2016-2017
- Apple Distinguished Program 2013-2015
- Ranked #63 nationally in Newsweek's "America's Top High Schools 2018"

### **Curriculum**

The school's college preparatory curriculum provides for a broad scope of knowledge in science, mathematics, social studies, language arts, world language, and the creative arts. Selecting from nine (9) majors (Aerospace Engineering, Law & Justice, Culinary®, Automotive Engineering and Design, Fashion Design & Merchandising, Strategic Asset Management, Computer Science, Commercial Art & Graphic Design, and Digital & Media Arts). Students follow a coherent scope and sequence of courses that are Advanced Placement, Honors, or College Level. Aligned to New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLAS), and partnering universities, students are well prepared for college and beyond.

### **BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL – PARAMUS CAMPUS**

The Paramus Campus provides students with a strong academic and technical foundation to pursue either postsecondary educational opportunities or entrance into the workforce upon graduation. The school is committed to serving the needs of students with both full-time and shared-time programs that provide training in eleven (11) technical areas: Automotive Collision Repair, Automotive Technology (A.S.E.), Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Green Building Trades, Healthcare Occupations, Information Technology, Environmental Design, Skin Care & Esthetics, Veterinary Assistant/Animal Care, and Media Production. Students learn in classrooms and career-specific technical labs that mirror future academic and professional environments.

### **Full-Time High School Program**

Our full-time program provides both academic and technical educational opportunities for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Upon graduation, all students are awarded a state-endorsed diploma. All academic courses mirror objectives and requirements as set forth in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.

## **Shared-Time High School Program**

Shared-time students attend the technical program for up to one-half of each school day, with the remainder spent in their local high schools. This program provides students an excellent opportunity to learn a technical trade while completing most of their academic requirements at the local home district. A shared-time student may have an IEP, but it is not required. All shared-time students are required to take an academic course each year to help meet the graduation requirements of the local sending district. Registration for these courses must be done in writing from the local district's guidance department or child study team.

## **APPLIED TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL (ATHS)**

This high school program located on the Paramus Campus of Bergen Community College provides students a unique educational experience through a blend of academic high school curriculum, college classes, and hands-on technical training. ATHS currently offers two (2) technical concentrations, Engineering Technology and Health Professions, and will introduce a third concentration, Cybersecurity, in September 2021.

**Engineering Technology:** With a curriculum that is centered on “smart machines,” students learn to apply math, science, and technology to hands-on projects in the fields of automation, electronics, and advanced manufacturing. Students acquire the essential skills needed to pursue a career in a wide variety of areas including engineering technology. Technical training is coupled with the dual enrollment coursework needed to allow students to earn advanced standing into several technical associates programs at the community college, including an A.A.S. program in General Engineering Technology. Rigorous coursework in the humanities as well as an emphasis on the development of soft skills essential to networking, conducting presentations, and interacting with professionals complete this well-balanced program. Students who complete their Associates Degree at

Bergen Community College may transfer their credits to all four-year public colleges and universities in New Jersey.

**Health Professions:** The Health Professions Program offers hands-on, college-level coursework in healthcare as well as required high school academics. Through access to the College's state-of-the-art lab facilities, students apply health science content in real-world patient simulations. Students are given the opportunity to earn college credit and gain clinical experiences through a curriculum that emphasizes science and the human and organizational side of healthcare. The program emphasizes the concept of teamwork as essential to patient well-being, provides students a strong foundation in science, and addresses the health workforce needs of New Jersey and the surrounding region. Graduates will be prepared to enter degree programs in areas such as health science, nursing, paramedic science, dental hygiene, sonography, and respiratory care.

Applied Technology High School students participate in all district sports, clubs, and organizations, that are offered to students attending the Hackensack, Paramus, and Teterboro campuses.

## **ADULT & CONTINUING EDUCATION**

In 1982, the Bergen County Technical Schools (BCTS) introduced full time postsecondary programs to its curriculum. These programs enable students to obtain the specialized training needed to gain entry into vocational or technical occupations. Students possessing a high school diploma or equivalent are eligible to apply for admission to the Adult & Continuing Education Full-Time Day Program. Students age 16 or older may apply to the Adult & Continuing Education Part-Time Evening Program with written permission from a parent and high school guidance counselor. All full-time day program require attendance at an information session and a personal interview with an admissions counselor. This allows the school to provide prospective students with complete information regarding program and facility availability.

### **Adult Day Program**

The Adult & Continuing Education Full-Time Day Program offers the latest specialized professional training for high-wage, high-demand occupations. Students master marketable job skills using state-of-the-art equipment and techniques. Programs are offered in Management Information Systems, General (Business Professional/Administrative Assistant), Electrician, Plumbing Technology/Plumber, and Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/Technician.

Students are offered career counseling, vocational testing, job placement assistance, and financial aid (if qualified). Additionally, adult students are offered a work-based activity (WBA) internship in their program. The Bergen County Technical Schools Adult & Continuing Education program's reputation and connections with local industry enhance the opportunity for excellent job placement. Training is located on the Hackensack Campus. Experienced, highly qualified, certificated, and noncertificated instructors provide a practical, hands-on approach to training in fields where skilled employees are needed.

### **Adult Evening Program**

The Adult & Continuing Education Evening Program offers courses in Apprenticeship Training, Carpentry, Collision Repair, Computer Training (PC), and Technical Computer Training in the Autodesk Premier Training Center and Regional Cisco Networking Academy. Makerspace, Home Maintenance and Repair, Electrical Technology, Firemen-Stationary Engineering, Water & Wastewater Operation, Home Inspection Program, HVAC/R Non-Apprentice, Plumbing, and Welding and lifestyle classes are also offered.

### **High School Equivalency (HSE) Test Preparation & English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs**

The District offers day and evening classes in HSE test preparation and English as a Second Language instruction.

HSE test preparation classes are offered to participants who wish to earn a high school equivalency diploma to enter employment or retain employment, or to enter a post-secondary or training programs of study.



ESL classes are offered to participants who wish to improve their English language skills in order to secure unsubsidized employment or retain employment, or to enter post-secondary education or training.

English for Employment and Training in a tuition-based intensive program enabling participants to improve language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for further educational training and/or better employment preparation. Students also become familiar with job search techniques and acquire basic computer literacy skills.

## **BERGEN ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER**

Bergen County Technical Schools has served as administrative entity for a number of job training grants for adults since 1995, when the District opened the Bergen Workforce Center. The largest federal grant, the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) continues to provide the Workforce Investment Development Board the responsibility to oversee policy on local workforce development, and Bergen One-Stop Career Center (BOSCC), a Proud Partner of America's Jobs Centers, to implement workforce initiatives.

The BOSCC, located at 60 State Street, Hackensack, NJ, is a consortium of workforce service providers operated through WIOA and other grants, and the New Jersey Department of Labor (NJDOL). Additional grants under the Bergen County Technical Schools District include WorkFirst NJ, which provides job training skills to individuals receiving temporary assistance, and Workforce Learning Link, which offers adult learners the ability to upgrade their academic skills preparing them for employment.

In the past, various workforce providers and agencies offered services in a number of different locations throughout the area. In 2006, these providers came together under one roof, with WIOA named as the lead operator of the consortium. In addition to WIOA, partner agencies include the following local Department of Labor divisions: the

Business Resource Center, Workforce Development, Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance. There are also representatives at the Center from the Displaced Homemakers Grant, Easter Seals/55 Plus, Veterans Services, and the Bergen County Board of Social Services.

The BOSCC serves both prospective workers and employers in Bergen County, and strives to provide the county with a skilled labor force. It operates as a drop-in center for individuals seeking career counseling and job development skills. Through workshops and one-on-one sessions, counselors offer career counseling, resume writing, on-the-job training, and targeted job fairs. There is an extensive public access area, where individuals are connected to a number of online job banks or can prepare cover letters and resumes.

Leading employers throughout the county, such as Verizon, Whole Foods, and UPS, utilize the BOSCC's Business Resource Center to recruit and screen prospective employees. The Business Resource Center also helps companies find information about new business development, loan programs and labor laws. When a company experiences a

layoff or plant closing, a state response team accompanied by a representative of the BOSCC is sent to ease the separation, and assist displaced workers re-enter the workforce.

The BOSCC serves as a broker for training and educational grants for disadvantaged or displaced workers, placing eligible clients in leading post- secondary schools, colleges, and in counseling programs offered by community organizations. Programs for at risk youth desiring to obtain a state issued high school diploma are provided educational services in Garfield, Cliffside Park, Hackensack Drop in Center and the Bergen Community College Ciarco Center in Hackensack. At risk youth participating in the WIOA program are able to secure funding for occupational training or an On the Job Training Contract.

## **WORKFORCE INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Bergen County Technical Schools serves as the administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act of 2015, a federal job training grant. An integral component of this grant is The Bergen Workforce Investment Development Board (WDB). The WDB provides oversight to the state's largest county workforce development system by enabling residents and business to utilize programs through the Bergen One-Stop Career Center, the Business Resource Center, and the Youth Investment Council, as well as training, education and literacy programs.

The WDB is charged with creating effective policy, planning strategic workforce initiatives, and building workforce collaborations that enhance workforce skills and productivity within Bergen County.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES TRAINING CENTER**

With the support and encouragement of the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Board of Education of Bergen County Technical Schools District initiated the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Training Center in February 1976. With their continued support, the center has grown to be the largest ambulance and rescue training facility in the northeast.

The Bergen County Emergency Medical Services Training Center (BCEMSTC) is Bergen County's comprehensive training and education facility for emergency services personnel. The training center plans, develops and delivers quality programs to enhance the ability of emergency services providers to protect life and property. Located in Paramus, N.J., the EMS Training Center trains students in four major programs: Emergency Medical Technician, Rescue Technician, Rescue Task Force/Bleeding Control, and Hazardous Materials. This modern training center is equipped with the latest in computerization and presentation equipment as well as state-of- the-art demonstration and teaching aids.



