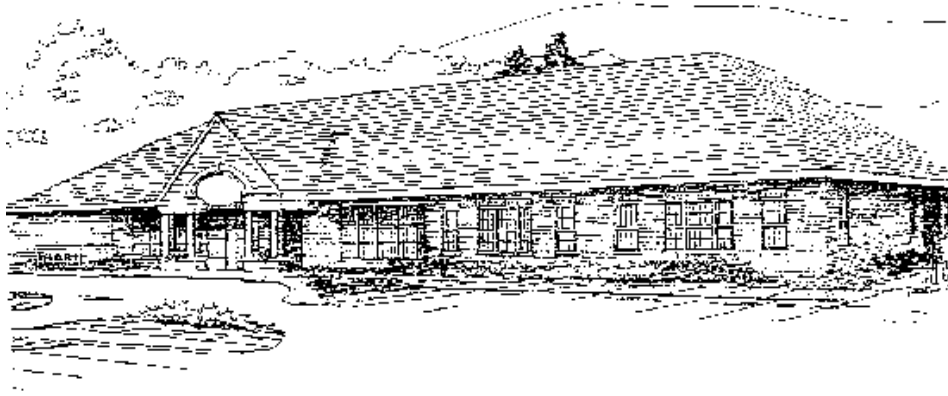


Berkshire Trail Elementary School
Student and Family Handbook
2009-2010



September 1, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This is your ***Berkshire Trail Elementary School Student and Family Handbook***. It tells you almost everything you need to know about our rules and procedures. Please read it with your child and sign below. Your signature does not indicate that you agree with everything. It only tells us that you have received the handbook and have read it. Thank you for returning the portion below on or before Friday, **September 11, 2009**.

By removing this outer cover, you will be able to cut off the reply slip to return to your child's teacher and save the back cover for easy reference.

Sincerely,

Laura J. Dumouchel, Principal

I have received and read the 2009-2010 Berkshire Trail Elementary School Handbook.

Parent signature: _____

Student signature: _____

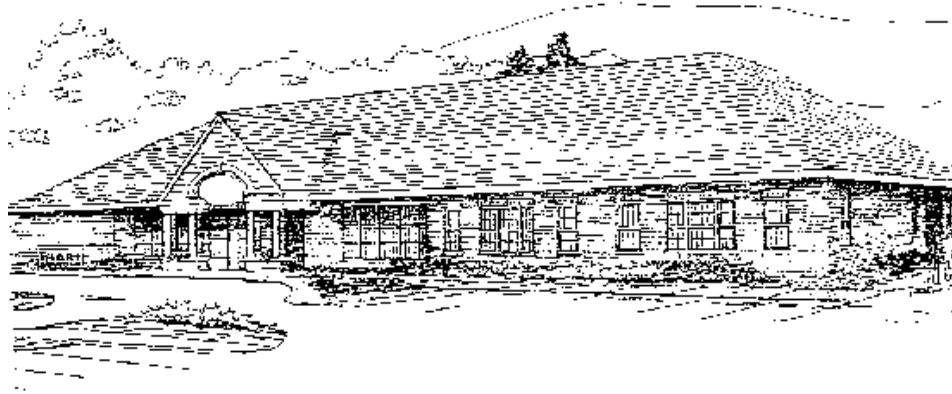
Print student name and grade: _____

**Berkshire Trail Elementary
School
Student and Family Handbook**

2008-2009

Welcome to our wonderful school!

2 Main Street
Cumington, MA 01026



www.cbrsd.org/btes

Welcome to our wonderful school!

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Berkshire Trail Elementary School to help children develop skills so that they can continue learning throughout their lives.

All children, regardless of race, age, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness/unaccompanied status have the right to attend schools in Central Berkshire Regional School District. For children identified as having special needs, services will be provided within the regular classroom unless the nature and severity of the disability warrant otherwise.

The Central Berkshire Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, age, gender, national origin, disability, homelessness, sexual orientation or veteran status. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

September 1, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This handbook has been prepared for your convenience and information. We urge you to read each item and cooperate with us in carrying out the various policies and regulations stated in it. Please read it now, and put it in a place that is easy to find. Refer to it often. Thank you for your support. We look forward to an educationally rewarding and safe year.

Sincerely,

Laura J. Dumouchel, Principal

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Information follows on staff, important phone numbers and organizations within the school. After that there is an alphabetical listing of subject matter regarding rules, procedures and policies.

Berkshire Trail Elementary School Staff 2009- 2010

Principal:	Mrs. Laura Dumouchel
Nurse:	Mrs. Phoebe Bushway
Preschool:	Mrs. Robin Latson
Kindergarten:	Mrs. Margaret Kelleher
Grade 1:	Mrs. Debbie Fitzroy
Grade 2:	Mr. Alec MacLachlan
Grade 3:	Mrs. Magdalena Pasiut
Grade 4:	Mr. Brian Gilman
Grade 5:	Mr. Hal Westwood
Resource:	Mrs. Louise Dynok
Physical Education:	Mr. Tom Keefe
Art:	Mrs. Sarah Clark
Music - General:	Mrs. Meghan Gillespie
Music - Instrumental:	Mrs. Melissa Campbell

Resource Providers

Reading Teacher:	Mrs. Lynn Robb
Physical Therapist:	Ms. Linda Caesar
Occupational Therapist:	Mrs. Judy Andersen
Speech and Language Therapist:	Mrs. Brenda Arbib
Guidance Counselor:	Mrs. Valerie Welts

