



# BETHEL PUBLIC SCHOOLS E-NEWS

“Our Primary Purpose is to Improve Student Achievement”



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## Superintendent's News

*Christine Carver, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools*  
*[2020 Outstanding School Superintendent of the Year](#)*

### In This Section:

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### Reminders:

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### Dear Parents/Guardians, Staff, and Community Members:

Thank you for providing feedback on our **Opening Plan for the Fall of 2021**. We received (to date) a total of 154 comments. After reading all of the individual comments, as you can imagine, there were a variety of opposing opinions on a number of issues.

I thought it might be helpful to provide a summary of some of the feedback and general comments in the form of questions and answers (below). Please note, there may be revisions to some of the answers depending on updated guidance from the Center for Disease Control, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the Department of Public Health.

**Will we be on a normal schedule next year?** Yes. We intend to start school at all levels, full in-person (PreK-12). We will not be hybrid or offer distance learning.

**Will my students be going to all classrooms for specials (PreK-8)?** Yes. We have already started introducing students to spaces that are not being used for other purposes.

**Will Bethel Middle School go back to changing classes?** Yes. It is our intent to go back to the traditional model of students switching classrooms by period.

**Will Bethel High School go back to a “full-day” schedule?** Yes. The school day will end at 2:30 next year.

**Will our children be eating in the cafeteria?** Yes. We are trying to create schedules to allow students to resume eating in the cafeteria and still maintain some social distancing if needed.

**Can the schools require that our students receive the COVID-19 vaccine?** Absolutely not. The schools can not require any vaccinations. Any requirement for vaccinations is based on law, which we have no control over. COVID-19 vaccination is a discussion you should have with your child's pediatrician and a family decision. We would like parents who have had their children vaccinated to let the school nurse know, to update health records, and assist with contact tracing.

◆ **May 31**  
Memorial Day Observed  
Schools Closed

## Upcoming District Calendar Dates



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**Will you maintain the desk shields?** We are considering removing the desk shields. The main reason they were put up was for periods of times when students were unmasked at lunch. If we resume lunch in the cafeteria, then we would not need them.

**Will student desks still be in rows?** We hope not. In some classes we have already begun placing students in small groups, allowing for some distancing.

**Will you be offering all clubs and activities next year?** Yes. We intend to resume all after and before school activities. We will need to implement the appropriate mitigation measures required by the State Department of Education (SDE) and the Department of Public Health (DPH).

**Will my child be required to wear a mask? Can parents choose? Who makes that decision?** We do not know what the requirements for fall will be yet. The schools do not make the decision. We are required to follow DPH and SDE guidance on mask wearing. We only know the current guidance through the end of this school year, to wear a mask inside schools and when in larger crowds where social distancing is difficult.

**Will the school still be required to quarantine students who are direct contacts?** We do not know what the requirements for fall will be yet. As per the CDC, we do know that any staff member or student who is vaccinated will not have to quarantine if they are a direct contact.

**Will we still have 1:1 technology (1 student to 1 device) for our students?** Yes. We will continue to support developmentally appropriate use of technology in our instruction.

**Will “emergency weather days” or “snow days” be able to be provided remotely?** We hope so. The State Department of Education has not come out with an official ruling on this topic yet, but we hope we will be given the opportunity. If allowed, we will likely include one or two true “snow days” but take advantage of the opportunity to provide remote learning on a modified schedule when there is emergency weather.

## COVID-19 Reminders

As you may know, there was [new guidance](#) released last week by the Department of Public Health regarding individuals who are vaccinated, not vaccinated, and mask expectations. Masks continue to be required inside school buildings.

Outside, whether individuals are vaccinated or not, masks are not required. However, there are a few exceptions, crowds where there is not adequate spacing and/or if groups of students/staff are in close proximity for a prolonged period of time. But generally speaking students and staff who are working with their class outside (maintaining distance), at recess, and/or when participating in PE (outside), *do not need to wear masks*. For the most part, this has already been existing practice for "mask breaks". Masks should be put on prior to re-entering/entering the school building.

I hope this [new guidance](#) provides additional clarification.

Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact your child’s school nurse for guidance.

School	Nurse	Email	Health Office Phone Number
Berry School	Robin Lamontagne, RN	lamontagner@bethel.k12.ct.us	203-794-8681
Rockwell School	Donna Savellei, RN	savelled@bethel.k12.ct.us	203-794-8719
Johnson School	Frances Jerolimo, RN	jerolimof@bethel.k12.ct.us	203-794-8704
Bethel Middle School	Chris Cruz, RN	cruzcb@bethel.k12.ct.us	203-794-8669



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	Michelle Mitchell, RN	mitchellm@bethel.k12.ct.us	203-794-8669
Bethel High School	Lisa Davenport, RN	davenportl@bethel.k12.ct.us	203-794-8600 ext. 1262
	Jill Kurtz, RN	kurtzj@bethel.k12.ct.us	203-794-8600 ext. 1261

Thank you, again, for all of your efforts and support as a community. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact either Laura Vasile, Director, Dept. of Public Health at 203-794-8539, or our BPS Health Coordinator, Lisa Davenport at 203-794-8600 ext. 1262 [davenportl@bethel.k12.ct.us](mailto:davenportl@bethel.k12.ct.us), or myself at [carverc@bethel.k12.ct.us](mailto:carverc@bethel.k12.ct.us) or 203-794-8601.