## **DAY CARE CENTER**

The Bergen County Technical Schools Day Care Center is located adjacent to the Bergen County Academies in Hackensack, New Jersey. This inclusive childcare program is jointly sponsored by the District and the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders. A licensed, state-of-the-art facility that was established in 1987, the Day Care Center accepts children from birth through kindergarten. The preschool inclusion program offers a rich learning experience for three- and four-year-old students with and without disabilities. An inclusive kindergarten program is offered, as well as options for before and after school care. Early childhood certified personnel prepare and follow an age-appropriate curriculum when planning daily lessons. These plans focus on necessary cognitive, social/emotional and physical development skills. Motor skills are developed daily on either of our two playgrounds. Enrollment in the program is open to all.

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

The Bergen County Technical Schools and Special Services School Districts strictly adhere to their Boards of Education affirmative action and anti-harassment policies to ensure equal education opportunities for all students and equal employment opportunities for all persons. In conformance with these policies the Districts affirm not to discriminate in their education programs, activities, employment or admission procedures and practices on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, socioeconomic status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, gender identification or expression, disability or marital status.

If a student, parent, or staff member has a complaint regarding these matters, he or she should contact the appropriate supervisor. If not satisfied with the determination, the complainant then may contact the District's Affirmative Action Officer.

Tara Bohan, Director of Instruction  
Public Agency Compliance Officer/Affirmative Action Officer for the  
Bergen County Technical Schools and Special Services School District  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4079

## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING**

The Boards of Education prohibit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive and violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Suspected incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying must be reported first to your appropriate supervisor. An Anti-Bullying Specialist is assigned to each school building or program and investigates each potential case. He or she will begin the investigation process. The Anti-Bullying Coordinator oversees all matters concerning harassment, intimidation and bullying.

The Anti-Bullying Coordinator is:

Patricia Cosgrove, District Supervisor  
Bergen County Technical Schools and Special Services School District  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4010

## CONSCIENTIOUS EMPLOYEE PROTECTION ACT

### “WHISTLEBLOWER ACT”

The law prohibits an employer from taking any retaliatory action against an employee because the employee does any of the following:

1. Discloses, or threatens to disclose, to a supervisor or to a public body an activity, policy or practice of the employer or another employer, with whom there is a business relationship, that the employee reasonably believes is in violation of a law, or a rule or regulation issued under the law, or, in the case of an employee who is a licensed or certified health care professional, reasonably believes constitutes improper quality of patient care;
2. Provides information to, or testifies before, any public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into any violation of law, or a rule or regulation issued under the law by the employer or another employer, with whom there is a business relationship, or, in the case of an employee who is a licensed or certified health care professional, provides information to, or testifies before, any public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into quality of patient care; or
3. Objects to, or refuses to participate in, any activity, policy or practice which the employee reasonably believes is:
  - In violation of a law, or a rule or regulation issued under the law or, if the employee is a licensed or certified health care professional, constitutes improper quality of patient care;
  - Fraudulent or criminal; or
  - Incompatible with a clear mandate of public policy concerning the public health, safety or welfare or protection of the environment.  
*N.J.S.A. 34:19-3.*

Your employer has designated the following contact person to answer your questions or provide additional information regarding you rights and responsibilities under this act.

Gary P. Hall, Director of Human Resources  
Bergen County Technical/Special Services School Districts  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
201-343-6000, Ext. 6062

## **EMPLOYEE INFORMATION**

Please be advised that these guidelines are for informational purposes only. Unless stated otherwise, these guidelines apply to employees of both Districts. They are not to be substituted for any law, statute, code, policy and/or regulation. If you have any questions concerning procedural precedence, ask your supervisor or contact the Human Resources Department.

Please refer to the District's website, [www.bergen.org](http://www.bergen.org), for more information about specific topics including District policies, regulations, and procedures.

The District encourages its staff to support the philosophy of Standards for Excellence in Educational Service and take pride in its commitment to students and clients. As an employee, you will be part of a team that promotes conduct consistent with these values:

- Caring
- Communication
- Courtesy
- Dignity
- Individual Commitment
- Individual Responsibility
- Personal Excellence
- Professional Excellence
- Respect
- Sensitivity
- Support
- Understanding

These guidelines have been developed based on federal and state law and Board of Education policies and regulations to assist employees in reaching the highest level of excellence possible.

The following guidelines are listed in alphabetical order. Please review them so that you are aware of the expectations, standards, rights and responsibilities of all employees.

### **Affirmative Action**

It is the District's policy to strive to overcome the effects of any previous patterns of discrimination and/or harassment in employment practices. District procedures are systematically monitored to insure continuing compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws and regulations. If you have any concerns regarding affirmative action related issues, please contact your District's Affirmative Action Officer (AAO). Your supervisor will inform you how to contact your AAO.

For more specific information, see the section of the Handbook entitled "AFFIRMATIVE ACTION".

## **Alcoholic Beverages**

The Board of Education prohibits teaching and support staff members from possessing, using, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol during work hours or at school-sponsored functions where the staff member has been assigned job responsibilities. In addition, the Board of Education is committed to a safe, efficient, alcohol-free workplace that protects the District's students as well as the health and safety of its employees and the general public. The Board requires all employees who perform any safety-sensitive function to be free of alcohol and will test those employees who operate a commercial motor vehicle.

See also "SUBSTANCE ABUSE" in this section of the Handbook.

## **Arrest and Indictment**

All staff members must submit to the Superintendent a written report of the staff member's arrest or indictment for any crime or offense within fourteen (14) calendar days of such occurrence. In addition, the staff member must report to the Superintendent the disposition of any charges within seven (7) calendar days.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

Quality education demands that staff be punctual and consistent in their attendance. Tardiness seriously interferes with the efficient operation of the District in providing educational excellence and places extra burdens on others. Poor attendance and/or lack of punctuality may result in disciplinary action. All employees are responsible for accurately recording their time at work on the appropriate sign-in sheet.

## **Audio/Video Taping, etc.**

Staff members and students, with certain exceptions, may not videotape, photograph, film, or audiotape other members of the District community. In order to do so, the individual must obtain the permission of the appropriate authority.

## **Benefits**

For a summary of benefits, including health, retirement, life insurance, pension, etc., see the section of the Handbook entitled "EMPLOYEE BENEFITS".

## **Bereavement Leave**

See "LEAVE OF ABSENCE – COMPENSATED" in this section of the Handbook.

## **Change in Employee Information**

If your personal information changes (i.e., name, address, home and mobile telephone number(s), personal email address, educational information, driver's license information, emergency notification information, marital status, family relationships, etc.) shall be given to your immediate supervisor or program secretary.

Complete the form and return it to the supervisor who will forward the information to the Payroll Department and the Human Resources Department. If you are a BCTS employee, you will inform the Payroll Department and the Human Resources Department by email with the changes. Human Resources and Payroll Departments will receive this information.

### **Confidential Information**

Federal and state law requires that certain information contained in personnel records remain confidential. Unauthorized access to and disclosure of confidential information are considered serious violations of the law and District policies. In the event that any such violation occurs, disciplinary action may be taken.

Public information, that is, information that may not be deemed confidential, includes, but is not limited to certain personnel and pension records (name, title, salary, payroll record, length of service, amount and type of pension received, etc.) and certain information concerning crimes reported.

### **COVID-19**

See “COVID-19 Information” at the end of the Employee Information section of the Handbook.

### **Disability Benefits**

For a summary of disability benefits, see the section of the Handbook entitled “EMPLOYEE BENEFITS”.

### **Disability Etiquette**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was conceived with the goal of integrating individuals with disabilities into all aspects of American life. Sensitivity toward individuals with disabilities is not only in the spirit of the ADA, it makes good business sense. Disability etiquette can help you to better serve the District and students and it is an easy way to make individuals with disabilities feel welcome.

When you use disability etiquette, employees and students with disabilities feel more comfortable and work more productively.

- Ask before you help.
- Be sensitive about physical contact.
- Think before you speak.
- Respond graciously to requests.
- Do not make assumptions.

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

The District directs all staff members to observe New Jersey Statutes and Administrative Codes, Rules of the New Jersey State Department of Education and

Board policies and regulations governing staff conduct.

Disciplinary action may include verbal and written warnings as well as corrective action plans as appropriate and, in some cases, will provide for progressive penalties for repeated violations. Penalties may include, but are not limited to, suspension, withholding of a salary increment and dismissal. Whenever a staff member's employment status is on the Board of Education's agenda, that staff member shall receive notice of the meeting and will have the option of appearing before the Board in private session with or without a person of their choosing being present as well.

### **District-Wide Employees**

All staff are hired as district-wide employees. Every assignment is based on the current needs of the District including the best interests of the students as well as enrollment in the programs. Such needs may change at any time.

### **Drugs**

See "SUBSTANCE ABUSE" in this section of the Handbook.

### **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

Bergen County offers an assistance program to all District staff members. Assistance is provided for, but not limited to, the following issues: marriage and family matters, money management, legal problems, alcoholism, drug abuse, gambling, psychological problems and medical issues.

The EAP telephone number is (201) 342-1338.

### **Employee Code of Ethics**

#### **Certificated Staff Members**

The Board of Education endorses a code of ethics for its certificated staff members that is based on the code published by the National Education Association. The District's code of ethics adheres to two main principles: commitment to students and commitment to the teaching profession.

Specifically, with respect to the first principle, every educator in the District honors the worth and dignity of each human being and shall undertake the pursuit of academic excellence and the advancement of democratic principles. In the course of his or her daily work, each educator shall guarantee an equal educational opportunity for all and shall strive to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of our democratic society.

The District's code of ethics addresses its commitment to the teaching profession because the public invests in educators a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service. Each educator shall make every effort to raise professional standards

that promote a climate encouraging the exercise of consummate professional judgment and create and maintain those conditions that attract persons worthy of the public trust.

#### Noncertificated Staff Members

The Board of Education requires noncertificated staff members to act in a professional manner that conforms to its philosophy. Staff members must uphold all policies, rules and regulations issued by the Board of Education. Staff members must commit themselves to providing the best possible services for the students of the District and endeavor to establish good working relationships with all employees.

#### **Employee Evaluations – Certificated**

The District recognizes the importance of employee evaluations in the reinforcement of performance strengths and the remediation of weaknesses.