Support Staff

Secretary	Mrs. Debra Carlson
Head Custodian	Mr. Mike Emerson
Custodian	Ms. Donna Jordan
Head Cook	Mrs. Sylvie Carrier-Hastings
Cook	Mrs. Mary Wood
Paraprofessionals:	Mrs. Jodi Alpert
	Mrs. Mary Bourdon
	Mrs. Gail Prince
	Mrs. Mary Holloway
	Mrs. Donna Jordan
	Mrs. Jennifer Bailey
	Mrs. Kimberley Tuck
	Mrs. Nancy Papillon
	Mrs. Theresa Pease
	Mrs. Sandra Powers
	Mrs. Tara Howes
	Mrs. Tracey Hauser
	Mrs. Lois Ann Strucek

Administration and Frequently Called Phone Numbers

Berkshire Trail Elementary School	634-5327, 684-6160, 684-6162
FAX	684-0188
Superintendent, CBRSD James Stankiewicz	684-0320
Acting Associate Superintendent: Deborah Bevan	684-0320
Pupil Personnel Services: Connie West	684-2266
Business Manager: Margaret Foster	684-0320
Food Services: Rose Goddard	684-1307
Central Office	684-0320
254 Hinsdale Road	
P.O. Box 299	
Dalton, MA 01227-0299	
DCF (Dept. of Children and Families)	413-775-5000 Greenfield; 413-236-1800 Pittsfield
Dufour, Inc. (Bus Company) Kay Hall	655-2795

Emergency School Closing

If it is necessary to close school due to dangerous travel conditions or other emergency situations, the closing will be announced on the following radio and television stations:

RADIO STATIONS

WUHN/WUPE, Pittsfield
1110 AM/100.1FM

WBRK/WRCZ/Z101, Pittsfield
1340 AM/101.7 FM

WBEC, Pittsfield
1420 AM/95.9 FM

WHMP, Northampton
1400AM/99.3FM

WHYN, Springfield
56AM/93.1 FM

WAQY/102, Springfield
1600 AM/102.1 FM

WMNB, North Adams
1230 AM/100.1 FM

TELEVISION STATIONS:

- Ch. 22; Springfield
- Ch. 40; Springfield
- Ch. 10; Albany
- Ch. 13; Albany
- Ch. 6; Albany

School Committee Representatives

Cummington:	Amy Grallert	634-5362
Windsor:	Richard Wagner	684-4435

Parent-Teacher Organization

Parents and guardians are encouraged to attend the PTO monthly meetings to have an active say in what goes on in the school and with your children's education. The PTO funds classroom supplies, field trips and special events in the school. It sponsors Book Fairs, Community Dinners, Ice Cream Socials and many other community-building programs. Please consult the monthly calendar enclosed in your child's newsletter to see when the PTO is meeting.

Co-Chairs	Amy Grallert 634-5362 and Karen Howes 634-5036
Secretary	Dee Calvert 684-1980
Co-Treasurers	Suzanne Towne-Cramer 684-1031 and Maggie Kelleher 634-0058

School Council

The School Council is an advisory body composed of teachers, parents and community members to:

- Adopt educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide performance standards.
- Identify the educational needs of students attending the school.
- Formulate a school improvement plan.

You can nominate yourself or someone you know for election to the Berkshire Trail School Council.

Meetings will be open to the public and posted ahead of time. Once formed, we will meet monthly to coincide with other planned meetings and activities. Your input is important to the process of delivering quality educational services.

School Hours

Bell rings. Students enter.	8:25
A.M. Session begins	8:30
AM Session ends	11:15
Lunch grades K - 2	11:20
Lunch grades 3-5	11:50
Recess grades K - 2	11:50
Recess grades 3 - 5	11:20
PM Session begins	12:20
PM Sessions ends	2:45
Dismissal	2:55

When the 8:25 bell rings, children should be at school, ready to start the day. Please do not drop your children off at school before 8:15, as there is no supervision and we cannot be responsible for unsupervised children.

Calendar: School Year 2009-2010

Please see back cover.

Report Card Schedule

In order to insure uniformity for registers and report cards, the following quarter schedule will be used for the 2009 – 10 school year. Deviations from this report card schedule for special reasons, such as computer processing, are possible.

First Quarter: September 1 – November 6
Report Cards: November 12
Days: 46

Second Quarter: November 9 – January 22
Report Cards: January 27
Days: 44

Third Quarter: January 25 – April 9
Report Cards: April 14
Days: 49

Fourth Quarter: April 12 – June 22
Report Card: June 22
Days: 46

Acceptable Use Policy for Technology

Central Berkshire Regional School District

The policies that follow govern the use of the myriad technology offerings we have within our district.

The Central Berkshire Regional School District offers Internet and email access to its students, faculty and staff. Access to the school network, the Internet and email services is a privilege not a right. The intent of these Policies is to ensure that users utilize this access in a manner consistent with the purpose of providing the Internet and email service. From this point forward, wherever the words Central Berkshire Regional School District (CBRSD) Internet service is used, it includes email service, chat, instant messages, and network.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the CBRSD Internet service is to support the educational objectives of the CBRSD and the district's community in general. The CBRSD Internet service is not a public forum, and the CBRSD shall place limits on materials posted or accessed through the CBRSD Internet service.

While the Internet's possibilities are tremendous, it also has potential for abuse. To use the CBRSD Internet service, the user must take full responsibility for his or her own actions. The CBRSD shall not be liable for the actions of anyone accessing the Internet through this or any other Internet connection. Users assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities or damages arising from the way the user chooses to use his/her access to the CBRSD Internet service.

Network Usage Policy

This Policy states expected behavior required by users of the network. In any specific situation, the district shall prescribe appropriate conduct. The following general Policies include:

1. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Be polite. Use appropriate, non-abusive language.
- b. Users shall not reveal personal information such as last names, addresses, phone numbers and photos that could identify the user or CBRSD students or staff on any website or email, whether school sanctioned or personal, except the user's information to the extent necessary for any lawful purpose related to their capacity in the CBRSD.
- c. Do not use the network in such a way as to disrupt its use by others.

