

WILLIAM S. COHEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2010

From the Principal's Desk



Dear friends of the William S. Cohen School:

I hope that this first newsletter finds you and your families well rested and eagerly anticipating the exciting opportunities that lie ahead of the next school year. The up-coming year offers rich and rewarding experiences for all of our students, parents, and staff. This year, the school calendar allows for three storm days. **The first student day is scheduled for Wednesday, September 1st.**

Very soon, the Cohen School will open its doors to approximately 400 enthusiastic middle school youngsters. They will be greeted by a competent, caring staff, committed to assessing each child's educational needs in order to provide a program specifically tailored to best accelerate their learning.

In addition to the rigorous course offerings, there is an extensive after school activity program available to all students. Dozens of activities are offered throughout the school year, supervised by the Cohen School staff. These experiences provide students with the opportunity to remain in a supervised activity after the regular school day, to interact with teachers and peers outside of the classroom, and to be active school citizens in whatever they may choose.

The Cohen School staff eagerly accepts the challenge and responsibility of guiding our students through these important, formative years in school. At the same time, we realize the critical role that parents play in their development. The statewide reputation that the Cohen School has for educational excellence is due, in large part to the high expectations that teachers and parents have for our students. We sincerely welcome your input and your cooperation. Together, we face no greater task than to provide the best education possible for our young people, so they may realize their greatest potential. If you have any questions, suggestions, or ideas to share, please call the school. Our secretarial staff will connect you to the appropriate personnel for assistance.

This information in this newsletter will hopefully assist in answering some of the more common questions regarding school start up procedures as well as the dates of upcoming events. **All monthly newsletters will appear on our website which can be found at <http://www.bangorschools.net>.**

OPEN HOUSE

We will be having an Open House on **Tuesday, September 7, 2010, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.** All classrooms will be open, and staff members will be here to meet parents. This is not a time for parents to meet individually with teachers about concerns they have about their child. If you have questions or concerns, please arrange for an individual conference at an alternate time.

SCHOOL DAY

The William S. Cohen School will welcome students on Wednesday, September 1st. Doors will open at 8:10 a.m. and school adjourns at 2:30 p.m. Our multifaceted After School Activity Program runs from **2:30 to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.** A late bus will be available to transport bus students at the conclusion of this program. Students receive information daily regarding programs over the school intercom.

Lockers

Homeroom teachers will assign each student a locker to use for the school year. Students are responsible for their own locker and are strongly encouraged not to share their combination with anyone. Please keep lockers closed and locked at all times. Student lockers are the property of the school and may be searched at any time. Book bags should be small enough to fit into the school locker since students are not allowed to carry book bags during the school day due to safety concerns in our hallways, computer labs, cafeteria, library, and classrooms. **Students bringing cell phones to school are required to turn them off and store them in their locker during the school day.** (Personal locks are not allowed on school lockers.)

Book Bags

Students who choose to use book bags should plan to leave them in their lockers throughout the school day. When purchasing a book bag, this should be taken into consideration. Book bags left in aisles in classrooms, science labs, computer labs, and the library, disrupt walkways, and often times trip students and staff members. With four hundred students in the corridors as classes pass, book bags add unnecessary congestion problems.

Student Handbooks

Each student at the William S. Cohen School will receive a Student Handbook on the first day of school. This year's handbook is printed inside the Agenda Book (Calendar/Organizer) which will be supplied to all students again this year. This handbook contains information specific to school rules, policies and programs. It is the students' responsibility to become familiar with the information in this handbook, so parents and teachers are encouraged to review the information contained in the handbook with students. The Student Handbook can be found on the **bangorschools.net website.**

A.M. Music

Band, orchestra and chorus will be offered from 7:20 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. Orchestra meets on Wednesday & Friday. Chorus meets on Monday & Wednesday. Band meets Tuesday & Thursday. Information regarding these programs will be forthcoming during the first week of school. The A.M. music programs are scheduled to begin the week of September 6th.

Attendance & Tardiness

Our 2010-2011 School Goal=95% Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

Regular attendance at school is essential for a student to achieve success and to derive the greatest benefit from the school experience. State law also requires regular attendance. When students are absent from school, we request that parents call the school prior to 9:00 a.m. Students to be dismissed from school must receive permission and sign out in the office. A note or phone call in advance is required from parents in order for a student to be dismissed.

