

BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Demographics. Berlin Public Schools opened the 2010-2011 school year with an enrollment of 1324 students K-12 and closed the school year with an enrollment of 1316. Kindergarten was offered in six half-day sessions. Most class sizes ranged from 12-27. The district hired 264 employees.

Grade levels K-2 are at Brown School, gr. 3-6 at Hillside School, gr. 7-8 at Berlin Jr. High School, and gr. 9-12 at Berlin High School. Special education offices and Title I (federal project for disadvantaged students in reading) offices are based at the Marston School building. The district's central office is in the Hillside School building. The district's bus fleet of 10 is housed in rented space on Third Ave.

SAU#3 reorganized district staff by eliminating an Assistant Superintendent of Finance and adding a Business Administrator, eliminating a custodial foreman position and adding a Building and Grounds Director. The district also has a full time Information Technology Coordinator to oversee all district technology including student and classroom uses.

Instruction & Assessment. The District Improvement Team has embraced three instruction and assessment goals that are designed for implementation in all grades K-12 to improve student achievement in Reading and Math. Those are:

- Response-To-Intervention model (RTI) 3-Tier Model: TIER I (instruction to all students), TIER II (supplemental instruction to some

students, about 20-30%), TIER III (intensive instruction for about 5-10%)

- Data Teams to develop instruction based on student assessments
- Parent and Community Engagement, increase participation and access

Brown School is in full implementation of RTI for Reading and Math. Teachers and specialists meet every week to pace and plan instruction by grade levels and data teams meet every six weeks to review student progress. From the data team meetings, teachers discuss and plan immediate interventions in reading or math so students will have the opportunity to catch-up and work towards being proficient. Interventions are provided by classroom teachers, special education staff, reading specialists and Title I tutors and teachers. Universal benchmark screenings are administered three times during the year and progress monitoring assessments are administered every two-three weeks to students in interventions to ensure adequate progress is being made.

Hillside School has implemented RTI in Reading with a 90-min. uninterrupted instruction time and an additional 30-minutes for interventions. Data teams by grade level review Benchmark assessments three times during the school year. Macmillan Treasures program is now consistently used in grades 3-6. Interventions are provided by special education staff, reading specialist and Title I reading tutors.

Berlin Jr. High School teachers in grades 7-8 were faced with difficult challenges with the elimination of a team of 4 teachers. This resulted in a 3-6 minute

loss of daily instructional time. Teaming will be reorganized for the 2011-12 school year to regain the loss of time by increasing class sizes. Teachers at these grade levels continued to put a strong effort operating in teams as promoted by the New England League of Middle Schools. RTI is implemented by weekly data teams who review assessment data from a variety of sources: state NECAP testing, NWEA Map testing, Accelerated Reader/Star Reading, disciplinary data and other pertinent anecdotal records. An intervention plan is developed for students not proficient or not achieving at benchmark. The staff has been creative in providing Reading and Math interventions during an Encore period. The Berlin Jr. High School replaced its wood shop program with a pre-engineering program called STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math). All students in grade 6, 7, and 8 will take this program for three years. The teacher is implementing the curriculum known as Engineering By Design. This class is designed for exploratory activities and hands-on practice on a variety of topics about how things are made and how they function in the real world.

Berlin High School (Gr.9-12) has implemented a student advisory program to provide an ongoing personal connection with students. Each staff member is responsible for 10-12 students during the school year. The advisories are the forum for parent communication, and supplemental instruction in areas such as pupil violence and safety prevention. Student portfolios were developed to improve parent communications at a December student-led parent conference, with 94.5% parent participation. B.H.S. is a PBIS (Positive

Behavioral Interventions and Supports) school with trained staff in using a behavioral analysis process for early interventions, both academically and behaviorally. A student support team meets weekly to review and discuss academic progress of students experiencing some form of difficulty, be it academic, emotional or behavioral. Data from classroom teachers, discipline referrals and Functional Behavioral Analysis are included in developing an intervention plan for students in need of support. Some student interventions include: "Check and Connect, APEX Learning credit recovery, counseling, Education and Work Program (RENEW) and peer tutorials.

All students in grades 3-8 and grade 11 were administered the NECAP (New England Common Assessment Program), the statewide testing, in October, in Reading and Math. Grade 5, Grade 8, and Grade 11 were also assessed in Writing. In May, grade 4, 8 and 11 were tested in Science. Grade 5 demonstrated an increase in the number of students who are proficient or above, 70% in reading and 62% in math. Grade 4 showed an increase in reading and grade 11 showed an increase in math.

Under the guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Districts and Schools are given a designation of "districts in need of improvement" and "schools in need of improvement" if state testing results aren't indicative of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in each student subgroup: race, disabilities, low socio-economic and gender.

Berlin is designated as a District In Need of Improvement (DINI) in reading and

math, Berlin High School is designated as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI) in reading and math, Berlin Jr.High School is designated as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI) in reading, Hillside School is designated as a SINI in reading and math, Brown School is a SINI in reading and math. These designations will continue until public schools reach the benchmark of 100% by 2014 as set by the U.S. Dept. of Education.