- d. The Internet service is a resource. Please do not be wasteful.
 - e. Defamatory remarks, racial slurs or obscene or profane language will not be tolerated.
 - f. Network and Internet usernames and passwords are provided for each authorized user. Passwords will not be shared with anyone, and users must not use another person's password. If you suspect that someone has discovered your password, you must change it immediately.
2. Any use for illegal purposes or activities is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, gaining unauthorized access to other systems, arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs, alcohol, or any retail purchases, participating in criminal activity, gambling, threatening others, transferring obscene material or attempting to do any of the above.
 3. Any use for commercial purposes is prohibited. Users shall not create web pages that advertise or sell products or services and may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the CBRSD Internet service except for purchases involving any lawful purpose related to employment in the CBRSD. Online purchase order practices are not approved and must be done under current Policies.
 4. Any use relating to, involving, or involved in party politics purposes is prohibited. The Internet service may only be used to communicate with elected officials.
 5. Users should be aware that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright. Any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through email or news sources must also be credited as to sources. The CBRSD and its Internet service make no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data collected through the Internet.
 6. Faculty, staff and students will have access to the Internet service in the computer lab, classroom or library. Faculty, staff and students are restricted to using the Internet service for educational and school related purposes only.
 7. The Technology Coordinator and/or designee for each school facility shall approve school specific web pages before they are uploaded. All material on the web page shall be related to school activities.
 8. Faculty and staff shall not access chat rooms or news groups except for any lawful purpose related to their employment in the CBRSD.
 9. Non-educational online games are prohibited and shall not be accessed.
 10. Users shall neither download nor install any commercial software, shareware or freeware without prior permission from the Technology Coordinator. All licenses and media will be available on site. Users are responsible for making use of software and electronic materials in accordance with copyright and licensing restrictions. CBRSD equipment and software may not be used to violate copyright or the terms of any license agreement. Users shall not change settings on the browser or any other application.
 11. Users shall not upload, download or distribute pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit or threatening material.
 12. Users shall not receive or transmit information pertaining to dangerous instruments such as bombs or other explosive devices, automatic weapons or other firearms, or other weaponry.
 13. Users shall not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any file servers in the CBRSD, outside file servers, or go beyond the user's authorized access. This includes logging in through another person's account, accessing another person's files, or attempting to do either. Users shall not seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data or passwords belonging to other users.
 14. Users shall not vandalize school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system, or destroying data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
 15. Faculty, staff and students will be allowed access to the Internet service for personal use after school hours.

Privacy

Users will have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. Internet messages are public communication and are not private. In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) the district will employ monitoring and filtering hardware and software. Items monitored include Internet, email, chat, ftp, telnet and print jobs. The district may, but is not obliged to monitor messages without prior notice. The CBRSD also reserves the right to examine all data stored on diskettes involved in the user's use of the CBRSD Internet service. All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Network administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system in a responsible manner.

Violations

The district reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or take other disciplinary action for violations of this Policy in the same manner as any other disciplinary action or as required by law. The district will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the CBRSD Internet service. The district will cooperate fully with local, state and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the CBRSD Internet service.

Appropriate Dress - General

- Children should dress in consideration of weather conditions. Each child should dress in a manner that is appropriate for a school setting, remembering that school is a child's place of business.

- It should be assumed that we will have outdoor recess and the children should be prepared. In colder or snowy weather, children should come to school with warm jackets, boots, mittens, and a hat, all labeled.
- Special attention should be paid to footwear. We ask that children wear shoes that are securely fastened to the feet with straps, ties or buckles so that we don't have accidents. **Flip-flops, backless sandals, and high heels are inappropriate for school, and sometimes disqualify a child from participating in an educational activity. Socks should always be worn.** We ask special consideration, when buying new shoes, that you try not to get the kind with black soles that scuff our floors.
- Children may never go barefoot – inside or outside the school.
- We do not wear hats or other headgear in school.
- Clothing which exposes undergarments or personal body parts, the midriff or the very top of the thigh, is not considered appropriate dress for school.

Appropriate Dress - Physical Education

Physical education instruction is an important school subject, addressing the total health and well being of your child. Grades K - 5 have Physical Education twice a week, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Children should wear loose fitting trousers or shorts on physical education days, and sneakers that fasten securely with Velcro or ties.

- Children will come properly dressed for participation in all physical education activities on the days it is scheduled for their classes.
- Only written excuses issued by a doctor will be considered viable for exclusion from physical education instruction.
- Children are tested in fitness twice a year, once in the beginning and again at the end. They set standards upon which to improve for themselves. All children are encouraged to do their personal best.
- Any questions about our physical education program should be addressed to Mr. Keefe: tkeefe@cbrsd.org

Attendance

Your child's education is important. Attendance each and every day school is in session allows your child to receive the benefit of the full curriculum of his/ her instruction. When he is absent or tardy, he misses valuable time spent in learning, some of which cannot be made up, such as class discussions, hands-on learning, and explanations by a trained professional, his teacher. **Please make every effort to schedule appointments and vacations that do not conflict with school hours.**

If absence is unavoidable, please call the school at 634-5327 to leave a message for the secretary, Deb Carlon.

Excessive absence is a situation which can be taken to court, according to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 2: "Every person in control of a child ...shall cause him to attend school as therein required, and, if he fails to do so for seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within any period of six months, he shall, on complaint by a supervisor of attendance, be punished by a fine of not more than twenty dollars...."