Teachers – N.J.A.C. 6A:10-1.1 through 10-1.4; 6A:10-2.1 through 10-2.5; 6A:10-3.1 and 10-3.2; 6A:10-4.1 through 10-4.4.

On an annual basis, the Board of Education will adopt evaluation rubrics for teachers that must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education by June 1 for approval by August 1 of each year. The evaluation rubrics have four (4) defined annual ratings: highly effective, effective, partially effective, and ineffective. A corrective action plan shall be developed for teachers rated unsatisfactory or progressing on their annual summative evaluation rating.

Teaching Staff Members, Excluding Teachers and Administrators - N.J.A.C. 6A:10-1.1 through 10-1.4; 6A:10-2.1 through 10-2.5 and 6A:10-6.2.

On an annual basis, the Board of Education will adopt evaluation rubrics for teachers that must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education by June 1 for approval by August 1 of each year. The evaluation rubrics have four (4) defined annual ratings highly effective, effective, partially effective, and ineffective. A corrective action plan shall be developed for teachers rated unsatisfactory or progressing on their annual summative evaluation rating.

Examples of these job titles include educational services staff members, guidance counselors, school nurses, library/media specialists, therapists, and other teaching staff members working under an educational services certificate. It does not include teachers, Principals, Vice Principals, Assistant Principals and administrators such as directors and/or supervisors.

Administrators, Excluding Principals, Vice Principals, and Assistant Principals - N.J.A.C. 6A:10-1.1 through 10-1.4; 6A:10-2.1 through 10-2.5.

On an annual basis, the Board of Education will adopt evaluation rubrics for teachers that must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education by June 1 for approval by August 1 of each year. The evaluation rubrics have four (4) defined annual ratings highly effective, effective, partially effective, and ineffective. A corrective action plan shall be



developed for teachers rated unsatisfactory or progressing on their annual summative evaluation rating.

Administrators are appropriately certificated staff members, employed in the District in an administrative and/or supervisory role who hold a valid and effective standard, provisional, or emergency administrative certificate. They may be directors, supervisors or any other administrative or supervisory position in the District. The term “administrator” does not include Principals, Vice Principals, or Assistant Principals.

Principals, Vice Principals, and Assistant Principals - N.J.A.C. 6A:10-1.1 through 10-1.4; 6A:10-2.1 through 10-2.5; 6A:10-5.1 through 10-5.4; and 6A:10-7.1 through 10-7.3.

On an annual basis, the Board of Education will adopt evaluation rubrics for teachers that must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education by June 1 for approval by August 1 of each year. The evaluation rubrics have four (4) defined annual ratings: highly effective, effective, partially effective, and ineffective. A corrective action plan shall be developed for teachers rated unsatisfactory or progressing on their annual summative evaluation rating.

#### Noncertificated Staff Members

For evaluation purposes, employees shall be grouped into position classifications based upon similarities of duties, responsibilities and qualifications. The evaluation process shall be similar for all employees in a single classification.

The evaluation process shall provide for the recognition and commendation of effective performance, the identification and remediation of performance deficiencies and the recommendation of discipline or dismissal when an employee fails to improve his or her performance. Evaluation procedures shall provide that each employee is informed of the specific objectives of his or her position and the standards that will be used to assess the employee’s performance against those objectives.

Supervisors will evaluate employees on an annual basis. Any records created in the evaluation process will become part of the employee’s file and subject to Board of Education policies concerning personnel records.

#### **Employee Liability for Student Welfare**

Each staff member must maintain a standard of care, control and protection of students commensurate with the staff member’s assigned duties and responsibilities. In addition, certain staff members are responsible for the supervision of students.

Staff members should not voluntarily assume responsibility for duties that they cannot reasonably perform. The assumption of such voluntary responsibilities carries the same potential for liability as do assigned responsibilities.

Staff members must provide for proper student safety and welfare and report immediately to the appropriate supervisor any accident or safety hazard detected.

Staff members must not:

- Send students on personal errands;
- Transport students in a personal vehicle without the approval of their supervisor;
- Require students to perform tasks that may be detrimental to their health or well-being; and
- Use personal furnishings and equipment in the classroom without appropriate permission.

Staff members are required to report immediately to their supervisor any instance of substance abuse, violence, vandalism, harassment, intimidation, bullying, accidents, or suspected child abuse in accordance with District policy.

### **Employee Portal**

BCSS and BCTS uses Computer Solutions, Inc. (CSI) as their administrative software platform. Employees have access to their employment records online through an “Employee Portal”, which is a web-based access point to the following information:

All employees will need to create an account in order to access:

- Pay stubs;
- Record of health benefits;
- Record of attendance; and
- W-2 forms.

The Districts will no longer be issuing this information on paper. It is available on the Employee Portal using the appropriate website:

BCSS Employees: <https://ssportal.bergen.org>

BCTS Employees: <https://techportal.bergen.org>

By default, your user name is going to be your Bergen.org email.

The portal not only gives access to this information, but it gives you the ability to print out any of the information.

### **Employee Solicitation and Distribution**

Employees are neither permitted to solicit other employees or students nor distribute literature during working time.

### **Employment Contracts**

Contracts are issued on an annual basis after approval by the Board of Education.

## **Employment Verification**

Upon written request, the Human Resources Department and Payroll Department will provide employment verification, which shall be limited to dates of employment, job title and salary verification.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

District employment applications and pre-employment inquiries conform to the guidelines of the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights. All employees and applicants for employment are afforded an equal opportunity to receive equal and fair treatment in all terms and conditions of their employment without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, religion, ancestry, gender identity or expression, age, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation.

## **Gifts and Conflicts of Interest**

District staff member shall not accept any gift, favor, service or other object of value under circumstances from which it might be reasonably inferred that such gift, service or other object of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing the staff member in the discharge of their duties. The District discourages the presentation of gifts to staff members by students and parents.

## **Grievance Procedure**

The term “grievance” means a complaint by any employee that there has been an inequitable, improper application or interpretation of the rules, regulations or contract affecting the terms and conditions of the individual’s employment or a violation of District policy.

### **Affiliated Staff**

For the grievance procedures applicable to union-represented employees, refer to your collective bargaining agreement.

### **Non-affiliated Staff**

If the staff member does not file a written statement of his or her grievance within fifteen school days after he or she knew or should have known of the act or condition on which the grievance is based, then the right to proceed with the grievance shall be deemed to have been waived.

A staff member with a grievance shall discuss it with his or her supervisor with the objective of resolving the matter informally. If no resolution is reached at this level, the staff member shall file a written statement of his or her grievance with the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall be obligated to give the individual an appointment to discuss his or her grievance within fifteen school days of the receipt of the written statement.

If no resolution is achieved at this level the grieving party shall present his or her written grievance to the Board of Education within ten school days of the receipt of the Superintendent's written response. The Board Secretary shall establish a date on which the Board of Education shall hear the grievance. The Board of Education's written answer shall be delivered within ten school days of this meeting.

This completes the final action of the grievance procedure.

### **Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying**

The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB). Such acts, like other disruptive and violent behaviors, are conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and the District's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Staff members shall demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate HIB. Initially, any allegations of HIB must be reported to your appropriate supervisor. If you have any concerns regarding HIB-related issues, please contact your District's Anti-Bullying Coordinator. Your supervisor will inform you how to contact the Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

For more specific information, see the section of the Handbook entitled "HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING".

### **Holiday Paid Leave**

#### **Affiliated Staff**

The District will compensate affiliated staff members for holidays in accordance with the holiday provisions of their collective bargaining agreement and the Board of Education approved school calendars.

#### **Non-affiliated Staff**

The Board of Education will determine compensation for holidays for non-affiliated staff members on an annual basis.

Unless specified in your collective bargaining agreement, if recognized holidays fall on a Saturday or Sunday, the Superintendent will determine the day on which the holiday will be observed.

### **Inclement Weather Conditions**

The Superintendent will determine if the District facilities are to be closed. Staff members will be notified by telephone. Certain departments will be required to report to work and those employees will be notified accordingly. Delayed District opening instructions will be conveyed to employees by telephone. Please note that on days when the District is closed or opening is delayed, you may call (201) 343-6000, press 4 for special announcements, or visit [www.bergen.org](http://www.bergen.org) for special announcements.

In the event of a delayed opening, BCTS will open ninety (90) minutes after the usual time unless otherwise specified and BCSS will open sixty (60) minutes after the usual time unless otherwise specified or the employee is assigned to a host school, in which case the employee follows the host school's determination.

### **Leaves of Absence – Compensated**

It is the responsibility of all employees to notify their supervisor and the Human Resources Department of any leave of absence.

Direct deposit of pay may be stopped if prior to the end of the fiscal year an employee uses all compensated leave. If an employee uses all compensated leave before the end of a fiscal year, the Payroll Department may stop direct deposit of the salary check.

### **Bereavement**

In general, employees shall be paid at their regular rate of pay in the event of the death of an immediate family member. An immediate family member is defined as follows: spouse, mother or father, mother/father-in-law, children, brothers or sisters or any other relatives, if living in the same domicile as that of the employee at the time of death. The specific number of days allowed is stated in your collective bargaining agreement or the fringe benefits section for your job description.

Employees may be entitled to bereavement day(s) for the death of a relative not in the employee's immediate family. Please refer to your collective bargaining agreement or the fringe benefits section in your job description for this information.

### **Jury Duty**

In general, the District will indemnify all full time and part time employees against loss of pay incurred by a call to jury duty. No employee will be penalized in any way for an absence caused by service on a panel of grand or petit jurors. The time absent will not be charged against personal leave and will count toward District service. Employees must return any payment received for jury service in order to collect their full District salary.

### **Military Leave**

The District recognizes that military service rendered by any employee in the defense of the United States or in maintaining preparedness for foreign or domestic conflict is a service benefiting all citizens. Such service shall neither act to penalize employees nor deprive them of benefits that would have been received had the period of military service been spent in District employment.

Any person granted a leave of absence for active duty will be re-employed by the District upon being honorably discharged or separated from military service, provided that the person has given notice before the end of the military leave of his or her intention to return to District employment.