Data teams were established in each building. In addition, district and content level (reading & math) data teams were formed K-8. Our district goal is to actively review and discuss student data to drive instruction. Both formative and summative assessments are viewed to assist in the decision making process if a student needs an intervention to reach the benchmarks.

Staff Accomplishments. The District In Need of Improvement Team (DINI Team) developed the district improvement plan that included specific K-12 goals. The action plans that were completed to meet our goals include:

- Professional development in math instruction for differentiated abilities
- Consultation and facilitation with school teams to implement RTI, data teams, and increase parent and community engagement
- Parent/teacher/student conferences were held Dec. 2010
- Increase in parent communication requiring a minimum of 2 phone contacts per student, K-8

- Developed a new district website with more options and accessibility to all school information

District-wide committees met to address: “Wellness for staff and students”, “Professional Development” to coordinate all staff activities and individual professional development plans, “Bullying Law implementation”, “K-11 NECAP administration” for consistent interpretation of NECAP proctoring.

The Wellness Committee group took an inventory of all district activities that comply with the required N.H. Minimum State Standards for Approval. The inventory included both student and staff daily physical activities that promote healthy lifestyles, review of our food service offerings and competitive food sales during the school day. The content and accessibility of vending machines was changed. Soda is omitted from vending machines and food sales are prohibited when the hot lunch program is open. A culminating task of this committee was to complete a state requested survey about the school district’s nutrition and physical activity policies and implementations.

The Professional Development committee revised the district’s master plan for professional development by integrating the district goals: differentiated instruction, response-to-intervention model, data team development and parent involvement. The plan has been approved by the N.H. Department of Education for 5 years. The plan will guide staff with professional development activities and with the writing of individual 3-year professional growth plans. This committee met 8 times during the school year to collate and align

district-wide professional development activities with school and district improvement goals

Effective July 1, 2010, N.H. RSA 193-F Pupil Safety & Violence Protection was revised to define and address compliance requirements for incidents of bullying and cyberbullying. A school team was established to implement the changes. The group met 7 times during the school year and was charged with setting up required training for staff, students, parents and community. The team set an aggressive timeline for full implementation and compliance with the law.

- January, 2011: all professional staff, coaches, volunteers received school district policy and training
- February, 2011: all support staff, custodians, bus drivers; cafeteria staff received training on district policy on Bullying, distributed to all students and staff, training by Sue Buteau of UNH Cooperative Extension Service, "Understanding Bullying". Booklets for parents were also distributed.
- March, 2011: all parents received school policy and training offered in "Understanding Bullying" at Brown, Hillside and Jr. High School. Public and community presentation on 'Internet Safety and Cyberbullying' by Investigator Jennifer Frank. Investigator Frank is a member of the Plymouth State University Police Dept. Booklets were distributed about internet safety.
- April, 2011: Berlin High School held an open house where students

reviewed the bullying policy with their parents.

The district's Mentor Program is instrumental in providing support to beginning teachers, teachers with new assignments, and teachers new to the district. Monthly meetings and classroom observations were part of the mentor's responsibilities.

Cafeteria workers have continued the process of becoming certified with two professional development activities: Safe Serve and Healthy Edge. The Food Service Director and a Kitchen Manager are also certified by the School Nutrition Association. Three custodians participated in training with Honeywell to learn how to manage our heating system. Ten out of sixteen educational assistants, who are not Highly Qualified, participated in summer training and completed a portfolio of job related experiences that was scored and reviewed by an outside consultant. This will bring us to 75% who have met the criteria to be Highly Qualified Assistants; a district goal is to employ 100% HQ Assistants.

The Berlin School Department was the site of several review committees from various agencies and state departments.

In Oct./Nov., 2010, Berlin High School was host to a visiting team from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. This was the culmination of a 2-year process to acquire continued school accreditation for five years. Berlin High School staff prepared several documents identifying instructional practices, competencies, culture and climate. The Commission on Public Secondary Schools voted to award the school's continued

accreditation in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

On April 27, 2011, Hillside/Jr. High School was the site for a compliance review of the National School Lunch program. Extensive preparation by the Food Service Director and Kitchen staff, with adequate program reporting, recordkeeping, menu requirements and civil rights compliance, all supported a successful review. Recommendations for full compliance of the Child Nutrition Program were provided and corrections for inadequate findings were rectified. The USDA National School Lunch Program in Berlin Schools is a federally funded hot lunch, breakfast and snack program that is entirely self-sufficient.

On May 5 & 6, 2011, Berlin High School, Berlin Jr. High School and Hillside School were selected by the N.H. Department of Education for a compliance review of meeting the requirement of providing an adequate education based on N.H. Law. A visiting team of 12 members from the NH Dept. of Education and public school administrators from other districts, reviewed curriculum documents, interviewed staff and students, and toured facilities. The state visiting team made recommendations for expansion of programs as well as support to ensure full compliance of all programs.

