

**BERKELEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES**

345 Plainfield Avenue  
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922  
(908) 464-1298 Fax (908) 464-3282

**Michele F. Gardner, M.Ed.**  
**Director**

**Kevin S. Morra, M.A.**  
**Supervisor**

June 15, 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

This letter brings you an update on Extended School Year planning for summer 2020. We have had the opportunity to 1) review the limited guidance provided by the state for safety and health protocols, 2) engage in conversations with all of our colleagues throughout Union County and beyond and 3) participate in informational meetings/webinars at the state and national level. The New Jersey Department of Education has provided districts with the option to remain remote during extended school year programming.

Berkeley Heights will proceed with a **fully remote extended school year**, inclusive of related services and educational programming. We realize that this may be a relief to some, while disappointing to others. We have determined that it would be inappropriate to conduct in-person programming during the summer months, with the health and safety of students, staff and families at the forefront of our decision-making. Our district behaviorist, Michelle Corsentino, will continue to be on-hand during the duration of our extended school year program, should families encounter resistance or behavioral challenges in continuing to engage their children in remote learning during ESY. Some of the areas that we considered when making our decision included, but were not limited to:

- Safe transportation of our students
- Availability of PPE and medical supplies necessary
- Availability and health status of our employees to be able to engage in in-person programs
- Availability of detailed, appropriate guidance/protocols from various state entities
- Appropriateness of “testing out” new protocols & safety measures on some of our most vulnerable students
- Ability of intensive, highly individualized programs to safely engage in social distancing, donning of masks and overall participation in general health guidelines

Additionally, as this has come up as a point of inquiry, educators and related services personnel will not be permitted to provide services in family homes due to health and safety concerns for all involved.

When the district fully returns to in-person instruction, teachers and related services providers will review student progress during the closure, to determine if additional supports or services are required. Any further determinations of in-person educational services, such as evaluations, will be dependent upon the school district having its reopening plan completed and approved through the State Department of Health. We thank you for your anticipated understanding while we continue to persevere in this long road of recovery in our wonderful community.

Sincerely,

Michele Gardner  
Director of Special Services

Kevin Morra  
Supervisor of Special Education