## Personal Leave

District employees may receive a specific number of days off to be taken to attend to personal business. This shall be in addition to vacation and sick leave. Employees should review their collective bargaining agreement or the fringe benefits section for their job description to determine the number of personal leave days and related provisions. Personal leave cannot be carried over and used in a subsequent year.

## Sick Leave

Sick leave means the absence of any employee because of personal illness or injury or because the employee has been involuntarily excluded from school for medical reasons by the District's medical personnel. Your supervisor will inform you of the departmental procedure for notification of illness. After a specific number of consecutive days of illness and upon returning to work, you may be required to submit documentation from your health care provider verifying your illness.

Please review your collective bargaining agreement or fringe benefits section for your job description to determine how many sick days you are allowed and any other related provisions that may apply.

All allowable days of sick leave not utilized within either one school year or one fiscal year, as may be applicable, shall be accumulated and may be used for additional sick leave as needed in subsequent years.

Sick leave must be used only for the bona fide illness of the employee. It is not intended as additional vacation time, personal time or time to take care of an ill family member. Furthermore, any appointments for medical or medically related purposes must be made before or after, but not during the workday.

## Vacation Leave

Employees may receive vacation time based on the applicable collective bargaining agreement or as stated in the fringe benefits section for your job description. All requests for vacation leave are subject to approval by your immediate supervisor.

## **Leaves of Absence - Uncompensated**

All requests for leaves of absences MUST be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Department and your immediate supervisor.

## Family Leave

In accordance with the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA), the District will grant staff members up to twelve weeks leave of absence in a twelve month period upon advance notice so that such member may provide care for the birth or adoption of a child or the serious health condition of a spouse, parent, child or the staff member. The method used to determine the twelve month period is a rolling twenty-four months, measured backwards from the date an employee last used any FMLA.

The District provides for uncompensated leaves of absence in accordance with federal and state laws and their policies for any employee. Absence from duties may be required for a foreseeable event of disability such as pregnancy, childbirth, surgery or serious health-related matter. At the expiration of the uncompensated leave of absence, the employee may return to District employment in a position for which he or she is appropriately qualified and/or certified.

Contact the Human Resources Department to discuss specific personal eligibility requirements.

### **Lunch Periods**

See your collective bargaining agreement or fringe benefits section for your job description, as applicable. Additional clarification, if necessary, will be provided by your supervisor.

### **Nepotism**

It is the intent of the Board of Education to avoid both the reality and the appearance of any impropriety or conflict of interest in its hiring practices and procedures. The Board will not hire anyone related by blood or marriage to any Board member, administrator or any other employee of the Board to any paid position in this District. This does not apply to the employment of substitutes, interns and any other temporary employee.

### **Orientation Program**

New employees may be required to attend a mandatory orientation program on a date specified by the Board of Education. Employees' supervisors will provide specific orientation to familiarize new hires with departmental procedures, policies, etc.

### **Outside Activities**

The Board of Education reserves the right to determine when an employee's activities outside the school interfere with an employee's performance and the discharge of his or her responsibilities to the District.

The BCSS Board of Education prohibits providing private educational, therapeutic or counseling services or any other services for compensation to any student enrolled in the District.

The BCTS Board of Education prohibits providing private educational, therapeutic or counseling services or any other services for compensation to any student enrolled in the District, but only if the student is not enrolled in the certificated staff member's class and/or their caseload.

### **Overtime**

Employees may be required to work overtime, as determined by their collective bargaining agreement and/or their work assignment as determined by their supervisor.

## **Parking**

In most cases the District provides parking for employees at their work location. Employees must park only in those areas designated for such use. The District is not responsible for loss or damage to employees' vehicles and/or their personal property.

## **Paychecks**

For a summary of information regarding your paycheck, payday and other financial information, see the section of the Handbook entitled "FINANCIAL INFORMATION" and "EMPLOYEE PORTAL".

## **Personal Appearance**

The image of the District is reflected in its employees. For purposes of maintaining an environment conducive to academic productivity, the following criteria have been established for staff members, volunteers and other representatives of the District.

- Employees are required to wear identification badges at all times while on District property unless otherwise advised by the supervisor.
- Personnel should present a business-like appearance. Attire must be neat, clean and appropriate to the District's professional setting.
- No clothing or accessories shall be worn that constitute a danger to the health or safety of the wearer or others.
- Certain types of clothing shall not be worn. They include, but are not limited to, tank tops, halter tops, muscle shirts, sweat clothes, torn clothing or clothing containing foul language or obscene images.
- Employees who are required to wear uniforms must keep them clean and neat.
- Personal cleanliness and good body hygiene are required in the District environment.
- For safety and sanitary reasons, no overly encumbering or excessive jewelry should be worn. Fingernail length and facial hair should not interfere with one's ability to perform all required job tasks or present any safety hazards.
- All other aspects of personal appearance will be covered by existing safety, health and infection control policies and regulations.

In the event a supervisor determines that a staff member's appearance does not meet the District's policy requirements, the staff member shall be advised accordingly. If similar instances recur, the supervisor may write a reprimand that shall be placed in the staff member's personnel file.

## **Privacy – Staff Members' Rights**

Staff members have a right to privacy in facilities provided by the District or District-owned property. This includes, but is not limited to, an office, a storage closet, a filing cabinet, a locker, and/or a desk. In addition, this right extends to, but is not limited to, District-owned computers and technology equipment.



The expectation of the right to privacy, however, is reduced for searches conducted in an investigation of work-related employee misconduct or by legitimate District policies or regulations or if there is reasonable suspicion that the staff member is violating a law or school policy. As a result, staff members should be on notice that District facilities and District-owned property are subject to searches without a search warrant.

In order to avoid exposing personal belongings to such a search, staff members are discouraged from storing personal papers and effects in these facilities or District-owned property.

## **Professional Development**

### **Certificated Staff Members**

The Board of Education encourages all certificated staff members to pursue a program of continuing professional development through course work or matriculation in institutions of higher learning, participation in workshops and conferences, membership in professional organizations and independent scholarship. All certificated staff members, including licensed teachers and educational services personnel who work in a school district or non-public school requiring licensure, are required to complete twenty (20) clock hours of state-approved continuing professional development and/or in-service training every school year.

### **Noncertificated Staff Members**

The Board of Education believes that continued training and study is essential to the improvement of employee performance and the acquisition of technological skills. The Board of Education encourages all employees to participate in appropriate training programs.

## **Promotions, Reassignments and Transfers**

It is the policy of the District to fill vacancies by promoting, reassigning or transferring qualified employees. Vacancies are posted on the District websites, in employee lunch and break rooms and other common areas throughout the District buildings. Notify your supervisor if you are interested in a transfer, promotion or reassignment. All requests for transfers or reassignments must be submitted to the Human Resources Department in writing.

## **Protection Against Retaliation (“Whistleblower Act”)**

The Board of Education will take no retaliatory action, by discharge, demotion, suspension or any other adverse means, against an employee who conscientiously discloses or threatens to disclose to a supervisor or public body an activity, policy or practice of this Board or any District officer that the employee reasonably believes to be in violation of law or rule; provides information to or testifies before a public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into any alleged violation of law by the Board of Education or an officer of this District; or objects to or refuses to participate in an activity, policy or practice of this District that the employee reasonably believes to be in violation of

law or rule, fraudulent, criminal, or incompatible with a clear mandate of public policy concerning the public health, safety or welfare or protection of the environment.

See Section XIII of the Handbook entitled “CONSCIENTIOUS EMPLOYEE PROTECTION ACT.”

### **Public Statements**

No statement, which in any way involves the District, its policies or its students may be given out by any employee unless authorized to do so by the Superintendent.

### **Reduction in Force**

#### Certificated Staff

When certificated staff member positions have been abolished, the District will transfer, reassign or dismiss affected certificated staff members as required by law. Dismissals resulting from a reduction in force shall not be made by reason of residence, age, sex, marriage, race, religion or political affiliation, but shall be made on the basis of seniority according to standards established by the Commissioner of Education.

Tenured and seniority entitlements will govern the transfer and dismissal of tenured certificated staff members affected by a reduction in force. However, when two or more tenured certificated staff members within the same employment category are affected by a reduction in force and they possess identical seniority entitlement to that category, the certificated staff member who has demonstrated greater competence shall be retained in that category. The Board of Education may consider the scope of certification in making its decision. The Superintendent shall develop and maintain District seniority lists and shall recommend dismissals and transfers in a reduction in force in accordance with those lists.

#### Noncertificated Staff

The Board of Education reserves the right in accordance with statutory law to abolish any existing position in whole or in part or to reduce the number of employees in such positions. The Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education the abolition of existing positions, but shall meet and confer with the recognized employee organization before so doing.

Not all secretarial/clerical and other noncertificated personnel who have seniority in their positions as stated in their collective bargaining agreements/fringe benefits section of the job description shall be selected for layoff in accordance with length of service in the District. In such cases noncertificated positions shall be apportioned into categories on the basis of the skills and qualifications required to perform efficiently the duties of each category. Staff with seniority shall be considered to have an entitlement only to those positions for which they possess the requisite skills and qualifications.

Unless specifically addressed in a collective bargaining agreement, in the event a reduction in the number of custodians/maintenance personnel under tenure becomes necessary, those having the least number of years to their credit shall be dismissed in preference to any other such personnel having a longer term of service.

### **Reporting Violence, Vandalism, Alcohol and Other Drug Offenses**

Any employee who observes or has direct knowledge from a participant or victim of an act of violence, domestic violence, or the possession or distribution of alcohol or other drugs on school grounds, and any school employee who reports a student for being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, shall file a report describing the incident to the employee's immediate supervisor.

### **Residency Requirements**

In accordance with the "New Jersey First Act" all employees hired into a position on or after September 1, 2011, must reside in New Jersey. A newly hired employee who does not reside in the state will have one year after the date employment begins to relocate residency to New Jersey. An employee who does not do so is subject to termination of employment. All employees who live in New Jersey may not move out of state if they want to continue to be employed. The law allows an exemption on the basis of critical need or hardship. Contact the Human Resources Department for further information.

