

What Every New Board Member Needs to Know

About the Berlin Area School District – 2016

The mission of the Berlin Area School District, with students as our number one priority, is to provide every student a safe and healthy environment where every student can collaborate, problem solve, and develop their full potential. In order to prepare students to live and contribute to a changing world, Berlin Area School District partners with parents and community members to empower all students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens through the delivery of quality instruction and a well developed curriculum designed to support all students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

General Information

Berlin Area School District
295 E. Marquette Street, Berlin, Wisconsin 54923
920-361-2004

District Administrator

Dr. Robert Eidahl 920-361-2004 or 920-570-2532 beidahl@berlin.k12.wi.us

District Administrator's Assistant

Tricia Polakowski 920-361-2004 tpolakowski@berlin.k12.wi.us
Fax: 920-361-2170

Board Members

Catherine Kujawa (President) ckujawa@berlin.k12.wi.us

Sue Haase (Vice President) shaase@berlin.k12.wi.us

Beth Malchetske (Treasurer) bmalchetske@berlin.k12.wi.us

Dina Dretske (Clerk) ddretske@berlin.k12.wi.us

Mark Finger mfinger@berlin.k12.wi.us

Linda Reetz lreetz@berlin.k12.wi.us

Paul Werch pwerch@berlin.k12.wi.us

Nick Bartol nbartol@berlin.k12.wi.us

Dr. Craig Batley cbatley@berlin.k12.wi.us

Communities served by the district: The Berlin Area School District is a common District and includes the City of Berlin and parts of the townships of Aurora, Saxeville, St. Marie, Leon, Poy Sippi, Warren, Nepeuskun, Brooklyn, Seneca, Town of Berlin, Bloomfield, Rushford and Marion.

Number of Employees in district: Licensed = 139 (Teachers, Admin, Nurse & Special Services) Non Licensed = 83 (Custodians/Maintenance, Food Service, Office Staff, Paraprofessionals and District Office Staff) Total: 222

Grade Levels Served by the district:

Early Childhood, 4K – 12

Number of Schools

4-Year Old Kindergarten Site Based: All Saints Catholic School, St. John’s Lutheran School, Berlin Community Daycare, Headstart

Elementary School: Clay Lamberton

Middle School: Berlin Middle School

High School: Berlin High School

Number of Students

Total K4-12 = 1,610

Ethnic Group by percentage: American Indian or Alaskan Native = .2%, Asian = .9%, Black or African American = .9%, Hispanic/Latino = 13.5%, Pacific Islander = .1%, White = 83.6%, Two or More Races = .8%

Percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch: 46%

Bus Service

Provided by Mascoutin Transportation (920-361-2100)

Building Administrators

Berlin High School

Lynn Mork (Principal) 920-361-2000 lmork@berlin.k12.wi.us

Joe Brandl (Asst. Principal/Athletic Director) 920-361-2000 jbrandl@berlink12.wi.us

Berlin Middle School

Mike Raether (Principal) 920-361-2441 mraether@berlin.k12.wi.us

Jodi Becker (Director of Instruction 6-12) 920-361-2000 jbecker@berlin.k12.wi.us

Clay Lamberton Elementary

Scott Bartol (Principal) 920-361-2442 sbartol@berlin.k12.wi.us

Judy Munsey (Director of Instruction 4K – 5) 920-361-2442
jmunsey@berlin.k12.wi.us

School Board Standing Committees

Board members are appointed to committees by the Board President.

Building and Grounds Committee:

This committee reviews and addresses facility needs based on maintenance needs and helps to develop solutions to adequately maintain District facilities. All plans for work in the district is brought before the whole Board for review.

Policy Committee

This committee systematically reviews, updates, and revises District policies and procedures as necessary. They also make discuss and propose new policies as situations dictate. All policy changes and updates are brought before the Board for approval.

Questions to Consider

What changes have occurred in the district in the past five years?

