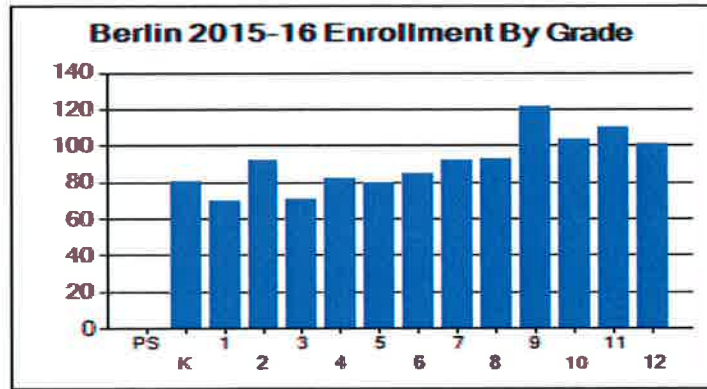


# BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2015 - 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## Demographics

Berlin Public Schools opened the 2015-2016 school year with an enrollment of 1183 students K-12.



Kindergarten was offered as a full day program. Class sizes ranged from 14-24 students in grades K-8. The district hired 250 employees. The district has 54% low socio-economically deprived. 20% of the students are identified as students with disabilities, state average is 15%.

Grade levels K-2 are at Brown School, Grades 3-5 at Hillside School, Grades 6-8 at Berlin Middle School, and Grades 9-12 at Berlin High School. Special education and pupil services offices are at the Marston School building. The district's central office is in the Hillside School building. The district's bus fleet of 9 plus 2 minivans is at a leased garage on Hutchins St. Total miles travelled: 138,499 miles.

The After-School Program, in partnership with the Family Resource Center, saw growth in participation for students in grades K-8. Academic and enrichment support is provided daily in after-school programming, as well as community involvement. The program staff collaborates with classroom teachers to ensure students increase academic achievement in the regular classroom. An estimated number of regular attending participants were 109 students, with a total of 224 students enrolled from grades K-8. Funding is primarily through 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community of Learners federal grant. After-school program has been offered in the Berlin schools since 2004.

## Instruction & Assessment

In the spring of 2016, all N.H. schools were administered a statewide assessment called Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

**Number of Students Tested and Percent of Students at Level 3 or Above for Students in Berlin, 2015-2016**

**ELA/Literacy**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Students Tested</b>	<b>Percent at Level 3 or Above</b>
<b>Grade 3</b>	71	30%
<b>Grade 4</b>	82	48%
<b>Grade 5</b>	76	55%
<b>Grade 6</b>	79	42%
<b>Grade 7</b>	91	52%
<b>Grade 8</b>	92	55%

**Mathematics**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Students Tested</b>	<b>Percent at Level 3 or Above</b>
<b>Grade 3</b>	71	27%
<b>Grade 4</b>	82	39%
<b>Grade 5</b>	76	36%
<b>Grade 6</b>	79	20%
<b>Grade 7</b>	91	27%
<b>Grade 8</b>	92	27%

SBAC is administered to students via an electronic platform. Though Brown School does not have a required testing grade, grade 2 students begin practice and preparations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade assessment process with academic progress measured using NWEA MAPS testing. Students showed marked growth in math, an increase of 31% proficient from the previous year, and 12% increase proficiency in reading. Hillside School also showed marked progress in math. The school schedule was modified to include intervention blocks for small group instruction for remediation and acceleration of math and reading skills. Those scheduled intervention blocks are known to students as WIN (What I Need).

A new curriculum was implemented at Hillside School in both reading and math, known as EngageNY. Increased support of a math coach via Title I included monthly professional development for teaching math concepts and skills.

Berlin Middle School students participated in a model for interventions and supports also known as WIN groups. 74% of students made personal gains. Student growth for proficiency moved from 42% in October to 60% in June. Grade 6 students increased an average of 2 grade levels in reading proficiency.

New this year is the state adoption of using SAT College Board tests for all grade 11 students instead of the Smarter Balanced Assessment used at other grade levels. We anticipate this will raise awareness of the importance for all students to be in preparation of college and career readiness.

Formative and summative assessments are reviewed to assist in the decision making process if a student needs an intervention to reach the benchmarks. Benchmarks are based on curriculum alignment with N.H. College and Career Ready Standards which are inclusive of Common Core State Standards.

Teams of teachers in all schools have developed unit design plans/units of study that clearly identify what students will learn, what they will be able to do and how we will assess what they know. The unit design planning is carried out in all grades, all subject areas. Teachers continue to align their instruction vertically and continue to develop common assessments to measure student progress.