## Bethel High School News

The BHS ART Show is open for viewing from June 1st-11th in the hallways of the main floor. Gallery hours are as follows:

Monday, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays: 1:30-2:30

Wednesdays June 2nd & 9th: 1:30-6:30

Awards will be recorded and shared virtually.

Please come and see the amazing work of the student artists at BHS! If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Lacey-Aubin at [laceyr@bethel.k12.ct.us](mailto:lacey@bethel.k12.ct.us)

## [BHS Final Exam Schedule 2021](#)

## Summer's BEST Summer School Program 2021

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Summer's BEST has been reimagined for Summer 2021! The Bethel Public Schools will be offering **exciting** and **dynamic** summer programs following State and BPS safety protocols. We will offer one three-week session of programs for grades Pre-K through Grade 2 (this is the current grade of your child). Class sizes are limited to 12 students each. We hope to create a summertime adventure of discovery, fun, and learning that will enrich your child. The Enrichment programs are self-funding. The cost of each program is set to cover the cost of the teacher and the materials. You will be sending your child to a fun, safe, educational program at Berry School. Save July 6- July 23 to enroll your child in a rewarding summer experience!

Sincerely,

**Linda Anderson**

**Coordinator of Community Programs**

**How to Register:** [ONLINE, starting May 3rd, through Pickatime.](#)

The registration link will be posted on the [BPS Summer's BEST website](#).

**Questions?** Please email Linda Anderson at: [AndersonL@bethel.k12.ct.us](mailto:AndersonL@bethel.k12.ct.us)

## Bethel Public Library News



The Bethel Public Library is pleased to announce the reopening of the library building's first and second floor on May 10, 2021, along with returning to our regular hours:

Monday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.



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Tuesday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Thursday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Friday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

## REMINDERS



**June 11-20, 2021**

**COMPLETE THE 5K ON YOUR TERMS!**  
RUN, JOG OR WALK  
ANY DAY-ANY TIME  
ANY PLACE YOU LIKE!

**\$20 PER PERSON**  
*all proceeds fund scholarships for BHS seniors*

**Race for the Future**  
Bethel Education Foundation 5K

[See Flyer for Details](#)



Bethel Public Schools is working to build consumer awareness about the Emergency Broadband Benefit, a new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program. The temporary benefit will help to lower the cost of broadband service for eligible households during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$3.2B Emergency Broadband Benefit program provides a discount of up to a \$50 per month toward broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for qualifying households on qualifying Tribal lands. The benefit also provides up to a \$100 per household discount toward a one-time purchase of a computer, laptop, or tablet if the household contributes more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase through a participating broadband provider.

A household is eligible if one member of the household meets at least *one* of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is at or below 135% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) or participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid or the FCC's [Lifeline](#) program;
- Approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision, in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income through job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

Emergency Broadband Benefit enrollment will open on May 12, 2021. Eligible households can enroll through a [participating broadband provider](#) or directly with the [Universal Service Administrative Company \(USAC\)](#) using an online or mail-in application. Additional information about the Emergency Broadband Benefit is available at [www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit](http://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit), or by calling 833-511-0311 between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. any day of the week.



Download this free app to check in on the development of your 0-5 year old's heart, mind, body, and words with the Ages & Stages Questionnaires® and to find fun ways to learn through play together. Sparkler is an evidence-



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based, mobile platform available in English and Spanish, that is working with the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood to help fuel healthy early childhood development.

[Kindergarten Registration for the 2021-2022 school year is now open!](#)



To access the site, go to our website, [www.bethel.k12.ct.us](http://www.bethel.k12.ct.us), scroll down, and click on the “Registration” link in the maroon circle half way down the page. Select <https://ecollect.accelaschool.com/BethelSD>. There you will begin the online process to formally register your child for kindergarten.

At the completion of your online registration, an email will be sent to confirm that the parent portal account has been created AND all of the online enrollment forms have been filled out. At this time, we anticipate that in-person appointments will take place in March (no registration appointments will take place until all of the online registration is complete). This appointment will take approximately 15 minutes as long as all of the required paperwork is provided. Students do not need to attend this appointment with their parents. Parents/guardians will be contacted using the email provided during online registration to make a Kindergarten screening appointment, which usually takes place in May. More information will follow on this step of the process.

If you are a parent of a current Circle of Friends student, you do not need to complete the online registration. Kindergarten registration instructions will be sent home with your child.

## School Lunch Information

The State Department of Education approved Bethel Public Schools to participate in the SSO school meal program, which means **beginning immediately all our students and their siblings 18 and under, regardless of income level, can receive school breakfast and lunch meals for FREE!** The program is funded through a Federal grant from the USDA. This program, which is an extension of the program we offered last spring, will continue through June 30, 2021. No charges will be processed for any meals served, whether the meals are served at school or picked up daily (for students on distance learning).