There have been many changes in our district in the last several years. We have closed an elementary school in Poy Sippi, sold Washington School to the Boys and Girls Club, and sold the old middle school to Commonwealth Development. We passed a referendum in the fall of 2013 to build a new middle school and to remodel the high school and elementary school. We also added a kindergarten wing onto the elementary school.

In the area of curriculum, the elementary changed our reading program completely to a level reading system. This development ended the use of basal readers and individualized reading instruction for all students. We have added new math curriculum at both the elementary and middle school to further individualize instruction. Throughout the district we have added technology to keep our students up to current standards. This includes Smart Boards in every room and chrome books for individual student use.

Our entire district has become more data driven while working hard to keep the personal touch that every child and staff members need. We have multiple assessments to use to evaluate student growth. For students who need more time to learn we provide additional supports to allow success while fast learners are supported with our new Advanced Learning Program. Our district also received two large federal grants. The first for School Climate supports our Positive Behavior Intervention System and the other was for Mental Health Awareness.

What changes are anticipated in the next five years?

The district will continue to monitor student growth and will explore the most effective strategies available to help every child. We will continue to support our students with mental health issues as this is a trending issue for schools. We will see some moderate growth in student population and will need to continue to meet the diverse needs of our students. The state has had a difficult time funding public education and so finances will be at the forefront of many discussions.

What are the Districts Vision 20/20 goals?

By the year 2020:

All Schools in Berlin Area School District will achieve in the “Exceeds Expectations” category as measured by the School Report Card.

- ⇒ All schools will achieve 96% or better for attendance – including all subgroups as measured by the School Report Card.
- ⇒ All schools will meet or exceed the state average in both reading and math student achievement as measured by the School Report Card
- ⇒ All schools will meet or exceed the state average in all aspects of closing the gaps for special populations (Reading achievement, Math achievement and Graduation Rate) as measured by the School Report Card
- ⇒ All schools will implement Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to fidelity.
- ⇒ All schools will establish effective communication within the district and community in order to create partnerships and build long-term positive relationships to help attain district goals.

Board Meeting Dates and Times

Third Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

The Purpose of the Public Comment Section of the Board Meeting:

The Berlin Area School District Board of Education believes that hearing public comments about issues affecting the District is important to its mission. Unless the issue brought forward is on the agenda the Board cannot discuss or respond to the Public Comment.

Board Protocol

0141 **Number**

The Board of Education shall consist of nine (9) members.

0142 **Election/Appointment**

0142.1 **Electoral Process**

Members of the Board shall be elected annually at the spring election on the first Tuesday in April in a manner that is consistent with State law.

120.06 (1), 10.68 (5)(2b), Wis. Stats.

Declaration of Candidacy

If an incumbent fails to file a Declaration of Candidacy and nomination papers by the 5:00 P.M. deadline on the first Tuesday in January, candidates may file a declaration of candidacy and nomination papers within seventy-two (72) hours of the Tuesday deadline.

Declaration of Non-Candidacy

If an incumbent files a Declaration of Non-Candidacy no later than 5:00 P.M. on the 2nd Friday preceding the Tuesday deadline, there is no extension of the Tuesday deadline.

When the first Tuesday in January is a holiday the deadline becomes 5:00 P.M. the next day.

120.06 (6)(b), Wis. Stats.

0142.2 **Qualifications**

A school elector in the School District is eligible to be a Board member.

120.06(2), Wis. Stats.

0142.3

Term

The term of each Board member shall be three (3) years commencing on the 4th Monday in April and shall continue until a successor is elected and qualified or until a vacancy occurs.

120.06(4,) Wis. Stats.

0142.4

Oath

Each newly-elected Board member shall file the oath of office with the Clerk and shall take an oral oath of office administered by the Clerk.

120.06 (10), Wis. Stats.