The district completed a revision of the five-year Master Professional Development Plan which is based on individual professional growth needs and coordinated with a professional staff performance evaluation process. The district committee members of teachers provided training and help sessions for teachers to develop their individual 3-year professional development plans.

Professional development was provided for all staff focusing on district and school goals. A North Country regional training was held in October, 2015 to establish professional learning communities as a model for professional growth and collaboration of teachers. Based on the revised district master professional development plan, inservice days were coordinated across the district. All teachers trained in a culture and climate framework known as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and evidenced-based process to increase consistent expectations of student behavior. The staff also received trainings in Youth Mental Health First Aid, CPR/AED, and developing individual student learning objectives. Guest speakers included employees of the Bureau of Federal Prison system to discuss drug and alcohol abuse and recovery. Building level professional development was conducted for better techniques in behavior management and de-escalating violent behaviors, use of technology for instructional practices, strategies for math instruction, trainings on assessments, and using data. Teachers participated in training to increase skills with building curriculum in the cloud and to be proficient integrating technology , with deployment of 1:1 computers and tablets for all students in grades 5-12, . Chromebook laptops were distributed to all students, grades 9-12. Parents and students were provided with digital citizenship guidelines to maximize use for learning.

District administrators developed a common process for educator effectiveness evaluations. The principals used a time-line for new and veteran teachers as they conducted performance evaluations. The team developed a professional eportfolio for educators to show evidence of practice. By the end of the school year, teachers were required to upload in their eportfolio, a current resume, a 3-year professional development plan, and a parent communication log. Administrators worked together on walk-throughs of all classrooms using an electronic platform they created for Ipads.

New courses were offered at Berlin High School, they included: Advanced Placement (AP) Statistics, AP English Composition, Introduction to Criminal Justice, Poetry, and Creative Writing. There were increased number of courses that were dual credit, high school and community college credit, known as Running Start classes. This is in partnership with White Mt. Community College.

Berlin Regional Career & Technical Education Center (CTE) offers the following programs: Accounting, Automotive Technology, Building Trades, Drafting/CAD, Early Childhood Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, Graphic Arts, Health Science Technology (HST), Pre-engineering and Welding. Industry certifications were earned by students in Automotive Technology, Health Science Technology, and Welding. Building trades program, under the instruction of teacher Matthew Lambert, completed

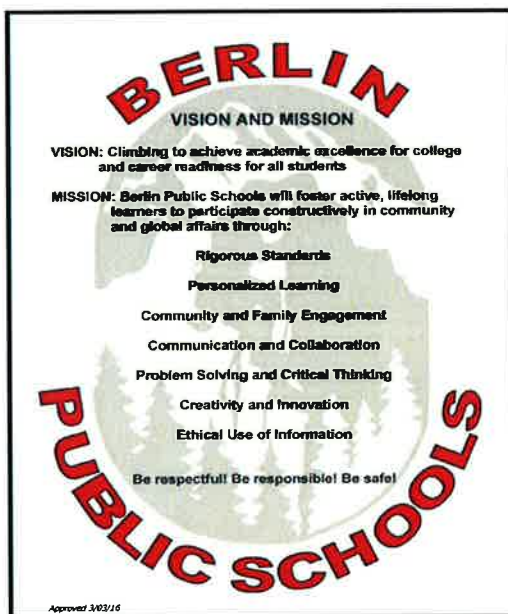
construction of 2 municipal buildings: 1) Recreation and parks storage and office building, 2) Public restrooms at Community Field.

## Staff Accomplishments

The Berlin District Leadership Team worked to continue implementation of district K-12 goals. The team met Nov.13, Feb. 12, and May 20 with an outside facilitator. The team members were: Corinne Cascadden, Martha Miller, Rosemary Rancourt, Angela Duquette, Kevin Carpenter, Dan Record, Julie King, Amy Huter, Brenda Lambert, Susan Griffin, Cheryl Pinette, AnnElise Record, Roland Pinette, Alaina Huot, Nicole Arguin, Don Picard, and parents Jennifer Buck and Karen Wheeler. The primary focus was the revision of the district vision statement.

The action plans that were implemented to meet our goals include:

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



School and district committees met to address: Professional Development, Wellness, District and School Goals, School Climate and Culture, Behavioral and Mental Health Supports, Emergency Management, Technology Integration, and Project A.W.A.R.E. (Advancing Wellness and Resilience Education).