For those students on distance learning, the hours for pick up at rear of Bethel High School are:

- 11 AM until 1 PM, Monday-Friday or
- **Saturday mornings between 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.** You will get meals for your student(s) for the entire week--breakfast and lunch.
- For Saturday meal pick up, please make sure to fill out the online form [Pick Up Meal Order Form](#) before 8:00 a.m. on each Friday or your meals will not be prepared. Pickups on Saturday are on a reservation only basis. **You must complete the form.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Amanda Riley at [rileya@bethel.k12.ct.us](mailto:rileya@bethel.k12.ct.us).

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the increased volume of meals that will be served under this program, we will not be able to accommodate individual choices at this time. We appreciate your understanding. For more information on the lunch program, Free/Reduced Lunch, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), go to the Food & Nutrition Department on our website by clicking here: [Food & Nutrition](#). If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact our Food Service Director, Amanda Riley at (203) 794-8722 or via email at [rileya@bethel.k12.ct.us](mailto:rileya@bethel.k12.ct.us).

## Board of Education Policy Updates

The Bethel Public Schools, as a learning community devoted to the academic and social growth of our children, creates educational opportunities that inspire competence, creativity, teamwork, and a drive to excel. In an environment of trust and respect, high expectations for student performance are evident in the discussions, actions, and policies of the Board of Education. Board of Education policies can be found on our district website. As a way to increase communication about Board of Education policies we include Board of Education policy updates in this section of our newsletter as they are approved by the Board. You can find the Board of Education policies on the district website at: [Bethel Board of Education Polices](#)



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## Policies Recently Reviewed and/or Revised, & Approved:

[Policy/Regulation](#) 1321 - Public Performances by Students – 2/18/21

[Policy 1321.01](#) - Student Performances, Digital Streaming of Student Performances– 2/18/21

[Policy 1330.2](#) - Use of Public Schools to Publicize Outside Events– 2/18/21 – (Reg. Pending)

[Policy 1313](#) - Gifts to School Personnel– 2/18/21

[Policy 4135.1](#) - Political Activities of School Employees– 2/18/21

[Policy 6151](#) - Class Size – 2/18/21 – (Reg. Pending)

All Board of Education meetings are now currently being held only in-person at Bethel Middle School, Media Center (unless otherwise posted). Masks & Social Distancing Must be followed.

Board of Education meeting agendas are posted with [Town Clerk’s Office](#).

Prior Board of Education meeting videos can also be found on our website via BEtv under the Board of Education Channel or click here:

[Bethel Board of Education TV](#)  
(Prior Meeting Videos On-Demand)

## District Dashboard

The District Dashboard is a new tool available with data and information about our students, schools, and District.

You can access it from the District website under the Board of Education drop down menu [BPS Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and District Dashboard](#). The information is extracted from a number of resources and presented on the Dashboard in one place. See the [Board’s communication regarding the District Dashboard](#).

## Bethel Education Foundation

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

## Flyers & Events

(USE LINK BELOW TO VIEW ALL FLYERS)

## Reminders

- Bethel Graduates – Need a place to celebrate Graduation? Stony Hill Preserve offering FREE use of their pavilion and meadows. See flyer for details.
- Emergency Broadband Benefit, a new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program. The temporary benefit will help to lower the cost of broadband service for eligible households during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.
- Bethel Parks & Recreation Summer Flyer - Registration Open
- Bethel Park & Rec. Day Camp 2021, Registration Open
- Shredding fundraising event to support Troop 71 and 710 in Bethel, June 19th
- Bethel Public Library has reopened the second floor to visitors. See flyer for hours.

## [Digital Backpack – BPS flyers & Community Flyers](#)

## How Do I Receive School & District Information?

Community members/parents have asked *“How do I get copies of fliers, notices, etc.? and How do I know what is going on?”* All of the information previously distributed by paper in backpacks is provided to parents via email in the weekly newsletters (school and district). Making copies is not environmentally or fiscally responsible. Also, the district newsletters are available on our [website](#). You can always look there if you delete the message. **If you, as a parent/guardian, are not receiving it, please check your spam folder, check in the**



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PowerSchool Parent Portal to ensure your email information is correct, if neither is case, [please contact your child’s school directly to resolve the issue.](#)

Parents receive the school and district newsletters automatically using the email contact information in PowerSchool. If you know of a community member interested in opting-in to receive this newsletter, they can sign up using the link on the main page of our website at [www.bethel.k12.ct.us](http://www.bethel.k12.ct.us).

### Nondiscrimination Statement

The Bethel Public Schools do not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, genetic information, protected veteran status or any other basis prohibited by law. The Bethel Public Schools provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding the Bethel Public Schools nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: **Title IX District Coordinator**, Dr. Kristen Brooks, Assistant Superintendent, 1 School Street, Bethel, CT 06801; **Section 504 District Coordinator**, Dr. Christine Sipala, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services, 1 School Street, Bethel, CT 06801