0142.5

Vacancies

The office of a Board member shall become vacant immediately upon the occurrence of any one (1) of the following events:

- A. the death of the incumbent, or the incumbent's being found mentally incompetent by the proper court
- B. the incumbent's resignation
- C. the incumbent's removal from office
- D. the incumbent's conviction of a felony or imprisonment for one or more years
- E. the incumbent's election or appointment being declared void by a competent tribunal
- F. the incumbent's neglect or failure to file the oath of office or to give or renew an official bond, if required
- G. the incumbent's ceasing to possess the legal qualifications for holding office
- H. the incumbent moving his/her residence out of the District

- I. the incumbent is absent from the territory of the District for a period of sixty (60) continuous days, unless such absence is due to active duty in the armed forces, in which case the vacancy shall be temporary for the remainder of the term or until the incumbent returns and files a notice of his/her intent to return to his/her unexpired term.

A vacancy shall be filled by the remaining members of the Board in accordance with 17.26.

17.03 et seq., Wis. Stats.

Filling a Board Vacancy

The vacancy shall be filled by the Board using the following procedure:

- A. Appointment by the Board to fill a vacancy shall be by the majority vote of the existing Board. All votes shall be recorded, preserved and open to public inspection to the extent prescribed in Wis. Stat. Chapter 19. Secret ballots may only be used when Board members are electing officers.
- B. The Board shall seek qualified and interested candidates from the community through the news media, word of mouth, and contacts with appropriate organizations.
- C. All applicants are to submit a notice of their interest, in writing, to the District Administrator.
- D. The Board may interview all interested candidates to ascertain their qualifications.

For Board Consideration

Candidates for a vacancy on the Board shall be considered at an open meeting, unless there are exceptional reasons to consider the candidates in closed session. The Board may consider candidate(s) in a closed session only if the discussion involves financial, medical, social or personal histories or disciplinary data, which, if discussed publicly, would be likely to have a substantial adverse effect upon the reputation of the candidate(s).

- E. Appointment by the Board to fill a vacancy shall be by a majority vote of the existing Board. If the vacancy is not filled within sixty (60) days of the date on which the vacancy first exists, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the Board President.

Revised 8/19/15

Revised 3/16/16

0142.6 **Recall**

Any member of the Board may be recalled pursuant to Chapter 9.10, Wis. Stats.

0142.7 **Orientation**

The Board and administrative staff shall make every effort to assist new Board members in becoming fully informed about the function, policies, procedures and concerns of the Board.

- A. New Board members shall be given materials available relating to Board member powers and duties.
- B. The District Administrator shall supply materials pertinent to meetings and explain their use.
- C. New Board members shall be invited to meet with the District Administrator and the Board President to discuss Board and administrative responsibilities.
- D. Access to the Board's policy manual shall be given to each new Board member.
- E. New Board members shall be encouraged to attend in-service sessions for new Board members conducted by school board organizations.

A new member, or any person designated for appointment as new member of the Board, is to be afforded the Board's and the staff's fullest measure of courtesy and cooperation. The Board and staff should make every effort to assist the new member to become fully informed about the Board's functions, policies and procedures.

A special orientation will be held for the primary purpose of briefing the new member to his/her responsibilities to the Board's method of operation and to school district policies. During this orientation the new board member shall meet with the District Administrator and building Principals to receive input on the operations and policies of their particular building and authority.

Areas of Orientation

- A. School Community Relationships and General Responsibilities
 - 1. Copy of the School District policy manual
 - 2. An explanation of School Board organization (officers, standing and special committees and so forth)
 - 3. Explanation of procedures to follow if a Board member receives a phone call positive/negative
 - 4. A description of the geographic limits and attendance area of the School District
 - 5. An explanation of how school buildings are used after school hours by the community
 - 6. Explanation of the legal status, activities and interests of education-orientated community groups such as the PTO, etc.
 - 7. An explanation of public relations – such as district newsletters, building level newsletters and media releases
 - 8. An explanation of closed session and the confidentiality it must entail
 - 9. New Board members shall be encouraged to attend the annual in-service for new and experienced Board members sponsored by WASB