Absences exceeding seven full days or fourteen half days or any combination of the above during any six month period will be reported to the Assistant Superintendent, and the parent will be subject to a fine. **In addition, if the child does not satisfactorily make up the work missed on the days of the absences, or 20% or more of the school year has been missed, it may be determined that the student be retained for the following school year.**

Band

Students in the fourth and fifth grades may participate in band, pending successful completion of and participation in classroom work.

Students may learn to play an instrument of their own or rent an instrument on which to learn to play. All students taking music lessons will be in the band. For further information, contact Mrs. Melissa Campbell at school or by e-mail: mcampbell@cbrsd.org

Band students, once selected, must remain with the program for at least one semester (September through December; January through June), as it is a performance group. Once committed, students have a responsibility to the performance and may not drop out.

Students who are in band and who are not making adequate progress in their core subjects may be asked to leave the band until their grades improve.

Bicycles

Students may ride their bicycles to school in the fall and spring months when there is no snow on the ground. Bicycles must be parked in the bike stand immediately upon arriving at school. The school is not responsible for bicycles brought to school.

We ask that our bicycle riders be considerate of walkers on the sidewalks and street. Bicycles must have a horn or bell. When approaching pedestrians from behind, use the bell or horn as a warning.

Chorus

Students in the fourth and fifth grades may participate in chorus, pending successful completion of and participation in classroom work.

Chorus students, once selected, must remain with the program for at least one semester (September through December; January through June), as it is a performance group. Once committed, students have a responsibility to the performance and may not drop out.

Students who are in chorus and who are not making adequate progress in their core subjects may be asked to leave the chorus until their grades improve.

Comprehensive Code of Conduct

Our **Code of Conduct** is a guideline for teaching children the real life skills of self-respect, respect for others, and the knowledge that life's choices have consequences. We follow these behavioral rules to ensure the safety and respect of all our Berkshire Trail community members.

An important part of the beginning of each year is the formulation of classroom rules and consequences of misbehavior. This takes place early in the year, and involves everyone in the classroom. We feel that rules work best when people have a say in making the rules, know the rules, agree with the rules, and know the consequences if the rules are broken.

Students are expected to treat all people with respect and kindness. We practice cooperation with one another and deal with any conflicts using approved conflict resolution techniques in which all staff and students have been trained. If a student or students misbehave, conflict resolution techniques will be used immediately. If the conflict cannot be resolved either by the students involved or by the nearest adult, offending parties will either be brought to their classroom teachers or the principal, or to a peer mediation team. Consequences will depend on the severity and frequency of the infraction, ranging from letters of apology, missed recesses, phone calls to the parent, and extending to suspension from one to nine days, either in or out of school, or in severe cases, expulsion from the school or district. **All consequences cannot be listed here.** Part of the conflict resolution process is to determine a fitting consequence. However, repeated offenses will not be tolerated and some misbehaviors, such as, but not limited to, physical harm to another person, vandalism, and foul language, will be treated on a zero tolerance basis. Parents/guardians will be sent a misconduct report when the misconduct requires serious consequences. The staff requests parental support in helping maintain appropriate conduct in the school.

4 Steps to Conflict Resolution

- 1. Chill (calm down)**
- 2. Listen (each side gets to tell his story uninterrupted)**
- 3. Brainstorm (look for solutions)**
- 4. Choose Win/Win (pick a solution that works for everyone involved)**

The following is a **Statement of Rights and Responsibilities for Students:**

As a citizen of the Berkshire Trail Elementary School, I have both rights and responsibilities
I have the right to be happy and treated with respect.

I have the responsibility not to hurt anyone.

I have the right to be myself.

I have the responsibility to respect people's differences.

I have the right to hear and be heard.

I have the responsibility to stay quiet & listen when someone else is talking.

I have the right to hear only appropriate language.

I have the responsibility to use only appropriate language.

I have the right to be safe.

I have the responsibility to keep myself and others safe.

I have the right to expect that my personal property will be safe.

I have the responsibility to respect the property of others.

I have the right to learn.

I have the responsibility to do my work, follow directions, do my best, and allow others to work.

I have the right to learn appropriate behavior from those older than I.

I have the responsibility to model appropriate behavior for those younger than I.

Behavior Expectations for the School

1. Courtesy, respect and common sense are expected of everyone at all times.
2. Walk in the school building
3. Use a quiet voice when talking
4. No gum is to be chewed in school.
5. No hats may be worn in the building except for going to and coming from recess.
6. Electronic games, Walkmen, etc. may not be used or displayed at school or on the bus.

Misbehaviors that will be dealt with on a zero tolerance basis include, but are not limited to, the following. These are behaviors for which students may be suspended:

1. Physical harm (hitting, pushing, kicking, biting, scratching, etc.).
2. Carrying a weapon or something used as, or resembling, a weapon (immediate suspension)
3. Stealing
4. Lying

5. Doing damage to school or someone else's property (fine to replace damaged property or to repair)
6. Using inappropriate language
7. Possessing, using, offering or selling cigarettes, controlled substances, drugs.

Bus Rules

The district provides bus transportation to transport children between school and home, or school and a permanent childcare provider. The bus cannot be used for other purposes such as parties, visiting, or meetings. Parents must arrange their own transportation for these. **Changes in the daily bus routine, or even changing the stop, cannot be honored.**

Rules for Students:

1. Students must sit and stay in their assigned seats.
2. Students may talk quietly to the people beside them.
3. Students must obey the bus driver. If a child has to be asked to control any kind of behavior for a second time, he may be denied bus privileges for an amount of time deemed reasonable by the bus personnel and the principal.
4. Hitting, fighting, throwing objects, yelling, leaving the seat, kneeling on the seat, using inappropriate language, and teasing are not allowed.
5. Students should always walk in front of the bus when getting on or off, never behind.
6. Students should always walk, never run, near the bus.
7. If a student is suspended from riding the bus, it is the parent's responsibility to transport the child to and from school. Absence from school because of a bus suspension is not an excusable absence.

