

BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Demographics

Berlin Public Schools opened the 2012-2013 school year with an enrollment of 1277 students K-12 and closed the school year with an enrollment of 1258. Kindergarten was offered in six half-day sessions. The district employed 254 staff members.

Grade levels K-2 are at Brown School, Grades 3-5 at Hillside School, Grades 6-8 at Berlin Middle School, and Grades 9-12 at Berlin High School. Special education offices and Title I (federal project for disadvantaged students) offices were based at the Marston School building. The district's central office is in the Hillside School building. The district's bus fleet of 10 vehicles was based at a leased garage on Third Ave.

An After-School Program, under the directorship of Tami Hartley, saw a tremendous growth in participation for students in grades K-8. Academic and enrichment support is provided daily in after-school programming, as well as community involvement. This program staff collaborates with classroom teachers to ensure students increase academic success in the regular classroom. Funding is primarily through 21st Century Community of Learners federal grant.

Instruction & Assessment

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, grades 4, 8 and 11 were tested in Science.

The following grade levels showed the most gain either near, at or above state average.

- Grade 4: 77% Proficiency in Reading; 67% Proficiency in Math
- Grade 6: 74% Proficiency in Reading; 64% Proficiency in Math
- Grade 7: 64% Proficiency in Reading; 55% Proficiency in Math
- Grade 11: 71% Proficiency in Reading; 6.3 Grade Equiv. in Writing

In the spring of 2015, all N.H. schools will be administering a new state assessment called Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium which students will take on an electronic platform.

Under the guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Berlin was designated as a District In Need of Improvement (DINI) in reading and math, Berlin High School was designated as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI) in reading and math, Berlin Middle School was designated as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI) in reading, Hillside School was designated as a SINI in reading and math, Brown School was a SINI in reading and math. These designations will continue until the federal goal of 100% of the students reach the benchmark by 2014. As of June 26, 2013, N.H has been granted a flexibility waiver from all requirements of No Child Left Behind Act. These school designations will no longer apply.

The National Chief State School Officers and all state Governors have endorsed and are promoting Common Core State Standards to ensure that students all over the country are provided with college and career readiness, high level English/language Arts and Math instruction. N.H. has recommended schools adopt those standards. Schools throughout the state are reviewing those standards and aligning them with curricular needs. Berlin teachers have been in that process for the past year. Teams of teachers in all our schools are developing unit design plans that clearly identify what students will learn, what they will be able to do and how will we assess what they know. No longer will a textbook determine what students will learn. This unit design planning is carried out in all grades, all subject areas.

Teachers developed nine Universal Expectations for best practices in all classrooms. All teachers must include these expectations in their teaching practice:

- 1) Do Now Activity
- 2) Posted Objectives (learning goals)
- 3) Class Agenda
- 4) Activator
- 5) Direct Instruction,
- 6) Guided Practice,
- 7) Independent Practice,
- 8) Formative and Summative Assessments
- 9) Summarizer

District administrators developed a common process for staff evaluations. The principals used a time-line for new and veteran teachers as they conducted performance evaluations. Administrators also trained and worked together on walk-throughs of all classrooms using an electronic platform they created for iPads.

The regional Career and Technical Education Center (CTE) offered the following programs: Accounting,

Automotive, Technology, Building Trades, Drafting/CAD, Early Childhood Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, Graphic Arts, Health Science Technology, Pre-engineering and Welding.

Industry certifications were earned by students in Automotive Technology, Welding and Health Sciences.

Staff Accomplishments

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

- The use of best practices in instruction will improve student achievement and narrow the achievement gap
- Advance the effectiveness of student/building/district data teams with the use of common assessments
- Improved communication with parents and the community will have a positive impact on student achievement

District-wide committees met to address: Professional Development, Wellness, Standards-Based Teaching and Learning, Common Core State Standards, Teacher Evaluation process, District and School goals.

As a district, we have participated in Berlin's HEAL (Healthy Eating, Active Living) project and in the city's development and revision of the Emergency Management Plan.