### **Resignation**

#### **Certificated Staff**

Any certificated staff member, under tenure of service, desiring to relinquish his or her position shall provide the District sixty days written notice of his or her intention, unless the Board of Education approves a shorter notice. If said employee fails to give such notice the certificated staff member shall be deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct and the Commissioner may suspend his or her certification for a period of not more than one year.

#### **Noncertificated Staff**

A noncertificated staff member wishing to relinquish his or her position shall provide the Board of Education with notification in accordance with the time lines set forth in his or her employment contract, fringe benefits section for the job description or collective bargaining agreement.

### **Returning to Work from Illness or Injury**

Under certain conditions, the recovery of an employee from an illness or injury and the effective and efficient operation of the school district may be best served by the employee's return to work before he or she is medically able to resume unrestricted performance of all his or her job responsibilities.

Light duty is temporarily assigning an employee to work that is physically or mentally less demanding than his or her normal job duties. A light duty placement will be in a pre-existing position that is open and does not require the creation of a position specifically for the purpose of providing work for an employee who is medically unable to perform some or all of his or her normal duties.

An employee assigned to light duty is expected to and shall schedule all medical examinations and treatment (including but not limited to physical therapy, work conditioning, work hardening, etc.) outside of his or her assigned workday.

### **Revisions of Handbook**

The District may change information in this handbook at any time. It is your responsibility to acquaint yourself with and abide by the contents and all revisions of this handbook. Notification of changes in handbook information shall be provided by the District.

### **Rules and Procedures**

This Employee Handbook is revised annually. Any changes made between revision dates shall be made available through alternative information sources. In addition to the policies and regulations issued by the Board of Education, each facility has rules and procedures that are specific to that site or program. Supervisors shall inform their employees of these rules and procedures.

Listed below are some of the infractions that, if committed, may result in disciplinary action. The District reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of disciplinary action.

This is not a complete list, but only an indication of some of the more common infractions.

- Falsification or unauthorized alteration of records, e.g., employment applications and time sheets;
- Excessive lateness or absenteeism;
- Unsatisfactory job performance;
- Insubordination;
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information contained in personnel, student, or other District records;
- Threatening or provoking a fight;
- Gambling;
- Possession of weapons;
- Destruction, damage, or misuse of District property;
- Unauthorized use, and/or possession of intoxicating beverages on District premises or property or drinking during working hours;
- Unauthorized sale, transfer, use, and/or possession of controlled dangerous substances (CDS), prescription drugs, and anabolic steroids;
- Reporting to work under the influence of intoxicating beverages, CDS, or anabolic steroids;
- Abuse or inconsiderate treatment of another employee or a student;

- Refusal to carry out the instructions of a supervisor;
- Leaving the job without permission during regularly scheduled working hours;
- Sleeping while on duty;
- Violation of smoking regulations;
- Non-compliance with the dress code;
- Violating health and safety policies, regulations, and rules; and
- Unprofessional, immoral, inappropriate, or indecent conduct.

This list of infractions is not issued for the purpose of restricting the legitimate rights and activities of employees, but rather is intended to help employees by defining and protecting the rights and safety of all concerned.

### **Sexual Harassment**

The sexual harassment of any employee or student is strictly forbidden. Sexual harassment includes all unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and verbal or physical contacts of a sexual nature. Sexually offensive speech and conduct are wholly inappropriate to the harmonious employment relationships necessary to the operation of the District and are intolerable in a workplace to which the students are exposed.

Any employee or agent of the Board of Education found to have sexually harassed another employee or student will be subject to discipline, which may include termination of employment. Any employee exposed to sexual harassment by another employee, student or agent of this Board of Education is encouraged to report the harassment to their supervisor.

### **Staff Identification Badges**

The District recognizes that building security measures are important for the safety and welfare of all students, staff, parents, and community members. In acknowledging this important responsibility, the District requires all employees to visually display District issued identification badges at all times while in District buildings, on school property or at other District facilities. Generally, the identification badge shall be worn around the neck; however, in certain cases badges may be clipped to an article of clothing that is located above the waist. Please notify the Human Resources Department should you lose your identification badge.

### **Student/Client Identification Badges**

The District will provide each student and client with an ID badge at the start of the school year. Students and clients must wear their ID badge at all times while on campus. This is necessary so that staff administrators are able to distinguish between students/clients and trespassers.

### **Students – Communication via Electronic Media**

Staff members are expected to avoid any behavior that might compromise their status as authority figures and role models for students. To that end, personal communication and interaction between students and staff members, whether verbal or non-verbal, through electronic media is to be limited to a student's school work or school activities.

Personal communications and interaction between all school staff and students via electronic media shall be appropriate and consistent with the policies of the Board of Education and in accordance with professional standards of good and acceptable behavior. Under no circumstances may any staff member communicate with a student using their own personal communication devices.

### **Substance Abuse**

The Board of Education prohibits the employees of the District, while on duty and in the presence of students from using or consuming or being under the influence of intoxicating beverages, anabolic steroids, and other controlled dangerous substances, the misuse of legally prescribed drugs, and engaging in the trafficking of drugs. Compliance with this standard of behavior is mandatory. For purposes of this prohibition, substances include:

- All CDS as defined and prohibited in New Jersey Statutes and Codes;
- All chemicals that release toxic vapors as defined and prohibited in New Jersey Statutes and Codes;
- All alcoholic beverages; and
- Anabolic steroids.

The District will make every effort to educate its employees regarding the misuse of illegal substances, alcohol, drugs and anabolic steroids. Further, it will assist and provide guidance to employees who have a problem concerning the abuse of these substances.

See also, “**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**” in this section of this Handbook.

### **Supervisor**

Your supervisor has been delegated the authority to instruct you regarding the performance of your duties, oversee your work, evaluate your performance on the job, apprise you of the rules, regulations, policies and procedures issued by the Board of Education and perform other traditional supervisory functions. The first person with whom to discuss any question or problem concerning your work is your supervisor. When he or she is unable to answer your question or resolve your problems, it is your supervisor’s responsibility to obtain the answers for you.

### **Surveillance**

The District may use electronic surveillance devices in school buildings and on school grounds to improve the security and safety of staff, students, and the District community at large. Notice of such surveillance shall be provided.

### **Technology Devices Provided by Board of Education to Staff Members**

The Board of Education may provide technology devices, which are the property of the Board, to staff members to be used in their school business related responsibilities. Staff members shall not have any expectation of privacy in the use of these devices. In addition, these devices may have security settings, monitoring or auditing software, tracking technology, and any other software that could monitor the use of the device. All devices

provided to staff members must be returned upon request by the Superintendent or his or her designee or termination of employment with the District.

## **Termination**

### Tenured Certificated and Noncertificated Employees

The Board of Education will challenge the continued employment of any tenured certificated or noncertificated staff member who demonstrates inefficiency in the performance of his or her duties, is incapable of performing those duties, violates the public trust through unbecoming conduct or displays by other means unfitness for District employment. The Board of Education will file certification of tenure charges against a tenured certificated or tenured noncertificated staff member if it is determined that the gravity of the charges and the probity of supporting evidence is sufficient to warrant such action.

### Nontenured Certificated Employees

Pursuant to and in compliance with the contract termination clause, the Board of Education may end the employment of a certificated staff member not under tenure under any of these circumstances:

- A request made by the employee for reasons accepted as valid and in the best interest of both the employer and the employee;
- By mutual agreement of both the employee and the employer that termination of the contract is best for the school system; or
- By direct request from the employer.

### Nontenured Noncertificated Employees

The Board of Education will enter into a contractual agreement with each nontenured noncertificated staff member providing, in part, for the termination of employment by either party. The Board of Education may terminate the employment of an employee for incompetence, immorality, unfitness for service, insubordination, reduction in force or other good cause. Any notification of termination for cause will include a full statement of the reasons for the dismissal upon written request by the employee.

## **Tuition Reimbursement**

The Board of Education is dedicated to providing employees with maximum opportunities to achieve their personal and professional goals. To this end, the Board of Education offers tuition reimbursement for qualified staff who wish to continue their education by enrolling in a course or degree program that is expected to result in significant and tangible improvement in the individual's skill level with a corresponding benefit to the District. Please refer to your collective bargaining agreement or fringe benefits section of your job description to determine eligibility for this benefit.



Additional information is provided in the “Employee Benefits” section of the handbook under “TUITION REIMBURSEMENT”.

## **Uniforms**

If an employee is required to wear a uniform for the specific position hired, the uniform must be worn at all times while on duty. Uniforms are not for personal use and should not be worn other than while on duty.

## **Union Membership**

The Districts recognize the following unions:

### **Bergen County Technical Schools District**

- Bergen County Vocational-Technical Schools Education Association, Inc.;
- Bergen County Technical Schools Secretarial Personnel Association;
- Bergen County Vocational-Technical Association of Custodial and Maintenance Personnel;
- Bergen County Vocational-Technical Schools Principals, Vice-Principals and Supervisors Association;
- Bergen County Vocational-Technical Schools District Supervisors Association.; and
- Bergen County Technical Schools Custodial Supervisors and Head Custodians Association.

### **Bergen County Special Services School District**

- Bergen County Special Services Education Association;
- Bergen County Special Services School District 192/193 Association;
- Bergen County Special Services School District Custodial/Maintenance Association; and
- Bergen County Special Services School District Administrators Association.

Once hired, new employees will be contacted by their respective union representative who will discuss all aspects of membership in the appropriate union. All union members should contact their union representative to obtain a copy of the current collective bargaining agreement.

## **Use of District Communications Systems**

District-owned communication systems and devices such as mail, telephones, facsimile machines, computers, tablets, email and the Internet may not be used by employees for personal solicitation or other purposes unrelated to District business.

The Board of Education provides computer networks, computers, resources, and Internet access to its specific staff members for educational purposes only. District staff users are



responsible for good behavior on computer networks, and computers just as they are when using other District- provided means of communication.

Communications on the computer networks and computers are often public in nature. Policies and regulations governing behavior and communications apply. The District networks, Internet access and computers are provided for District staff users to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to computer networks and computers is given to District staff users who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Computer and Internet access is a privilege; not a right. Access entails responsibility. District staff users of the computer networks and computers are responsible for their own behavior and communications over the computer networks and computers. It is understood that District staff users will comply with District standards and will honor their agreement to abide by federal, state, and local laws and the policies and regulations of the District as acknowledged by acceptance of employment in the District. Beyond the clarification of such standards, the District is not responsible for the actions of individuals utilizing the computer networks and computers who violate the policies and regulations of the Board of Education.