- B. School Business and Management (District Administrator)

1. A copy of the District budget. Explanation of how, when and by whom it is prepared; how educational needs are translated into a dollar and cents plan; where the money comes from and where it goes.
2. Statewide per pupil cost comparison
3. Recent history of local taxes
4. A list of indebtedness and when those debts will expire
5. An explanation of fund accounting and management by objectives
6. An explanation of applicable Federal and State programs, Title one, special education, etc.
7. An explanation of the District's insurance programs
8. An explanation of procedures to follow when board members are to be reimbursed for travel, etc.

C. School Curriculum and Instruction (District Administrator)

1. An explanation of the District's overall curriculum program; business, technical and academic courses available to students including special education.
2. An explanation of how elementary and secondary curriculum are coordinated
3. An explanation of standardized testing and the utilization of tests results
4. An explanation of local student achievement and how it compares with that of other districts and with state and national scores
5. A description of libraries and instructional material available, including internet access, distant learning, school-to-work and youth option programs

6. An explanation of the district-wide athletic program and purpose of them

D. Administration and Teaching Staff (District Administrator)

1. A chart of the School District's organization of administrative staff all the way through the support staff
2. A description of staff recruitment procedures
3. An explanation and copy of evaluation instrument being used
4. A copy of the collective bargaining agreement, including salary schedule and fringe benefits programs
5. An explanation of collective bargaining, the hows and whys of negotiations

E. School District Facilities (District Administrator)

1. A list showing the number and location of buildings being operated by the District
2. An explanation of any construction projects contemplated
3. A description of the District's building maintenance program
4. An explanation of the student transportation system
5. An explanation of the School District food service program

Revised 8/19/15

0143

Authority

Individual members of the Board do not possess the powers that reside in

the Board of Education. The Board speaks through its minutes and not through its individual members. An act of the Board shall not be valid unless approved at an official meeting by at least a majority vote of the members present or as otherwise may be required by law.

0143.1

Public Expression of Board Members

The Board President functions as the official spokesperson for the Board.

From time-to-time, however, individual Board members make public statements on school matters:

- A. to local media;
- B. to local officials and/or State officials.

Sometimes the statements imply, or the readers (listeners) infer, that the opinions expressed or statements made are the official positions of the Board. The misunderstandings that can result from these incidents can embarrass both the member and the Board. Therefore, Board members should, when writing or speaking on school matters to the media, legislators, and other officials, make it clear that their views do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board or of their colleagues on the Board.

This bylaw shall apply to all statements and/or writings by individual Board members not explicitly sanctioned by a majority of its members, except as follows:

- A. correspondence, such as legislative proposals, when the Board member has received official guidance from the Board on the matters discussed in the letter
- B. routine, not for publication, correspondence of the District Administrator and other Board employees
- C. routine "thank you" letters of the Board
- D. statements by Board members on nonschool matters (providing the statements do not identify the author as a member of the Board)

- E. personal statements not intended for publication

0144 **Operations**

0144.1 **Compensation**

Board members shall receive compensation as approved by the electors at the Annual Meeting.

In addition, Board members holding the following positions will receive an additional salary to be set at the District's annual meeting:

- A. President
- B. CESA Representative
- C. Members of Negotiation Committee

Payment will be made semi-annually in October and April.

Expenses of a Board member when authorized by the Annual Meeting shall be reimbursed when incurred in the performance of his/her duties or in the performance of functions authorized by the Board and duly vouchered.

The following guidelines have been established by the Board of Education to ensure appropriate and proper reimbursement of expenses for Board members.

Expenses will be reimbursed only for activities authorized by the Board.

Reimbursement for mileage will not exceed the current rate established by the Internal Revenue Service.

For Board Discussion

- A. Attendance at Board-approved conferences should be at the location closest to the District.