On June 1, 2011, Berlin High School and the Career and Technical Center were selected for a civil rights on-site review. Principal Gary Bisson, CTE Director Roland Pinette, and Director of Special Education/Title IX/504 compliance coordinator Georgia Caron were well prepared for the state visit and provided many of the required documents to the

evaluator. Findings were reported regarding materials provided to persons of limited English proficiency and distributed to that community in its language. School policies were amended to include a specific staff coordinator's name rather than just a work title.

Facilities Report. A new entrance was installed at Brown School. Tile flooring on the second floor hallway was replaced at Berlin High School. The patio area at Berlin High School was enclosed to create a more energy efficient entrance to the school cafeteria. The first floor of the Jr. High Auditorium was painted. The department dump truck was replaced with a newer model, purchased by the city from the Berlin Airport Authority.

Training for custodial staff on maintenance of electrical, mechanical and heating problems at the schools, and winter plowing is ongoing.

Parent/Community/Board Involvement

Student contact information was made more readily available to teachers for parent communications. A district-wide phone log was developed for fall implementation. After surveying parents about their preferred method of contact, a telephone log was used by teachers to document a minimum of 2 personal phone calls per student. The phone logs, K-8, were submitted to the building principals at the end of the school year.

A parent/teacher/student conference day was scheduled for Dec. 10, 2010 for all grades K-12. In grades K-6, teachers reviewed student progress with individual parents, in grades 7-12, students reviewed their portfolios with parents. Parent participation rates were

strong: Brown School 91%, Hillside School 92%, Berlin Jr. High School 88%, and Berlin High School 94.5%.

School District brochures were developed and distributed to local establishments and departments, including all realtors. The brochures are an overview of our school profiles.

Parent and community forums were held at Brown and Hillside/Jr. High Schools on Bullying Prevention and Internet Safety. Berlin High School students met with parents on the same topic.

Family nights were held at Brown and Hillside Schools based on a literacy theme. 63% attendees at Brown School participated in literacy events centered on a theme, "How I Became a Pirate". and 57% attendees at Hillside School with a theme "Are You Smarter than A Fifth Grader?". These events were sponsored by the local Title I Program.

Students at all grade levels visited local establishments for community service, learning about safety on the job, science education, fine arts performances, job shadows and internships.

Brown School instituted a "Walking Wednesday School Bus". A grant was awarded to develop a walking program to encourage more students to walk to school. This was sponsored by the N.H. Department of Transportation. The school committed to four areas of focus: Evaluation, Education, Encouragement and Enforcement. Assistance is provided by Berlin Police Dept. and Berlin Public Works.

Berlin High School Building Trades students, under the direction of teacher

Matthew Lambert, built a visitor welcome center at Jericho Mt. Park for the N.H. Recreation and Parks Bureau. The center held a grand opening in June with N.H. Commissioner George Bald commending the students for a great job.

Berlin Board of Education members are: Nicole Plourde, Chair, Linda Pivin, Vice-Chair, Martha Laflamme, Secretary, Karin Dorval and Nathan Morin. In the fall of 2010, the Berlin Board of Education regrettably accepted the resignation of school board chair Michael Couture. Nathan Morin was appointed by the Mayor and City Council to fill the vacancy.

The Berlin Board of Education continued the process of district policy revisions. The following sections were updated during the 2010-11 school year:

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| Section E | Support Services |
| Section H | Negotiations |
| Section K | School/Community Rel |
| Section L | Education Agency Relations |

Three more sections remain for revision from the 1991 District Policy Manual: G Personnel, I Instruction, J Students.

The following individual policies were either added as new or revised: ECAF Audio and Video Surveillance on Buses, EEAA Audio and Video Surveillance on School Property, GBEBB Employee-Student Relations, GBEBD Employee Use of Social Networking Websites, GBEBB Staff Dress Code, JHB Truancy, JHB-R Truancy Policy Implementation Procedures, JICK Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention-Bullying, JLCC Communicable Diseases, JLCG Exclusion of Students, JLCG-R Exclusion of Students from School for Illness.

The Berlin Board members engaged in contract negotiations with the Berlin Education Association to develop a new collective bargaining agreement for two years. The Board members continue to participate in contract negotiations with ASFCME Local #1444 bus drivers and custodians.

The school budget was level-funded at \$15,797,124. The School Board members and district administrators carefully

examined all its programs and operational expenses in the year-long process of developing the FY12 school department budget. The goal continues to be to maintain N.H. Approved Schools that will ensure state and federal funding to supplement the city's school budget appropriation.

Respectfully Submitted,
Corinne E. Cascadden
Superintendent of Schools

***BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION
GOALS 2011-2013***

ACADEMIC

Improve achievement for all students.

Provide alternative learning strategies for our students including distance learning, after-school programming, virtual learning.

FACILITIES

Develop a facilities improvement plan and report to City Council by March 1.

SAFETY

Maintain a safe, supportive and nurturing environment in schools, allowing student and staff to focus on education without distraction.

COMMUNICATION

Promote parental and community involvement

COLLABORATION

Promote the collaboration between SAU#3 and SAU#20 to enhance educational opportunities that benefit students from both districts.