Because of the complex association between the many government agencies and computer networks and computers, the end user of these computer networks and computers must adhere to strict regulations. Regulations are provided so that District staff users are aware of their responsibilities and the consequences of violating federal, state and/or local law and the District's policies and regulations.

### **Use of Personal Cellular Telephones**

The use of one's own cellular telephone during the workday is restricted. Therefore, except under certain specific circumstances, staff members employed by the Board of Education may not use their own personal cellular telephones during the performance of their assigned duties or while operating District equipment or vehicles. Please refer to the Board of Education's Policy and Regulation Manual for a description of the circumstances under which the use of personal cellular telephones is permissible.

### **Vacation Time**

See "LEAVES OF ABSENCE – COMPENSATED" in this section of the Handbook.

### **Workers' Compensation**

See the section of the Handbook entitled "HEALTH AND SAFETY".

### **Working Hours**

Working hours shall be determined by your collective bargaining agreement and/or the work assignment given to you by your supervisor.

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## **COVID-19 Information**

### **Restart and Recovery Plan**

On June 26, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) published “The Road Back – Restart and Recovery Plan for Education” (Guidance), a guidance document for reopening New Jersey schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Guidance provided school officials with the information necessary to ensure that schools reopen safely and are prepared to accommodate staff and students’ unique needs during these unprecedented times. The NJDOE required school districts in the state to develop, in collaboration with community stakeholder, a “Restart and Recovery Plan” (Plan) to reopen schools that best fits the district’s local needs.

The Guidance requires the Board of Education to adopt certain policies and the Board adopts Policy No. 1648M – Restart and Recovery, to address those policy requirements in the Guidance. Policy No. 1648M shall only be effective through the current COVID-19 pandemic and will take precedence over any existing policy on the same or similar subject, unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent.

### **Remote Learning Options for Families**

On July 24, 2020, the New Jersey Governor and the Commissioner of Education published a supplemental guidance document titled “Clarifying Expectations Regarding Fulltime Remote Learning Options for Families 2020-2021” as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This supplemental guidance includes an additional “anticipated minimum standard,” as this phrase is used thought “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education” (NJDOE Guidance). This additional “anticipated minimum standard” provide that, in addition to the methods and considerations explicitly referenced in the NJDOE Guidance for scheduling students for in-person, remote, or hybrid learning, families/guardians (hereinafter referred to as “parents”) may submit, and school districts shall accommodate, requests for full-time remote learning.

Requests for full-time remote learning may include any service or combination of services that would otherwise be delivered to students on an in-person schedule, which may be a hybrid schedule, such as instruction, behavioral and support services special education, and related services. A parent may request some services be delivered entirely remotely, while other services follow the same schedule they otherwise would according to the provisions in the District’s Restart and Recovery Plan (Plan) and Policy No 1648M – Restart and Recovery Plan.

A parent may contact the Principal or his or her designee of the building the student would attend with any questions on: a request to transition from in-person services to full-time remote learning; a request to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services; the procedures of this policy; and/or any other information regarding the District’s Plan and Policy No 1648M.

## Restart and Recovery Plan – Full-Time Remote Instruction

On August 13, 2020, the Governor of New Jersey signed Executive Order 175 indicating public school districts shall resume partial or full-time in-person instruction during the fall of school year 2020-2021. However, Executive Order 175 also indicates public school districts that are or become unable to satisfy the health and safety requirements for in-person instruction delineated in the NJDOE’s “Checklist for Re-Opening of School 2020-2021” and detailed in “The Road Back – Restart and Recovery Plan for Education” Guidance, may provide full-time remote instruction to all students pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9 (Aid to school districts conditioned on compliance with rules and standards for equalization of opportunity; aid withheld for noncompliance).

## Federal Families First Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Act

The Federal Families First Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Act (FFCRA) includes the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA) and the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA). The EFMLEA expands the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the EPSLA provides employees with paid sick leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19.

The provisions of the FFCRA shall apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

**This summary contains highlights of the benefit plans available to you. For more complete information, please consult your District's Employee Benefits Specialist.**

Medical, prescription, dental, vision, disability, and long-term care insurance coverage may be part of the District's benefits program. New employees will be scheduled for a benefits orientation prior to their benefit eligibility date. Your Employee Benefits Specialist will explain in detail all the options that are available. For additional information consult your collective bargaining agreement or the fringe benefits sheet of your job description. Employees share in the cost of medical and/or prescription benefits via semi-monthly payroll deductions.

### **Medical Coverage**

In general, full time and part time employees who work twenty-five hours or more per week are eligible for medical coverage after completing two full months of continuous employment with the District. BCTS and BCSS ten month employees hired on the first day of September shall receive coverage effective immediately. Employees may insure themselves and/or eligible dependents, if applicable.

You may insure yourself and your eligible dependents. Eligible dependents include your spouse, domestic partner, civil union partner and the employee's child(ren) until age twenty-six, regardless of the child's marital, student, or financial dependency status – even if the young adult no longer lives with his or her parents. Children include natural children, stepchildren, adopted children and children for whom you have legal guardianship. Medical coverage will be available to eligible children through December 31 of the year they turn age twenty-six.

If the employee does not enroll him or herself and/or any eligible dependents in a medical insurance plan when he or she first becomes eligible for medical benefits, they must wait until the annual open enrollment period starts (usually in October for commencement of participation the following January).

If an employee has a life altering event affecting their personal health coverage, i.e., death, marriage, remarriage, change in domestic partner relationship, divorce or birth/adoption of a child, loss of other coverage, the employee must notify their Employee Benefits Specialist within thirty (30) days from the date of the change.

New Jersey State Employees Health Benefits Program must receive the application for changes no later than sixty (60) days after the qualifying event. If an employee fails to notify timely his or her Employee Benefits Specialist, they will have to wait until the next open enrollment period to make the change.

The website for New Jersey State Employees Health Benefits Program is  
<http://www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions/>

Each medical plan may also be located through the District's website at [www.bergen.org](http://www.bergen.org).

## **Prescription Drug Coverage**

Full time employees are eligible for coverage after completing two full months of continuous employment.

Bergen County Technical Schools and BCSS ten-month employees hired on the first day of September shall receive coverage effective immediately.

Prescription drug coverage will be available to eligible children up to the end of the month in which they turn twenty-six years of age.

The website is

<http://www.maxor.com/maxorplus/members>.

## **Dental Coverage – Delta Dental Plan of New Jersey, Inc.**

Full time employees are eligible for coverage on the first of the month after completing two full months of continuous employment. You may enroll yourself and your eligible dependents for coverage. Dependent children are covered until they reach the age of nineteen (19). Full time students are covered to their 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

Bergen County Technical Schools and BCSS ten month employees hired on the first day of September shall receive coverage effective immediately.

The website is

<http://www.deltadentalnj.com>.

## **Vision**

If applicable, your collective bargaining agreement or fringe benefits sheet of your job description will set forth your specific eligible coverage.

The website is

<https://www.e-nva.com>

## **Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)**

Employees of the District covered by the group medical, prescription, dental and/or vision plans have the right to choose continuation of coverage in the event the above-mentioned coverage is discontinued because of a reduction in hours or the termination of employment. For the details of eligibility to continue coverage under COBRA, please contact your District's Employee Benefits Specialist.

In addition to the above health benefits, certain other benefits are provided by the state and/or the District.

## **Pension**

### Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF)

Employees hired for positions requiring certification by the New Jersey Department of Education as members of a regular teaching or professional staff of a public school system in New Jersey are required to enroll in the TPAF as a condition of employment. You cannot join TPAF if you are a temporary or substitute employee, replacing an individual on a leave of absence or retired and receiving a monthly retirement allowance from another public retirement system in New Jersey.

### Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)

Membership in the PERS is generally required as a condition of employment for most employees. You are required to enroll in PERS if you are employed on a regular basis in a position covered by Social Security and you are not required to be a member of any other state or local government retirement system on the basis of the same position. Although most employees are required to enroll in the retirement system when hired, in some instances (for example, if you are a per diem employee or hired as a temporary or provisional employee by an employer covered by Civil Services) you may not qualify for enrollment in the system until up to one year from the date of employment.

Membership in TPAF or PERS for individuals enrolled after May 21, 2010, is based on hours worked.

### Defined Contribution Retirement Program (DCRP)

If you are ineligible to be a member under either TPAF or PERS, you may be eligible to enroll in the DCRP.

For more information, please visit the following website:

<http://www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions/>

## **Life Insurance/Accidental Death and Dismemberment**

All pensionable employees are eligible on the first day of hire for life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance. New hires over the age of 60 must show proof of insurability-notified and handled by the state. One-half of the premium amount is contributed by the employee and one-half by the District. Your premium contribution is mandatory for the first year of employment. After year one, you may stop contributing your portion of the premium. As a result, the original insurance amount will be reduced by one-half. Be advised that if you make this election, you can never reinstate the original option. The benefit is equal to three times the annual salary for employees covered by PERS. The benefit is equal to three and one-half times the annual salary for TPAF covered employees. The benefit is equal to one and one-half times the salary of the DCRP covered employees; contributions are made by the employer only.

## **Longevity/Service Adjustment**

Employees may be entitled to a service adjustment after working in the District for a specified number of years. Review your collective bargaining agreement or the fringe benefits section of your job description for specific information and eligibility.

## **Tuition Reimbursement**

Employees may be eligible to receive reimbursement for tuition expenses for courses if the following requirements are met:

- Prior written approval from the Superintendent or his or her designee; and
- The bursar's receipts and the original transcript of the course(s) indicating the award of a grade of "B" (or its equivalent) or better must be submitted ninety (90) days after completion of the course.

You must notify the Superintendent or his or her designee of your intent to take the course(s) two (2) months prior to the start of class(es). Upon approval, reimbursement shall be set based on tuition amount and number of credits allowed. Courses must be directly related to your professional responsibilities in the District. Please review your collective bargaining agreement and/or your fringe benefits section of your job description.