The district has a technology committee chaired by IT director Autie Hamilton. The committee worked monthly to: assess the needs of staff and students, ensure 21st century learning, increase access to technology, provide trainings for more efficient paperless tasks, support for student use and preparation for on-line, electronic

state testing with Smarter Balanced Assessment. The district has been proactive in increasing the use of technology for staff and students. Our inventory is currently 700 PCs, 320 Ipad and 105 Chrome notebooks. We have increased our district-wide bandwidth from 13 Megabytes to 200 Megabytes for all schools in preparation for our transition to a digital platform of one-to-one computing and state testing.

Parent/Community/Board Involvement

A parent/teacher/student conference day was scheduled for Dec. 10, 2012 for all grades K-12. In grades K-6, teachers reviewed student progress with parents, in grades 6-8 students reviewed their portfolios with parents. In Grades 9-12 parents met individually with teachers. Parent participation rates were: Brown School 100%, Hillside School 100%, Berlin Middle School 95%, and Berlin High School 47%. Berlin High School changed their approach from student-led conferences to parent meetings with parents. A student-led conference was scheduled at Berlin High School May 24, 2013, participation rate was 92%.

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

Family nights were held at Brown and Hillside schools based on a literacy theme. Brown School participated in literacy events centered on a theme, "Night Creatures" and Hillside School with a theme "Rope a Good Book". These events were sponsored by the local Title I Program.

Berlin Middle School students participated in a financial literacy fair assisted by Woodlands Credit Union and Guardian Angel Credit Union. Middle School

students also participated in a Health-O-Rama sponsored by Androscoggin Valley Hospital.

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.

The Drama Club had two performances; "Canterbury Tales" and Disney's "Aladdin, Jr."

Brown School continued a "Walking Wednesday School Bus". The school committed to four areas of focus: Evaluation, Education, Encouragement and Enforcement. Assistance is provided by Berlin Police Dept. and Berlin Public Works.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programming is evolving with a program for all students in grade 6, 7, and 8 at Berlin Middle School, then it transitions to Project-Lead-The-Way in grades 9-12. Project Lead the Way classes are pre-engineering courses offered at Berlin High School such as: Intro to Engineering Design, Civil Engineering, Bio-Technical Engineering, Digital Electronics, Technology and Robotics.

Students also have the opportunity to earn college credits by taking designated "Running Start" courses with White Mt. Community College while completing high school credits. APEX learning is an on-line program for students who need credit recovery.

Berlin High School Building Trades students, under the direction of teacher Matthew Lambert, built a private home on Hillside Ave. This house project will continue in the 2013-14 school year for students to learn finished carpentry work.

Several high school student groups qualified and attended national conferences and competitions: Destination Imagination, HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America), USA SKILLS for Welding, and FCCLA (Family Career and Community Leaders of America). Eight athletic teams qualified and participated in state tournament action.



Berlin Board of Education members are: Nicole Plourde, Chair, Donald Labrecque, Vice-Chair, Ken Proulx, Secretary, Louise Valliere and Lynn Moore. The Berlin Board of Education regretfully accepted the resignation of school board member Nathan Morin. Lynn Moore 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 2012-13 school year:

Section I Instruction
Section J Students

This concludes a complete revision of the former 1991 policy manual for the Berlin Schools. The following individual policy was revised, BEA Regular Board Meetings and a policy for students to bring their own electronic devices was added.

The Berlin Board members were successfully engaged in contract negotiations with Berlin Education Association Teachers, to develop a new collective bargaining agreement for three years. The Board members were also successful in contract negotiations with ASFCME Local #1444 bus drivers and custodians with an agreement for five years as well.

Berlin School District has an AREA (Authorized Regional Enrollment Area) with the town of Milan, N.H. and a Tuition Agreement with the town of Dummer, N.H.

The city funded the school budget at \$16,731,124. The School Board members and district administrators carefully examined all its programs and operational expenses in the year-long process of developing the FY14 school department budget. The goal is to maintain N.H. approved schools, to maintain high school accreditation with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, to pursue state and federal funding as supplements to the city's school budget appropriation and to increase technology in all aspects of teaching and learning.

Respectfully Submitted,

Corinne E. Cascadden
Superintendent of Schools