Rules for Adults:

8. Parents must never chase the bus to catch it.
9. Parents must wait with the child until the bus picks him/ her up at the bus stop.
10. **Kindergartners and first graders will not be dropped off unless an adult is waiting at the bus stop for them.** If no one is there, they will be brought back to school or to the police station.
11. It is illegal to pass a stopped school bus in any direction or to impede its progress in any way. This means that you may not enter or exit the bus circle while the busses are loading or unloading. At the end of the day, we strive for an orderly departure. With busses and cars in our traffic circle, sometimes things get confusing. Please be aware that you **must not pass any bus that has its flashing lights on** – regardless of the conditions of traffic or your proximity to the road. Please be patient while students load the busses – and feel free to depart by car after they have gone.
12. Visitors may not park in the bus circle – even for a moment. PLEASE respect and obey this rule.
13. To address bus issues, call Dufour, Inc. at 413-655-2795. If you are unable to resolve your concerns, please call Acting Assistant Superintendent Deborah Bevan at 413-684-0320 x106.

Cafeteria Rules

1. Talk quietly.
2. Keep hands and food to yourself.
3. Eat your own lunch. Do not trade lunches or items from your own lunch with other children.
4. Avoid bringing glass containers to school.
5. Seek permission from the adult in charge before leaving the cafeteria.
6. Obey the adults.
7. Use appropriate language and be respectful.

Playground Rules

General Playground Rules:

1. Prepare for recess quickly and line up quietly.
2. Use the bathroom before or after recess.
3. Students will treat each other and all adults with kindness and respect.
4. Obey the adults.
5. Wait at the bridge for an adult before entering lower playground.
6. Observe the playground boundaries:
 - a. Do not go near the brook
 - b. Play away from classroom windows
7. Take turns.
8. Be a good sport and use common sense at all times.
9. Do not leave the playground area.
10. Respect people's rights to use their personal possessions - balls, gloves, Frisbees, and other equipment they have - without interference.
11. The school is not responsible for personal toys lost, broken, or otherwise damaged on the playground.
12. Boots must be worn for playing in wet areas or on snow.
13. Line up immediately when the whistle blows. Wait politely in line.
14. Put all trash and litter in the trashcans.

Equipment Rules: Equipment will be used properly and safely, and only in the manner for which it was designed.

1. Slide
 - a. Wait on line
 - b. One at a time
 - c. Sit down
 - d. feet first.
2. Swings
 - a. Do not stand in front or back of a swing when someone is swinging
 - b. Swing one at a time
 - c. Sit down, facing into the playground
3. Sleds
 - a. One person per sled.
 - a. Sit down, facing forward.
 - b. You may not push anyone on a sled.
 - c. When you reach the bottom of the hill, quickly get off the trail and walk around the pole. Climb back up the hill near the road.
 - d. At the top of the hill, wait to see that the last person has gotten off the sled and walked away.
 - e. After your turn, give the sled to the person at the front of the line and go to the back of one of the lines.
 - f. You may not slide without a sled.
 - g. You may not bring a sled from home.
15. No visitors are allowed on the playground unless they are employees of CBRSD. Volunteers are to wear their badges while on the playground.
16. No child should be taken from the playground by a parent. Parents are to report to the office and school personnel will get the student.

Things that are not allowed on the playground:

1. Hard balls
2. Knives, caps, or any toy resembling weapons
3. Throwing sticks, stones, snow, snowballs, ice (or anything else besides a ball or frisbee)+
4. Fighting, play fighting, tackle games, chicken fights, or rough games
5. Glass containers such as soda bottles

Suspension

If there is a serious rules violation that (a) constitutes an immediate threat to the health and safety of any person (or persons) or (b) grossly violates acceptable standards of behavior, the teacher-in-charge may immediately remove the student (or students) from the classroom or playground. In addition, the principal may suspend the student (or students) responsible for the violation from school. Suspension from school is treated as a serious issue.

By law, students who are to be temporarily suspended from school are guaranteed certain rights as follows:

1. An oral or written notice of the charges against him/her;
2. An explanation of the evidence against him/her;
3. The opportunity to present his/her side of the story to an impartial decision maker (who may be a school administrator).

Notice of the suspension and the hearing (as outlined above) must occur before the student may be asked to leave school, except when a student presents an immediate threat to school officials, other students, or him/herself, or clearly endangers the school environment. In this case, the hearing may be delayed, but must be held within a reasonable length of time.

Two types of suspensions are used to deal with serious and/or repeated infractions of school rules.

Suspension from class, (ISS, or *In School Suspension*), will be held in the office or another room designated by the Principal. Schoolwork will be assigned and completed by the end of the day. All attempts will be made to contact parents regarding the details of the infraction.

If the severity of the infraction warrants a more serious consequence, suspension from school, (OSS, or *Out of School Suspension*) will result. See list of suspensionable behaviors. The principal will immediately notify parents by phone and by letter of the details. All attempts will be made to arrange a meeting between all parties concerned, to include the parents, the principal, the student, and all staff members involved. The purpose of the meeting will be to resolve any issues that may have contributed to the student's misbehavior.

Child Abuse

Anyone who works in a school is a mandated reporter. It is a felony for school personnel to fail to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. The phone number for DCF (Department of Children and

Families) is 413-773-3574 in Greenfield and 413-236-1800 in Pittsfield. Persons suspecting child neglect or abuse must call DCF within 24 hours of the knowledge of the suspicion or allegation.