## **Tax Sheltered Investment**

All employees may elect to participate in various tax sheltered investment plans. Under this arrangement, an employee authorizes the amount of money to be withheld each pay period on a "pre-tax" basis. Federal taxes on salary are computed after this deduction is made, thereby lowering the taxable income amount. At the time the money is withdrawn, taxes will be assessed. District employees may contact their Employee Benefits Specialist for a listing of financial advisory firms. The Districts do not contribute or match the employee's deductions.

## **Credit Union**

All District employees may elect to participate in the credit union immediately upon hire. The credit union provides the convenience of direct deposit and numerous other banking features. For more information contact the Greater Alliance Federal Credit Union at (201) 599-5500.

## **Retirement Benefits**

Based on your collective bargaining agreement or fringe benefits section of your job description you may be eligible for financial reimbursement of sick leave, personal days, vacation time or other District retirement benefits based on your years of District service. Employees who are considering retirement must contact their employee benefits specialist to clarify the proper procedure for filing for retirement benefits.

Employees **must** register on-the Member Benefits Online System (MBOS) and the myNewJersey website.

In order to do so go to the New Jersey Division of Pensions at:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbos-register.shtml>

### **Unemployment Insurance**

Employees who become unemployed may be eligible for unemployment benefits under the New Jersey Unemployment Insurance Law. The District absorbs one-half of the cost of providing these benefits.



## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **Pay and Pay Periods**

You will be paid by direct deposit twice a month. Direct deposit is mandatory to all District employees. The form to initiate this practice is available in the Payroll Department, the Human Resources Department, and the employee portal.

BCSS and BCTS no longer produces direct deposit statements. Direct deposit may be discontinued if the employee has used all available compensated leave time. An employee will be required to reapply for direct deposit in the following school year. Once a direct deposit application has been processed and moneys have been transmitted to the bank, a staff member may request deletion of the direct deposit of a specific pay date. In order to ensure that the deletion is successful, a check to replace the direct deposit cannot be issued until six (6) banking days after the pay day requested by the employee.

### **Paycheck Information**

Payroll information will be available on the Employee Portal each payday. Please review your payroll earnings to assure its accuracy. If any information is inaccurate and/or you would like to change deductions, etc., please contact the Payroll Department.

Employees will need to create an account in order to access their direct deposit statements and W-2 forms. Employees may access the employee portal in one of two ways: 1) Go to [www.bergen.org](http://www.bergen.org). and select the District in which you are employed and click on employee portal, or 2) Go to the websites listed below.

BCSS Employees: <https://ssportal.bergen.org>  
BCTS Employees: <https://techportal.bergen.org>

The Technology Department will assign user names and temporary passwords and send them to employees by email. If an employee has any issues in accessing their employee portal, contact the Technology Department.

### **Payroll Deductions and Withholdings**

An employer is required by law to make certain withholdings against wages. Employees of the District are subject to Federal Income Tax, New Jersey State Income Tax, FICA, Medicare Tax, New Jersey Family Leave Insurance Tax, and New Jersey State Unemployment Insurance.

There are other mandated deductions, such as the Internal Revenue Code §414H defined benefit plans.

You will complete an application for enrollment and your Employee Benefits Specialist will forward it to Trenton. Pension deductions may take as long as four months or longer to commence. Once the New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits certifies enrollment, your pension deduction and a retroactive deduction will be made to assure service credit beginning with your date of hire. These deductions are made on a tax-

deferred basis. In addition to the pension plan, the New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits offers voluntary plans for retirement savings.

For more information, please visit the following website:

<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/>

Employees are subject to a state-mandated deduction from their pensionable salary for the cost of their medical and prescription insurance benefits.

Premium Only Plan (POP) allows employees to pay their portion of insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars. This formalizes the treatment of employee contributions toward health benefits as S-125 payroll contributions before federal income and FICA (Social Security and Medicare) taxes are calculated.

Flexible Spending Account (FSA) allows employees to make pre-tax contributions for expenses paid for child care, deductibles and eligible medical expenses not otherwise covered under a health insurance plan. Money deducted from an employee's pay into an FSA is also not subject to payroll taxes.

Retirement savings plans also are available through various private companies that have been authorized by the Board of Education. You may elect to have wages withheld on a pre-tax basis for an Internal Revenue Code §403(b) Salary Reduction Agreement and Governmental Internal Revenue Code §457 Salary Deferral Agreement.

If you are interested in any of these options, consult the "EMPLOYEE BENEFITS" Section of the Handbook under the "Tax Sheltered Annuity" heading or contact the Employee Benefits Specialist in the Human Resources Department for a list of companies authorized to offer these services.

There also will be a deduction for life insurance. For more information on life insurance, please see the section of the Handbook entitled "EMPLOYEE BENEFITS".

Many positions in the District are affiliated with a union. Union membership dues will be withheld from your wages. If you are eligible for membership in the union and decline it, a representation fee of no more than eighty-five percent (85%) of what would have been your membership fee will be deducted during the second half of the school year.

The Greater Alliance Federal Credit Union offers membership to District employees. For more information contact the credit union at (201) 599-5500.

## **Salary Changes**

Non-affiliated employees are eligible for increases in accordance with established wage and salary guidelines announced by the District's Board of Education each year. Employees covered by collective bargaining agreements are eligible for increases negotiated between their bargaining representatives and the Districts.

## **Garnishments, Tax Levies and Assignments of Wages**

In the event that your salary is garnished, the District is required by law to deduct the determined amount from your paycheck each payroll period and remit it to the appropriate party. All such information will be treated as personal and confidential.

For additional information or clarification, please contact the Payroll Department. Please note: neither District participates in the New Jersey State Disability Program. Disability insurance may be available through the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) covered by Prudential, at group rates. Premiums are paid by deduction for both districts.

Private disability insurance also is available from AFLAC and Met Life. Premiums are paid by payroll deduction for employees of both school districts.

Additional life insurance coverage may be purchased through UNUM and is eligible for payroll deduction of premiums.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is a goal of the District to provide a work environment free of safety and health hazards. As an employee of the District, you are a participant in providing safe working conditions.

### **Safety**

Safety is a way of preventing accidents. There are many and various causes of accidents.

- Attitude – anger, carelessness, showing off, etc.;
- Conditions – cluttered aisles, hallways and stairs; tools, supplies and equipment not put away, etc.;
- Lack of knowledge; and
- Error in judgment.

The District shall provide, publish, and post safety rules for the prevention of accidents and instruction for safety and accident prevention; provide protective devices where they are required by law and provide suitable and safe equipment. Ways to prevent accidents.

1. Do your job correctly:
  - Know and follow standard operating procedures;
  - Wear proper clothing and personal protective equipment when required;
  - Do not take chances;
  - Never operate equipment without permission; and
  - Be sure shields and guards are in place whenever appropriate.
2. Report any unsafe condition, equipment, procedure or unsafe act of any employee to your supervisor.
3. Obey warning signs.
4. Maintain tools, equipment and materials in a safe operating condition and use them only for their intended purpose.
5. Learn to do your job in the best and safest way possible.
6. Bend and lift objects properly.
7. Ask for assistance when necessary.
8. Use caution when transporting or assisting students.
9. Walk, do not run.
10. Wear shoes and attire appropriate for the job.
11. Use common sense.

## **Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan**

“Bloodborne pathogens” are disease-producing microorganisms present in human blood. They can cause illnesses in human beings that include, but are not limited to, Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

“Parenteral contact” means access to the body other than through the mouth and alimentary canal, e.g., mucous membranes and the skin. Such contact may be achieved by piercing, biting, cutting or abrading the skin.

“Occupational exposure” means reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane or parenteral contact with blood or any other body fluid that may result from the performance of an employee’s duties.

- Employees in this District who have occupational exposure are those employees whose duties require close contact with students as cited in the District’s Exposure Control Plan. Universal precautions shall be observed to prevent contact with blood and other potentially infectious materials.
- Employees with occupational exposure must participate in an online training program, which shall be provided at no cost to the employee. Employees also shall receive training whenever any modifications in their employment affect exposure except that any such training may be limited to the new exposures created.
- With certain exceptions, Hepatitis B vaccinations may be made available to each employee identified as having occupational exposure after the employee has received training in bloodborne pathogens.

## **Emergency Management and Disaster Procedures**

Copies of the BCTS and BCSS Districts School Emergency Planning Guide & Crisis Management Handbook are available in school building/administrative offices throughout the Districts. Standard emergency procedures and protocols are identified in the manual to protect and sustain life, alleviate emotional trauma, support emotional recovery from crisis events and minimize personal injury and/or damage to property. Building administrators/supervisors will review building security and safety policies and procedures exclusive to their facility with staff annually.

Every employee must know the location of the fire alarm boxes and the fire extinguishers nearest to their work area. It is important for all employees to check with their supervisor concerning the fire and disaster safety procedures developed specifically for their facility, to include knowledge of lockdown, evacuation and shelter-in-place actions and protocols.

Inform your supervisor of all injuries and dangerous situations.

**Dial 911.**

## **The Rule in Case a Fire or Disaster Occurs:**

- R** – **Rescue** any staff or students in the immediate area;
- A** – Sound the **alarm** by activating a fire alarm box;
- C** – **Confine** the fire or disaster area by closing any doors; and
- E** – **Evacuate** the remainder of the building.

Move evacuees to a “safe area” to be designated at that time by the supervisor. It is the duty of every employee to safeguard the lives of the students by preventing them from becoming unnecessarily frightened and by removing them from areas in which a fire or disaster occurs.

### **Housekeeping**

We are proud of the general appearance of District facilities and the efforts of the custodial and maintenance staffs to keep the Districts’ facilities clean, attractive and pleasant. Please keep your immediate work area neat and orderly. Good housekeeping is essential for safety and contributes to the well-being of the students and co-workers.

### **Personal Property**

The safekeeping of your personal property is your responsibility. The District advises you not to bring large amounts of money or valuable possessions to work. Keep your valuables in a safe place. The District cannot be responsible if any loss occurs. You should immediately report to your supervisor the loss of personal belongings or those of students and visitors.