The Professional Development Committee planned and coordinated professional development activities in the district and assisted with individual 3-year professional development plans. Those members included: Amelia Alton, Pam Carrier, Alaina Huot, Jessica Mather, Anne Kopp, Lisa Devost, Lucie Kinney, Linda Scherf, Debbie Payeur, Georgia Caron(Enriched Learning Center), Judy Arsenault(After-School Program), Nicole Plourde, Board Member, and Corinne Cascadden. This committee reviewed and shared the district's professional development activities. Team members guided staff to write individual 3-year professional development plans. The committee worked extensively to rewrite the 5-year Master Professional Development Plan to include educator effectiveness.

The following staff members participated on the Wellness Committee: Patty Hood, Craig Melanson, Kate Demers,R.N., Catrina Annis, R.N., Pauline Duquette, R.N, Elaine Connary, Mike Poulin, Jill Poulin, Amy Blanchette, R.N., Dana Deblois, Candy Richard, Matthew Soprano, Lynne Mercier, R.N., Judy Arsenault, After-school program, Angela Martin-Giroux, Community member, Louise Valliere, Board Member, Corinne Cascadden, Heidi Barker, UNH Coop. Ext. Service. These members coordinated CPR/AED training with 32 staff members participating. Many staff members also participated in a Walking Challenge for healthy eating, regular exercise and stress management. UNH Cooperative extension service provided a family series on nutrition, a clinic "Life of an Athlete" was provided for all student athletes to maintain good health and fitness.

The district's Mentor Program is instrumental in providing support to beginning teachers, teachers with new assignments, and teachers new to the district. Monthly meetings and classroom observations were part of the mentor's responsibilities. Coordinator was Tammy Fauteux and the design team was Sandy Pouliot, Ann Nolin, Susan Griffin, and Patty Hood. In addition, trained district mentor teachers are: Emily Frizzell, Alaina Huot, Brenda Lambert, Amy Bugeau, Rosemary Rancourt, Cheryl Pinette, Nicole Arguin, Adrienne Backer, Jessica Mather, Jill Poulin, Tammy Watson, Courtney High, Ted McCormick, Jake Moore, Don Picard, Beth Sargent, Roland Simard.

As a district, all buildings have revised emergency management plans. Additional surveillance systems have been installed both in and out of school buildings. All school busses are equipped with video and audio surveillance systems. All teachers participated in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Physical building assessments were conducted by Sean Heichlinger from the N.H. Dept. of Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Scan procedure was shared and a multi-agency table top exercise was conducted at Berlin High School.

The district has a technology committee at each of the schools chaired by IT director Autie Hamilton, members are represented from each building as well as the Technology Integrator Kayla Steady and the Network Administrator Irina Williams.

Representatives from each school included:

High School: Kevin Carpenter, Corinne Cascadden, Ted Pacheco, Beth Sargent, Tim Forestall, Rachelle Gilcris, Carol Chabot, and Andy Rancloes.

Middle School: Dan Record, Tammy Watson, Sandy Pouliot, Tammy Fauteux, Nicky Arguin, Anthony Mullins, Denise Palmer, Eli Clemmer, Nate Roberge and Will Barth. Hillside School: Julie King, Cheryl Pinette, Sandy Pouliot, Ron Fini and Eli Clemmer.

These committees worked monthly to plan, prepare, and sustain our district goal of one-to-one devices K-12. As we moved forward with this initiative, we assessed the needs of staff and students to provide them with the tools necessary to be successful in a 21st century learning environment. Over seventy-five percent of our staff was provided with a graduate level course for professional development in the integration of one-to-one Chromebooks in the classroom. Parent information packets were created and included: care and use policy guides, loan agreements, SAU3 policies on internet safety and bullying, filtering software, and other resources regarding internet safety. The committees also focused on ensuring one-to-one devices were compatible with the NWEA and Smarter Balanced computer based state assessments. This compatibility allowed us to reduce the amount of time preparing for and conducting testing.

The district has been proactive in increasing the use of technology for staff and students. Our inventory is currently 500 PCs, 225 iPads, 650 Chromebooks and 300 Kuno Tablets. We have continued to increase our district-wide bandwidth in all schools to support our final step in our transition to a digital platform of one-to-one computing for all our students.

In the upcoming 2016-2017 school year, all of our students from Kindergarten through twelfth grade will be assigned a district owned Chromebook. We will continue to evaluate the technology needs of the district to stay up-to-date with current technologies and provide our students with the tools necessary for college and career readiness. We will also continue to provide quality and timely support, and seamless integration.

