

# BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT DISTRICT NEWS



## SPRING EDITION - APRIL 2019

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### FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

By Christopher M. Tully, EdD, Superintendent of Schools



As may read in the column to the right, Bergenfield High School was once again named one of America's Most Challenging High Schools. BHS was ranked in the top three percent in the country and top one percent of high schools in New Jersey by the Jay Mathews Challenge Index (formerly the Washington Post and Newsweek lists).

BHS has continued to move up this list for the past seven years because of our excellent test scores; the high percentage of students participating in and scoring well on AP exams; and, our high percentage of students attending college. It's my firm belief that our school district garners

recognition because our focus is on offering programs and services that enable all students to become self-directed, lifelong learners. This requires a balanced education focused on physical and emotional wellness as well as the development of skill, knowledge, and intellect.

While I will be the first to acknowledge that our local technology revolution, facilitating the use of data and online resources, has allowed us to rapidly accelerate student achievement, I would also like to recognize the limitations of technology in terms of striving for balance. Our reliance on small screens, whether cell phones, tablets, PCs, or televisions, can dramatically limit our perceptions and experiences. For example, if I walked out of my house on a sunny day, pointed my phone to the sprinkler on my lawn, and took a video, I can convince you that it was raining. Yet, if you put the phone away and look up, you would see that it was a beautiful day with not a cloud in the sky.

Too much screen time may be clouding our senses, influencing our judgment, limiting our perspective, imprisoning our bodies, and, most importantly, isolating us from meaningful connections. I've always believed that the most important component of a successful classroom is not the books, curriculum, or technology—but the relationship and bonds formed among the teachers and students. That's where our deepest learning takes place, as every meaningful interaction teaches us a little bit more about ourselves.

There's no doubt that technology is here to stay, and it has opened new doors to learning that we could not have imagined; but, if you want to see something trend-worthy that you can like and share, step outside and look around. Now that spring has arrived, I encourage us all to spend more time being active with our friends and families, and enjoying the beautiful outdoor space in our community and beyond.

Technology and test scores have helped our district win awards, but it's our music, art, clubs, and athletics that connect us and have filled us to the brim with Bear Pride. Parents clapping, friends cheering, hearts pounding, muscles burning, faces smiling, friends laughing—all in the name of school spirit. These immeasurable experiences happen in real time, not screen time. So, let's all make an effort to look up. I'll be looking up outside for you!

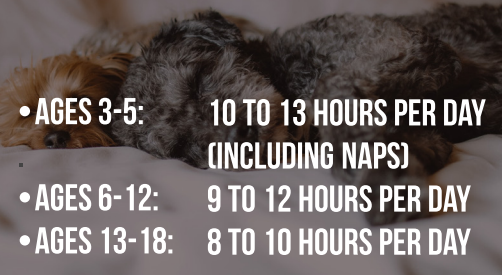
### BHS RANKED SECOND IN BERGEN COUNTY

For the seventh year in a row, BHS has made the Jay Mathews Challenge Index. Formerly The Washington Post's "America's Most Challenging High Schools," Jay Mathews' list ranks the top high schools in the nation. This year's index places BHS at 824, landing the school in the top 3% in the U.S. and top 1% of high schools, both public and private, in New Jersey.

On the 2018 index, BHS continues to steadily move up in rank. BHS rose 274 places from its spot on last year's national ranking. Bergenfield High School first debuted on the list at number 1624 back in 2012, and has increased 800 places in just 6 years. The high school now ranks 2nd in Bergen County (up from 7th last year) and 36th overall in the state.

The Challenge Index is the oldest high school ranking system in the country, beginning in 1998 in both Newsweek and The Washington Post. Education columnist Jay Mathews has been ranking the most challenging schools in the country for 20 years. There are over 2,200 schools on the 2018 Challenge Index, representing about 10% of the nation's high schools.

### AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS CHILDHOOD SLEEP GUIDELINES

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- AGES 3-5: 10 TO 13 HOURS PER DAY (INCLUDING NAPS)
  - AGES 6-12: 9 TO 12 HOURS PER DAY
  - AGES 13-18: 8 TO 10 HOURS PER DAY



# DISTRICT NEWS



## STUDENTS REPRESENT MIDDLE SCHOOL IN REGION CHOIR



RWB had a strong showing at the Junior Region Choir performance this month.