### **Reporting Accidents and Injuries**

Every accident must be reported and documented in writing to the school nurse and supervisor of the individual making such report. To ensure the employee’s rights under the New Jersey Workers’ Compensation Laws, all injuries must be reported to the Human Resources Department immediately. Questions concerning accidents and the procedures to follow may be addressed to the Human Resources Department.

Employees should never leave work to go to the doctor without first advising their supervisor who, in turn, must notify the Human Resources Department. This ensures compliance with Workers’ Compensation Laws. Claims may be delayed or denied for failure to follow the District’s rules regarding medical treatment.

All programs have Emergency Operation Plans (EOP). It is every employee’s responsibility to become familiar with his or her EOP and it is every supervisor’s responsibility to review the EOP with his or her staff.

### **Reporting Unusual Occurrences**

Report anything out of the ordinary immediately to your supervisor.

## **Smoking**

The District maintains smoke-free environments. In accordance with New Jersey law, the District prohibits smoking at all times in District buildings or on District grounds, except as part of classroom instruction or a theatrical production.

## **Telephone Calls**

Incoming personal calls are not permitted during working hours except in an emergency situation. Similarly, outgoing personal calls may be made only if an emergency occurs.

## **DIRECTORIES OF THE DISTRICTS**

### **Shared Administration**

Howard Lerner, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4005

John Susino, Business Administrator/Board Secretary  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4056

Gary Hall, Director of Human Resources  
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Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6062

Edmund Hayward, Director of Technology  
200 Hackensack Avenue  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3369

### **Technical Schools District**

Andrea Sheridan, Assistant Superintendent  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4012

Richard Panicucci, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
540 Farview Avenue  
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### **Special Services School District**

Mitchell Badiner, Director of Instruction  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4070

Tara Bohan, Director of Instruction  
540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4079



Danielle Russo, Supervisor of Instruction  
327 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6012

**BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOLS DISTRICT**

**Bergen County Academies**  
200 Hackensack Avenue  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3349

Principal Russell Davis

**Technical High School – Teterboro Campus**  
504 Route 46 West  
Teterboro, NJ 07608  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 7700

Principal David Tankard

**Technical High School – Paramus Campus**  
East 275-285 Pascack Road  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 8500

Principal Jeremy Wertheim

**Applied Technology High School**  
c/o Bergen Community College  
400 Paramus Road  
Technology Building  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000 Ext. 6805

Principal Dennis Montone

**Adult and Continuing Education Program**  
190 Hackensack Avenue  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 2274

Principal Victor Lynch

**Workforce Investment Development Board**  
25 Rockwood Place, Suite 205  
Englewood, NJ 07631  
(201) 343-8830, Ext. 4004

Director Tammy Mollinelli

**Bergen One-Stop Career Center**

60 State Street  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5501

Coordinator

Lynda Wolf

**Day Care Center**

284 Hackensack Avenue (Rear)  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4654

Director

Alisa Miller

**Emergency Medical Services Training Center**

East 281 Pascack Road  
Paramus, NJ 07652 (201) 343-3407

Director

Michael Tarantino

**BERGEN COUNTY SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Adult Services**

**Careers Through Technology**

296 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000 Ext. 6031

Coordinator

Janice D’Aiuto

**Paramus Adult Training Center**

296 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6031

Coordinator

Janice D’Aiuto

**Stepping Stones**

296 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6031

Coordinator

Janice D’Aiuto

**Wood-Ridge Adult Training Center**

304 Valley Boulevard  
Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3602

Coordinator

Janice D’Aiuto

**Progressive Paths**

304 Valley Boulevard  
Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3602

Coordinator

Janice D’Aiuto

**Contracted and Specialized Services**

**CAPE Center**

540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4076

Executive Coordinator

Linda Wieseneck

**Career Crossroads**

c/o Paramus Technical High School Solar House  
285 Pascack Road  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4304

Director of Instruction

Tara Bohan

**Hospital Programs**

c/o New Bridge Medical Center  
230 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 967-4281

Supervisor of Instruction

Danielle Russo

**Services to Non-Public Schools – 192/193**

327 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6017

Supervisor of Instruction

Danielle Russo

**Suspension Alternative Program**

284 Hackensack Avenue  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 2422

Director of Instruction

Mitchell Badiner

**Transition Services/Educational Enterprises/Sound Solutions**

540 Farview Avenue  
Paramus, New Jersey 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6501

Supervisor

Grisel Espinosa

**Autism Continuum**

Sandra Melicharek, Principal

**Washington Elementary School**

355 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6461

Supervisor

Lauren Besante

**Washington @ Emerson**

c/o Patrick M. Villano School  
100 High Street  
Emerson, NJ 07630  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6461

Supervisor

Lauren Besante

**Washington @ Emerson**

c/o Emerson Jr./Sr. High School  
131 Main Street  
Emerson, NJ 07630  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6461

Supervisor

Lauren Besante

**Washington @ Hanover**

c/o Bee Meadow Elementary School  
120 Reynolds Avenue  
Whippany, NJ 07981  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5850

Principal

Sandra Melicharek

**Washington New Bridges Middle/High School**

296 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4591

Supervisor

Marissa Gynn-Ricafort

**Washington @ Passaic Valley**

c/o Passaic Valley Regional High School  
100 East Main Street  
Little Falls, NJ 07424  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5850

Supervisor

Jackie Dubil Craig

**Washington @ Tri-Valley/Bergenfield**

c/o Lincoln Elementary School  
115 Highview Avenue  
Bergenfield, NJ 07621  
(201) 385-8600, Ext. 1358

Supervisor

Laure Wisse

**Washington @ Tri-Valley/Bergenfield**

c/o Roy W. Brown Middle School  
130 South Washington Avenue  
Bergenfield, NJ 07621  
(201) 385-8600, Ext. 1358

Supervisor

Laure Wisse

**Washington @ Tri-Valley/Bergenfield**

c/o Bergenfield High School  
80 South Prospect Avenue  
Bergenfield, NJ 07621  
(201) 385-8600, Ext. 1358

Supervisor

Laure Wisse

**Washington @ Tri-Valley/Bergenfield**

c/o Hoover School  
273 Murray Hill Terrace  
Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621  
(201) 385-8600, Ext. 1358

Supervisor

Laure Wisse

**Washington @ Tri-Valley/Dumont**

c/o Grant School  
100 Grant Avenue  
Dumont, NJ 07628  
(201 385-8600, Ext. 1358)

Supervisor

Laure Wisse

**Washington @ Tri-Valley/Dumont**

c/o Lincoln School  
80 Prospect Avenue  
Dumont, NJ 07628  
(201 385-8600, Ext. 1358)

Supervisor

Laure Wisse

**Washington - Behavior Department**

296 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5850

Supervisor

Jackie Dubil Craig

**Behavioral Skills Continuum**

**Brownstone School**

c/o St. Philip the Apostle School  
492 Saddle River Road  
Saddle Brook, NJ 07663  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 8675

Principal

David Perez

**Evergreen Program**

c/o Leonia High School  
100 Christie Heights Street  
Leonia, NJ 07605  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3502

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**Gateway High School**

c/o Congregation Beth Tikvah  
304 East Midland Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3502

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**Manchester Program**

c/o Manchester Regional High School  
70 Church Street  
Haledon, NJ 07508  
(973) 389-2849

Director of Instruction

Mitchell Badiner

**North Street School**

200 North Street  
Teterboro, NJ 07608  
(201) 336-3958

Supervisor

Reginald Marc

**NOVA Elementary**

c/o Patrick M. Villano School  
100 High Street  
Emerson, NJ 07630  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5800

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**NOVA North**

c/o Emerson Jr./Sr. High School  
Main Street  
Emerson, NJ 07630  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5812

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**NOVA Ridgewood**

c/o Somerville Elementary School  
45 South Pleasant Avenue  
Ridgewood, NJ 07450  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5812

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**Venture Program**

c/o Congregation Beth Tikvah  
304 East Midland Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3502

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**Communication Skills Continuum**

Kathleen Lo Cascio, Principal

**Hearing Impaired Program (HIP)**

c/o Godwin School  
41 East Center Street  
Midland Park, NJ 07432  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6480

Principal

Kathleen Lo Cascio

**Hearing Impaired Program (HIP)**

c/o Highland School  
31 Highland Avenue  
Midland Park, NJ 07432  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6480

Principal

Kathleen Lo Cascio

**Hearing Impaired Program (HIP)**

Union Street School  
334 Union Street  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6400

Supervisor

Lisa Stewart

**Secondary Hearing Impaired Program (SHIP)**

c/o Midland Park Jr./Sr. High School  
250 Prospect Street  
Midland Park, NJ 07432  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6490

Supervisor

Melissa Brockway

**Life Skills Continuum**

**Project SEARCH**

One Bergen County Plaza  
Second Floor Room 2E  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4079

Director of Instruction

Tara Bohan



**Springboard**

321 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3521

Principal

Robert Mortorano

**Transition Center @ Wood-Ridge**

304 Valley Boulevard  
Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 3602

Principal

Robert Mortorano

**Multiple Handicapped Continuum**

**Bleshman Regional Day School**

333 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6442

Principal

Gail Coe

**Bogota Program**

c/o Bogota Jr./Sr. High School  
2 Henry C. Luthin Place  
Bogota, NJ 07603  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5800

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**Visions @ Becton**

c/o Becton Regional High School  
120 Paterson Avenue  
East Rutherford, NJ 07073  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4017

Principal

Robert Mortorano

**Visions @ Emerson**

c/o Emerson Jr./Sr. High School  
Main Street  
Emerson, NJ 07630  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 5800

Principal

Kelly Lopez

**Visions @ Paramus/Elementary School**

c/o Parkway School  
145 East Ridgewood Avenue  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6565

Supervisor

Grisel Espinosa

**Visions @ Paramus/Middle School**

c/o West Brook School  
460 Roosevelt Boulevard  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 6565

Supervisor

Grisel Espinosa

**Pre-School Continuum**

**BELA**

Bergen Early Learning Alliance  
284 Hackensack Avenue (Rear Entrance)  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 343-6000, Ext. 4663

Director of Instruction

Tara Bohan

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James J. Tedesco III

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