Project A.W.A.R.E. (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) was a federal grant award. Training was provided for 136 staff and community members in Youth Mental Health First Aid. Through grant funding a School Resource Officer was contracted in partnership with the Berlin Police Department. Officer Arsenault responded to 1,085 calls for service and needs within the schools. The service calls included: home visits, school visits, students counseled, classroom presentations, field trips arrests/summons, incident reports, school meetings, and school patrol. Youth Leadership Through Adventure (YLTA) groups were formed in both the middle and high schools to empower and support students through youth leadership development strategies and service learning projects. With over 70 students belonging to these chem-free, pro-social, experiential education based groups, they are the largest school-based youth leadership groups in the North Country. The schools developed a framework and protocols for school based mental-health treatment, violence and substance abuse prevention activities. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) were implemented to foster positive school climate and culture, with a district-wide rollout of supports scheduled for September 2016. Bob Thompson is hired as the Project Manager. The project was awarded for five years. An outcome of the project was to establish behavioral health teams at all schools that meet weekly on a referral basis.

Student supports are initiated from the referrals including school-based mental health services. In year one of the grant student referrals to community based mental health services rose by 29%.

Brown School Physical Education teacher and Music teacher coordinated “Jump Rope for Heart” and raised over \$3,000 for N.H. Heart Association.

Brown School teachers who were nominees for the N.H. Teacher of the Year award: Susanne Styles and Randy Messineo.

Hillside and Brown School math coach, AnnElise Record was awarded the Louise Tillotson Teaching Fellowship award, selected by the N.H. Charitable Foundation.

Berlin Middle School teacher, Nicole Arguin completed the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) at North Country Education Services.

Berlin High School Athletic Director (AD), Craig Melanson, was awarded N.H.Division III AD of the year.

Berlin High School teacher, Jake Moore raised over \$2,000 to benefit cancer research through the “Movember” challenge

## **Facilities Report**

Our buildings had a full assessment of roof conditions and developed a multi-year plan for maintenance and repair. All roof drains were lowered and White Knight product applied to most roofs. All roofs will be completed in summer, 2016. Window replacements continue at the Hillside/Berlin Middle School complex. Four offices were renovated at Marston School for Project A.W.A.R.E., a nurse’s office was constructed at Hillside School, and a safe room was created within a regular classroom at Brown School. Fitness and weight rooms at BMS and BHS were also renovated and included asbestos abatement.

In light of the Sandy Hook Elementary incident, emergency management and school safety has risen. We are reassessing our main school entrances. All school doors have been locked since 1999, all visitors must sign-in and wear visitor passes. Additional surveillance cameras were installed at all schools. Keyless door locks were installed, funded by Emergency Management Planning Grant from NH Homeland Security. Heating management has proven to be successful with our decrease of fuel consumption. BHS heating unit was overhauled with high efficiency motor and variable speed drives, and the BMS boiler was overhauled and cleaned internally for maximum efficiency and performance. There is also a focus on reducing electrical costs with lighting fixture upgrades and installations to LED at BHS and BMS. This affords the district with \$4000 in energy savings and \$4500 in rebates. An electrical panel was replaced at BMS and several doors were re-insulated and weatherized with new seals. Additional building work included, painting the gym/cafeteria at Brown School, masonry work on the BMS complex, replacement of exterior doors at BHS gym, and drainage work behind BHS to address run-off from Mt. Jasper,

## **Student, Parent, Community, and Board Involvement**

Parent/teacher conferences were held at all schools.

Parent events were held at Brown School in August for “Meet the Teacher”, in September for parent general information, in October for a book fair and open house event, in December for parent/teacher conferences, in March for an author/storyteller family event sponsored by Title I, also in March for kindergarten registration and screening, and in April for a movie night. Classes visited local sites: Hillside School, Great Glen Trails, Milan Hill State Park, Moose Brook State Park, and Notre Dame Arena.

Parent events held at Hillside School included “Meet the Teacher”, open house, a family literacy event with 75 families represented and sponsored by Title I. Hillside student council members participated in the Berlin Main Street Day of Caring. Students participated in science programs with Tin Mountain Conservation, and local forester Haven Neal. The Shelburne Grange donated dictionaries to all third graders. A Lego Club was very active as well as the Parent Teacher organization that raised \$5,000 for assembly programs and field trips.