Classroom Visitation

Parents are encouraged to make an appointment to observe in their children's classrooms. Visitation to the classroom for any reason requires the permission of the principal. This is done for purposes of security and continuity of instruction time. **Visitors may not go directly to the classroom.** All visitors to the building must enter by the front door and sign in at the office first.

With regard to classroom visitation, CBRSD policy #6422.1 states:

"...Permission shall be obtained from an administrator before visitation. All visitors shall be required to sign in and out and show identification at the principal's office. The time and reason shall be indicated."

If you come to school to pick up your child, please follow the above procedure.

Communication with Teachers

Communication between parents and teachers is extremely important. If you wish to contact your child's teacher, please feel free to send a note with your child, or call the school to leave a message. All CBRSD personnel have similar e-mails: firstname.lastname@cbrsd.org. The teacher will reply at her/ his earliest convenience. **Please do not assume that your child's teacher is available for you when you walk in to school.** Time before school is spent in preparation for the day. Time during school hours is spent in instruction. When you enter a classroom unannounced, you stop the flow of instruction for the entire class.

Directory

This is a very important public notice.

According to Central Berkshire Regional School district Policy #6430.11 – "Notice is hereby given: That Central Berkshire Regional School District, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) declares the following as "directory information" and that this information relating to students may be made public if said information is within any of the following categories:

1. Student's name, address, telephone listing
2. Date and place of birth
3. Major field of study
4. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
5. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
6. Dates of attendance
7. Degrees and awards received.

Any parent in the district may notify the principal of the school in which said student attends that none of the above information may be released without the parent's consent, provided that such notification is given within thirty days of this publication notice."

Berkshire Trail Elementary School publishes class lists with phone numbers and addresses to be used for contact when needed for phone chains and for student contact use. If you do not wish your child's phone number and address to be published, please inform the school immediately at 634-5327.

English Language Learners – District Policy# 5240

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Education regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English (PHLOTE), observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to the Massachusetts Department of Education each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts Department of Education to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act.

LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. 3001 et seq. (language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students contained in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) 42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) 603 CMR 14.00

Field Trips

Classes are often taken on field trips as an educational enhancement to the curriculum. Going on a field trip is a privilege that must be earned by completing all prior work and behaving in a manner consistent with the school rules. Students who don't meet these criteria may be denied going on a field trip.

Gum

Chewing gum is not allowed anywhere in the school, the school grounds, or on the busses.

Health

Ideally, each child would have perfect attendance and health. However, it is unfair to your child to expect him to do work in school when he does not feel well or to endanger the health of other children by sending him to school with a communicable disease.

- If your child has done any of the following things within the last 24 hours, you should keep him home from school: had a fever, thrown up, or begun taking antibiotics.
- Children on whom head lice or nits are discovered will be sent home and allowed to reenter only when all signs of nits and lice are gone, as determined by the school nurse.
- No child will be allowed to attend school until proof of current immunizations has been furnished to the school, or if that child is exempted because of religious beliefs or health risks as determined and written by a physician.
- If your child has had a virus or other infectious disease, please notify the school so that we can protect our other students. In some cases, we must notify the Public Health Nurse, as in the case of chicken pox.
- Each September, you will receive an EMERGENCY CARD. Please keep this information up to date. We need an emergency number to call if your child is ill or hurt at school. If this information changes during the year, please call the office to update it.
- Over the counter medications that we have permission to administer are listed on the EMERGENCY CARD. Check the ones you will allow and sign the card.
- Prescription medications can only be given to children with a written doctor's order and with the medication in its original prescription bottle. Only the nurse can administer this medication. Nothing will be given to a child from an unlabeled container. Children may not take their own medicine sent from home.
- To have your child take medication on a field trip, you must get a form from the nurse to be signed by your doctor to allow the teacher to administer this medication.
- A weekly fluoride swish program will be available to students in grades 1- 5. This program has proven to be effective in preventing tooth decay. This is not a substitute for daily oral fluoride tablets. Parental permission is required for your child to participate.
- Please call the school nurse, Mrs. Bushway, if you have questions. 634-5327

Homework and Independent Study Policies

Students have the responsibility to do all assigned work given each day and to be prepared each day for class, including preparation for tests, quizzes and class participation. The amount of homework and length of time available to the student should be appropriate to the age and maturity of the student. If a student never has homework, or is spending more than one hour per night doing assignments, it is appropriate that the parent contact the child's teacher to discuss the situation.

RATIONALE: The Berkshire Trail staff and parents view homework as an integral part of the school experience. Homework benefits students not only by promoting academic success, but also by providing valuable opportunities to build important character traits.

Students grow in their independence by being able to successfully complete school related tasks with a minimum of direct help.

An important Berkshire Trail goal is to promote a desire for lifelong learning within each child. Through frequent and successful participation in homework, students discover that learning takes place all the time, in school and at home. Not only do students have the opportunity to practice new skills and concepts at their own pace, they may also explore and broaden their own particular interests through creative homework assignments.

In reflecting our Berkshire Trail beliefs about school and community, homework also supports our emphasis on community collaboration and partnership. Through regular homework assignments, parents stay informed about our school's philosophy, curriculum, and objectives. Parents' positive support, by providing an atmosphere conducive to students' successful completion of homework, gives them an indispensable opportunity to show their children how much they value education. Lastly, both parents and students benefit as homework provides important opportunities for strengthening parent-child interaction.

TIME ALLOTMENT: The following are Berkshire Trail's recommended time allotments per grade level. These anticipated homework guidelines should be considered when planning a student's extra curricular activities.

<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Suggested Average Per Day</i>
K - 1	10 - 15 minutes
2 - 3	20 - 30 minutes
4 - 5	30 - 60 minutes

(Note: Those students who have homework modifications listed in their Individual Education Plans should follow those modifications if they differ from the chart above.)