- B. When attending a Board-approved conference, all fees, parking, mileage, meals, and housing will be reimbursed.
- C. Purchase of any printed or other materials relating to Boardmanship will be reimbursed if prepurchase approval is given by the Board. If such approval is not possible or feasible, a voucher must be submitted to the Board for approval. No postpurchase voucher will be approved if it exceeds \$50.00.
- D. When the Board attends a community or school-related event as a Board function, or a Board member attends as the designated representative of the Board, any incurred expenses, including mileage, will be reimbursed by the Board. If a Board member attends such events as a private citizen, any incurred expenses are to be paid by the Board member.
- E. No entertainment expenses or purchases of alcoholic beverages are reimbursable.
- F. A voucher detailing the amount and nature of each expense must be submitted to the Board for approval within thirty (30) days after the expenses have been incurred.

0144.2

Board Member Ethics

As members of the Board of Education, Board members will strive to improve public education and to that end they will:

- A. attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
- B. recognize that they should endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings;
- C. render all decisions based on the available facts and independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
- D. encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members, and seek systematic communications between the Board and students, staff, and all elements of the community;
- E. work with the other Board members to establish effective Board

policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the District to the District Administrator;

- F. communicate to other Board members and the District Administrator expressions of public reaction to Board policies and school programs;
- G. inform themselves about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by the State and National School Boards Associations;
- H. support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff, and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;
- I. avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using their Board positions for personal partisan gain;
- J. take no private action that will compromise the Board or administration, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law;
- K. remember always that their first and greatest concern must be for the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

Source: Board of Directors, National School Boards Association.

0144.3

Conflict of Interest

Board members shall perform their official duties in a manner free from conflict of interest pursuant to 19.59, Wis. Stats. To this end:

- A. no Board member shall use his/her position as a Board member to obtain financial gain for himself/herself, immediate family, or any organization with which s/he is associated;
- B. no Board member shall engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the school system and as a public officer;

- C. when a member of the Board determines that the possibility of a personal interest conflict exists, s/he should, prior to the matter being considered, disclose his/her interest (such disclosure shall become a matter of record in the minutes of the Board), and thereafter shall abstain from participation in both the discussion of the matter and the vote thereon. In the event that the potential conflict involves a program or activity in whole or in part financed through Federal grant funds, the potential conflict of interest must be disclosed to the Federal granting agency consistent with the requirements of the particular granting agency.

Board Members shall also perform their duties in a manner that does not violate criminal conflict of interest laws pursuant to 946.13, Wis. Stats., by having a private interest in a contract with the District in an amount that exceeds \$15,000 annually.

Revised 3/26/14

Revised 3/16/16

0144.4 **Indemnification**

The Board may hold harmless, indemnify, pay, settle, or compromise a judgment against a Board member to the extent allowed under the law.

0145 **Sexual and Other Forms of Harassment**

The Board of Education believes that sexual or other forms of offensive speech and conduct are wholly inappropriate to the harmonious relationships necessary to the operation of the District and intolerable in an environment in which students and staff members of this District function.

Sexual harassment includes all unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical contacts of a sexual nature whenever submission to such conduct is made a condition of employment or a basis for an employment decision, or when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Other forms of harassment include verbal or non-verbal expression related to race, gender, age, religion, disability, pregnancy, or sexual orientation.

Substantial interference with a person/employee's work performance or creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment is established when the conduct is such that a reasonable person under the same circumstances as the person/employee would consider the conduct sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to interfere substantially with the

person's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. 111.36(1) Wis. Stats.

The harassment of a District staff member, student or another Board member by a member of the Board is strictly forbidden. Any member who is found to have harassed a member of the staff, student or another Board member, will be subject to discipline by the Board and may be reported to law enforcement authorities.

118.13, 120.13(1) 111.32(13) Wis. Stats.

P.I. 9, Wis. Adm. Code

Title IX Education Amendments of 1972, Chapter 227

Revised 8/19/15