Berlin Middle School students participated in a financial literacy fair assisted by Northeast Credit Union and Service Credit Union. Middle School students also participated in a Health-O-Rama sponsored by Androscoggin Valley Hospital. Students participated in North Country Youth Leadership and Kids in Prevention Youth Leadership (YLTA). The BMS National Junior Honor Society established an in-school Food Bank for students to have readily available non-perishable foods.

Parents of all incoming freshman students at Berlin High School were invited to freshman orientation, attendance rate was 95%. Grant awards through Berlin City Dealership were presented to the guidance dept., athletic dept., and the honor society. The guidance department funds were used to provide travel and college visits for underprivileged students. The athletic department used grant funds to renovate and add equipment to the weight training room. And the honor society participated in an educational and cultural visit to Boston. Berlin High School students participated in a New England challenge to fight melanoma by taking pledges for Your Skin in In Challenge. Students placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in New England and earned \$2,500 for their class treasuries.

Students at all grade levels visited local establishments for community service, learning about safety on the job, science education, fine arts performances, job shadows and internships.

Coos County Family Health Services sponsored a dental hygienist to promote healthy oral health. Lessons are provided for oral hygiene, weekly fluoride rinses, free cleanings and check-ups for qualifying students on school sites.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programming is evolving with a program for all students in grade 6, 7, and 8 at Berlin Middle School, then it transitions to Project-Lead-The-Way in grades 9-12. Project Lead the Way classes are pre-engineering courses offered at Berlin High School such as: Intro to Engineering Design, Civil Engineering, Bio-Technical Engineering, Digital Electronics, Technology and Robotics. Hillside School held a successful STEM family night. The district hosted the first regional STEMFEST event for students in the North Country and sponsored by UNH engineering students and staff.



Girls' Field Hockey team, under the coaching of Nicole Arguin and Louise Johnson won the NH Division III State championship. Boys' Ice Hockey team, under the coaching of Michael Poulin and Matthew Soprano won the NH Division III State championship. Girls' Ice Hockey and Unified Basketball finished as first state runners-up.

In partnership with North Country Health Consortium, a student leadership group was formed at both the high school and middle school levels. Youth Leadership Through Adventure showed a significant increase in student participation. 25-40 students participated in leadership trainings and were able to facilitate community events and a school climate project. Over 30 students participated in suicide prevention trainings sponsored by NAMI.

First Gentleman Tom Hassan donated 500 books to students at Brown and Hillside School, sponsored by Scholastic.

Pizza Hut of Gorham, NH continued to sponsor a reading incentive program called "Book It". This is designed to encourage parents to read to, and with their children outside of the school day.

Of most significance during the 2015-16 school year was a community-wide focus on drug abuse awareness and prevention strategies. Two community events, sponsored by North Country Listens held forums at Berlin High School. The first held in November, Facing the Heroin Crisis, had over 250 community participants. The second forum was held in May. This event was facilitated by student leaders who led small groups in creating a local resources assessment. These events contributed to a strong community alliance formed as a coalition called Stand Up Androscoggin Valley.

In December a round table discussion was held at Berlin High School with U.S. Senator Shaheen who met with community and student leaders about the reported heroin use among our youth based on the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. This drew national attention culminating in a web-based newscast with [www.the74million.org](http://www.the74million.org), two stories with NH Public Radio, and an article in a national education magazine, DAdministrator, May, 2016.

Berlin Board of Education members are: Chairperson, Nicole Plourde, Vice-Chair, Lynn Moore, Secretary, Denise Valerino, Louise Valliere, and Scott Losier. The School Board held an annual joint meeting in October with Milan and Dummer school boards.

The school board successfully negotiated three collective bargaining agreements with Berlin Education Association, Berlin Education Support Staff, and AFSCME Local #1444 custodians and bus drivers.

The Board members were proactive with drug and alcohol prevention by being the first school district in N.H. to approve a medications policy that included Narcan/Naloxone within schools, during school hours for administration by school nurses.

School Board chair, Nicole Plourde was the recipient of this year's Sylvia Evans Award for her volunteerism and contributions to women and families. Berlin High School student Kayleigh Eastman was also a recipient of the same award.

The city funded the FY16 school budget at \$17,823,718. The School Board members and district administrators carefully examined all its programs and operational expenses in the year-long process of developing the school department budget. A five-year capital improvement plan is submitted annually to the city. The goal is to maintain N.H. Approved Schools, to maintain High School Accreditation, to pursue state and federal funding as supplements to the city's school budget appropriation and to increase technology in all aspects of teaching and learning.

Respectfully Submitted,



Corinne E. Cascadden  
Superintendent of Schools