TYPES OF HOMEWORK: Homework assignments will vary from day to day, from teacher to teacher. While reading is an appropriate "standing" assignment every day, over the course of the school year you might also see:

Practice: These are assignments that are often given on a day-to-day basis, offering students opportunities to practice and master new skills that have been presented in the classroom. Writing spelling words, using them in sentences, and completing a math worksheet are examples of practice homework.

Preparatory: These are assignments that provide students the time to review background information to gain the maximum benefits from an upcoming lesson or to prepare for an upcoming quiz. Reading a chapter in preparation for discussion or quiz is an example of preparatory homework.

Extension: These are assignments that enable students to transfer specific skills and concepts to new situations. Conducting an experiment at home and evaluating a new piece of writing are examples of extension homework.

Creation: These are assignments that challenge students to apply higher order thinking abilities as they integrate skills and concepts from many different subject areas to produce a major original project. Most often these are long-term assignments. Creating a diorama of a Civil War battlefield, producing a book of art and poetry, or, for those households that have computer systems, creating a multimedia project on the computer are examples of creation homework.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS:

1. Know homework assignments before leaving school.
2. Take homework assignments and all necessary supplies home.
3. Spend the necessary time on homework each night.
4. Demonstrate pride in homework by doing the work well.
5. Seek help from parents if needed.
6. Submit finished homework to the teacher, neatly done and on time.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS:

1. Ensure homework assignments leave school with clear and full directions.
2. Remain flexible to parent's concerns about unusual circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS:

1. Think "coach" not "cop" - be a partner, not a boss!
2. Allow your child to unwind after school.
3. Consider homework as a non-negotiable (extracurricular activities should not preempt timely completion of homework).
4. Make agreements with your child regarding homework rules (when, where, how).
5. Limit T.V. viewing.
6. Arrange a quiet time and study area including proper lighting.
7. Expect regular assignments.
8. Encourage reading for pleasure.
9. Show confidence in your child's ability; never do your child's homework for him/her.
10. Spend a few minutes each evening monitoring your child's progress on required homework, and check finished product.
11. Help or make sure homework gets into backpack for return trip to school.
12. Encourage your child to report to you on long-term assignments and projects.
13. Hold your child accountable for getting homework to and from school.
14. If homework is consistently too difficult, let the teacher know!

STUDENT ABSENCES: Students are responsible for finding out the assignments missed and then completing them. (Note: for excessive absences and/or assignments, contact the teacher to negotiate an appropriate amount of assignments and a completion date.) If parents want to pick up missed school assignments, it is necessary to call the office by 8:45 a.m. if you want them by the end of the day. This allows the teacher the entire day to gather the appropriate materials. DO NOT drop into the classroom to ask for missed assignments. This is disruptive and interruptions of this sort subtract valuable minutes from student instructional time. As a general rule, schoolwork is NOT provided ahead of time for family trips/vacations. Standing assignments such as reading and journal writing may be given at the discretion of the teacher. Make-up assignments will be given when the student returns to school.

SUMMARY: Thank you in advance for your support of this critical component of our school program. Your help in fostering good work habits at home will have beneficial effects on your child's performance at school. In addition, this policy will also help ensure a smooth transition to our middle school.

Library

Children visit the school library once a week to choose books to borrow. Children in kindergarten through second grades may take home one book a week. Children in third through fifth grades may borrow two books a week. All books must be returned before any more may be borrowed. If a child has not completed a book and wants to renew it, he must bring it to the library on library day to renew it. If a child loses a book, it must be paid for before he can take any others out. Fines will be assessed for serious damage to books. At the end of the year, all books must be returned or paid for.

Lost and Found

A Lost and Found box is located in the cafeteria. Each year, hundred of articles are left unclaimed at school. Many children cannot identify what they have lost. Please label coats, mittens, caps, boots, sweaters, sweatshirts, etc. All unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each term.

Lunch and Breakfast

A healthful and nutritious hot lunch is served in school every day. Sandwiches are also available. The cost is \$2.00, or \$.40 for a reduced price lunch. Milk only may be purchased separately for \$.35, but cannot be taken

separately by free or reduced lunch students. Breakfast is also served daily for \$1.25, or \$.30 for reduced price breakfast. Menus are distributed at the beginning of each month to allow you to plan for lunches.

We have no facilities for refrigeration or reheating.

Free and reduced lunch prices are available for eligible families. Please contact the office for details.

Students who forget breakfast or lunch money will be allowed to eat a school meal **on that day**. Full payment is expected on the following day. If two consecutive lunches are unpaid, students will be given an alternate meal, consisting of a sandwich and milk only.

All checks should be made out to **Central Berkshire Regional School District**.

Students may not charge lunches.

Forms for ordering lunch are included with each monthly menu. Orders should be placed each Monday. If your child is having a hot lunch circle "H", circle "C" for cold lunch (this orders milk only), circle "N" to indicate no hot lunch or milk.

Party Invitations

If your child is going to bring invitations to school for a party at home, make sure that all children in the class are invited. Otherwise, make other arrangements to distribute invitations. Each child will receive a class list with phone numbers. **If you do not wish your phone number to be made public, please inform the school immediately.**

Picking Your Child Up After School

If you are going to pick your child up, rather than have him take the bus, we must have a note. Otherwise, he will be put on the bus. We cannot rely on a young child's spoken message.

If someone else is going to pick your child up, please name the person, and have him or her be ready to show us identification if s/he is unknown to us. We do this for your child's safety.

Busses arrive before 2:40 and leave by 2:55. You may not stop in the bus circle when you pick up your child at the end of the day. Please refer to **Bus Rules**.