Fourteen 7th and 8th grade choir students from Roy W. Brown were accepted into the 2019 Junior Region Choir. Their performance was on Sunday, March 17th at Mountain Lakes High School.

Representing seventh grade were: Emily Carmona, Chenelle Castor, Alyssa Darby, Abigail Loszynski, Gregg Martin, Giada Ragusa, Juliaross Ramos, and Kathryn Tesoriero.

Representing eighth grade were: Katrina Castillo, Bianca Del Campo, Margaret Jenkins, Rachel Lerma, Aaron Lintag, and Irthu Pillai (not pictured).

### HELPFUL PARENTAL CONTROL APPS

**BARK:**  
[BARK.US](http://BARK.US)

**QUSTODIO:**  
[QUSTODIO.COM](http://QUSTODIO.COM)

**LINKSYS APP:**  
[LINKSYS.COM/US/APP/](http://LINKSYS.COM/US/APP/)

BERGENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION DOES NOT HAVE A BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP WITH THESE COMPANIES. YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO PERFORM YOUR OWN RESEARCH AND MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS.

## PRINCIPAL FOR A DAY



Christopher and Mr. Biggins prepare for the day.

As part of the PBIS Rewards Program at RWB, students are acknowledged for positive behavior by earning Bear Bucks, which can be spent on privileges throughout the year. Recently, the school held a "Principal for a Day" auction. Christopher Plump was the highest bidder and had the opportunity to shadow Mr. Biggins.



The duo conducts a teacher observation.

## VOLUNTEERS RECOGNIZED



Russell and Lucia show off their certificates.

Seniors Russell Sangalang and Lucia Miano both earned the President's Volunteer Service Award, which recognizes Americans who volunteer significant time to serve their communities and country.

Russell also received a Certificate of Excellence from the 2019 Prudential Spirit of Community Award committee, finishing in the top 10% in the nation, and the Martin Luther King Certificate of Merit representing BHS.

## WORDMASTERS CHALLENGE



Gabriella and Eva both achieved perfect scores.

Franklin School fifth graders Gabriella Raymundo and Eva Bayersdorfer achieved perfect scores on the second meet of this year's WordMasters Challenge. Gabriella also had a perfect score on the first meet.

The WordMasters Challenge is an exercise in critical thinking that encourages students to learn a set of interesting new words (above grade-level), and use them to complete various analogies.

# DISTRICT NEWS



## THE BEAR DEN OFFICIALLY OPENS AS NEW HOME TO TRANSITION PROGRAM



Exterior shot of the newly constructed Bear Den.

In January, board members, staff, students, and borough officials attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Bear Den at Lincoln Elementary School.

The Bear Den is home to a transition program for students, ages 17 to 21, with special needs. The goal of the program is to provide educational, vocational, and leisure activities in the students' local community. The program also teaches students advanced life skills to support their transition to adulthood with increased independence.

The Bear Den will benefit both our students and community for years to come. The program allows for our students to stay in Bergenfield rather than attending a program in another community. This translates to a savings of approximately \$60,000 per student per year while providing a world-class program within Bergenfield.

## STUDENT'S PROJECT SELECTED FOR NEW JERSEY ART EXHIBIT



Christopher received a Certificate of Achievement.

Christopher Estiler, fifth grader at Hoover School, is one of six Bergen County students selected out of hundreds from grades K-12 to represent Bergen County in the New Jersey State Youth Art Month (YAM) Exhibition held in Trenton. He was honored in an elaborate award ceremony on March 8th.



The student's colorful pastel landscape.

Christopher's creativity and well-thought-out detail enabled him to create a pastel landscape of spectacular mountain peaks towering over fog-filled valleys using a blocking technique.

The juried YAM Exhibition is considered one of the most prestigious art competitions of the year.



Modern kitchen is used to prepare meals daily.



Living room space equipped with SmartBoard.



Bedroom space further supports life skill training.

### American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for Children's Use of Media

- Children ages 2-5: Limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programs. Co-view media to help them understand content & apply it to the world around them
- Children ages 6+: Place consistent limits on time spent using media, types of media, & make sure it does not replace time spent on sleep, physical activity, & other things essential to health
- Designate media-free times together as well as media-free locations at home, such as bedrooms
- Have ongoing talks about online citizenship and safety, including treating others with respect online and offline

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## DISTRICT NEWS | APRIL 2019

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# DISTRICT NEWS



THE BEAR DEN UNVEILED!

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