Students who are being picked up will be dismissed with the walkers at 2:50.

Picking Your Child Up Early

We request that you do not make appointments for your child that require him to miss valuable school time. If you must pick your child up before the end of the day, you must send a note indicating that you will do so. Dismissal is at 2:55. Be sure to ask the office personnel to call for your child. Do not go to get him yourself.

Placement

The composition of a class is a carefully planned ratio of boys and girls, children with abilities and strengths ranging the entire continuum, and a delicate balance of personalities. Because we know your children, we feel confident that we can make the best choice for the following year's placement. However, if you feel that you have information that would help us make that placement, please make sure you put it in writing and send it to the principal, not the teacher, before June 1. According to Central Berkshire Regional School District Policy, final decisions lie with us to be made in the best interest of your child's education.

Retention

As per Central Berkshire Regional School District policy #5670.1:

"In general, children will be placed at the grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially and emotionally. Children will usually progress annually from grade to grade, spending one year in each grade. However, some children may profit by staying another year in the same grade. In such cases, the parent will be contacted in advance, although the final decision will rest with the school authorities.

School Improvement Plan - School Year 2009-2010

We will continue to aggressively address math proficiency consistent with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to keep as many students in the Proficient and Advanced categories as possible. We will strive to keep a 0% failure rate, using feedback from multiple assessment sources.
We will continue to aggressively address language arts proficiency consistent with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to have as many students in the Proficient and Advanced categories as possible. We will strive to keep a 0% failure rate.
We will increase our school choice/other enrollment by providing the community and surrounding communities with more information about our school and opportunities to take part in school activities. We will inform the local community and surrounding communities of the quality of our programs and the educational experience at BTES. Our ultimate goal is to fill classes at each grade level and to ensure that we maintain our preschool.
In response to increased pressure to do well on Math and ELA MCAS, Science and Social Studies have been minimally addressed. We will place a renewed focus on Science and Social Studies.
We will continue our research into Expanded Learning Time and a Gifted and Talented Program to enrich the education we offer our students.

Security System

All of the schools in Central Berkshire Regional School District have had security systems installed for the safety of our children. All doors will be kept locked. If you wish to enter the building, please ring the bell on the wall near the front door and be ready to state your name and purpose for entrance. A camera will help to identify you. Once we know who you are, we will buzz you in. Thank you for understanding that these somewhat inconvenient security measures are essential safety measures.

Sex Education

Later on in the school year, as part of the approved Health Education Program, fifth grade students may be learning about the human body. Part of this unit involves learning about the changes that will be taking place in their own bodies during puberty. The course of study does not deal with reproduction.

You are being informed of this in accordance with policy 5521, which refers to notifying parents about sex education. If, for any reason, you do not want your child to be present for this part of the Health Education program, or if you wish to discuss the unit beforehand with the teacher, the principal, or the superintendent, you have the right to do so.

Sexual Harassment/Harassment

The names of the Sexual Harassment/Harassment Investigators are:

- Laura Dumouchel, Berkshire Trail Elementary School, Cummington MA
ldumouchel@cbrsd.org Tel: (413) 634-5327
- James Stankiewicz, 254 Hinsdale Road, Dalton MA
jstankiewicz@cbrsd.org Tel: (413) 684-0320 X2

Smoke Free

This school is a smoke free environment, as are the grounds surrounding the school.

Snow Days

All radio stations have information on the cancellation of school due to inclement weather. This information should be on the air by 6:00 am. You may call the school on 634-5327 to hear a recorded message after 6:30 a.m.

Children will not be sent home from school early in bad weather for two reasons: 1) Busses would not be available. 2) There is no way to contact working parents and children might not be able to get into the house or would be unattended. They are safer in school. If you feel that inclement weather is too bad to wait for transportation home by bus, you may come to the school to get your child yourself.

Student Health Insurance

Applications for Student Health Insurance are included in your first day packet. The insurance company is Lefebvre, 850 Franklin St., Wrentham, MA 02093. 24 hour and school time coverage is available.

Student Records

Student records will be maintained in school and will contain the following information: the name, address, and phone number of the student; his/ her birth date; name, address, and phone number of the parent or guardian; course titles, grades (or the equivalent when grades are not applicable), course credit, grade level completed, and the year completed. Such information may include standardized test results, class rank (when applicable), extracurricular activities, and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff. Also included in these files will be any documents having to do with custody, DSS, or court cases.

School personnel, custodial parents, children over the age of 14, law enforcement agencies, a probation officer, DSS, and the Department of Youth Services may have access to these files. These files will be sent to the receiving school if your child transfers.

Toys / Valuables at School

Toys, games, all electronic games and toys, precious valuables etc. are not allowed in school because of theft, breakage, and loss and, if brought, are at the user's own risk. If your child is seen playing with a toy, game, or electronic amusement during instructional time, the item will be taken away and not returned without a written request from the parent or guardian. The school assumes no responsibility whatsoever for the loss or breakage of any of these items, and will not intervene in any conflict resulting from having them.

Items brought for Show and Tell are to be used for that purpose only.

Volunteers

We welcome and encourage volunteers at school. Each class needs room parents for parties and a phone chain, as well as to assist in the classroom. To become a volunteer, contact your child's teacher or Mrs. Dumouchel, the principal.

Ways You Can Support Our School

- Save and send in Campbell Soup Labels.

- Save and send in General Mills “Boxtops for Education” which are found on top of General Mills cereal and other treats boxes. They are worth \$.10 each.
- Shop at Stop & Shop and sign up for A+ Bonus Bucks. School ID is 05339.
- Shop at Big Y and make Berkshire Trail Elementary School your preference on your card.
- Shop at Price Chopper and designate Berkshire Trail Elementary School to receive points.