Student Breakfast & Lunch Programs

The William S. Cohen School offers a breakfast and lunch program to all students. An application for free/reduced meal prices will be distributed to students on the first day of school. If you wish to apply for free or reduced meal prices, please complete the application and return it to school as soon as possible. Applications are available in the main office at all times throughout the school year. An A La Carte program is also available for students who wish to pay for individual food items during lunch. Students who wish to bring their own lunch may purchase milk. The following are prices for the school year: Full lunch \$2.15, Reduced lunch \$.40, Full breakfast \$1.00, Reduced breakfast is free this year.

Report Cards

Report cards for this year will be issued to students according to the following schedule:

1st Quarter	No later than	November 17th
2nd Quarter	No later than	February 2nd
3rd Quarter	No later than	April 13th
4th Quarter	No later than	*June 29th

*The final report card will be sent home through the mail.

Homework

Homework is an important and necessary part of each student's education. Although the amount and type of homework will vary from class to class, **it is essential for all students to spend time each evening on schoolwork.** **This includes written work, as well as study time.** The Bangor School Department has established the following guideline for daily homework at the middle level. *****30 to 90 minutes each evening*****

Make-Ups & Incompletes

Students may make-up work missed due to excusable absence or suspension. All efforts should be made by the teacher and student to arrange mutually convenient times for make-up. **The period from 2:30-3:00 p.m. daily is reserved for make-up.** Make-up work, due to excused absence or suspension, should be completed within one week exclusive of holidays or vacations from school if the absence was five days or less, or within two weeks if the absence was more than 5 days. The Principal may make exceptions. When incompletes are issued, the teacher must change the incomplete to a grade in the guidance office by the end of two weeks after the close of grades. The Principal may make exceptions. No incompletes will be issued for the last rank card unless arrangements have been made and approved by the Principal.

Parent Conferences

Parents may make appointments to meet with staff at any time during the school year by calling for an appointment. Scheduled Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held October 12th & 13th.

Student Dress Code

Students of the Bangor School Department (BSD) should dress for success every day of the school year. Dressing for success in the school routine reinforces for the students the importance of dressing appropriately for the world of work and their future professional endeavors.

Dressing for success has multiple effects for students: maintaining respect, establishing credibility, ensuring safety, promoting a positive learning environment, and limiting distractions. Dress must reflect neatness, cleanliness, modesty, good taste and must not be suggestive, threatening, or intimidating. Additionally, dress must reflect the standards of both individual and schoolhouse safety. All dress must contribute to an environment consistent with a positive and healthy school climate. As a guide, the BSD, for example, considers tank/halter tops, pajamas, 100 percent spandex attire, bare feet, chains, hats, head gear, and clothing promoting alcohol, drugs, obscene or suggestive acts to be in conflict with the BSD's expectations of a healthy and positive learning environment and therefore, are not allowed to be worn in school. Clothing should not be too short, too long, too low, or worn too tightly. (Skirts and shorts must extend to fingertips). Clothing that exposes cleavage, the midriff, undergarments or that is otherwise immodest or provocative is prohibited. All dress must be weather appropriate. For example, wearing shorts during the winter months is not appropriate.

Footwear must be appropriate for school. Flip flops, and flip flop type sandals are strongly discouraged as they may be a safety concern. All footwear must be tied and/or laced, if designed to be tied and/or laced.

"Dress for success" is a phrase that captures the intent of these guidelines. For all students associated with the BSD, the expectation is that responsibilities are approached purposefully each day. "Dress for success" supports this approach and promotes our individual responsibility to contribute to the common good of our school community.

Building administrators and/or their designees are authorized to determine appropriateness of student attire.

Students dressed inappropriately will be expected to change their attire before continuing in their studies for the day. Parents of students requiring accommodation for religious beliefs, disabilities, or medical purposes should contact the building principal.

PAPERWORK NEEDED FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETES

Before students can participate in any interscholastic practices or games, they must have filled out and returned the following documents:

1. Health Examination for Interscholastic Sports (Form F - green form): This physical examination form must be completed by the child's physician. This form must be done once while the child is a student of the Cohen School. One completed form covers the child for the three years he/she is a student here.
2. Form P - yellow form: This parent permission form giving students parent permission to participate in athletics is filled out once a year. The form covers the student for all sports that year. Parents must provide insurance information and emergency contact information. The forms are available at WSCS or on-line at bangorschools.net.

Math and Reading Extension Courses

The Federal No Child Left Behind Act's major goal is to improve student achievement across the nation. It mandates that public schools raise the educational performance of **all** students.

The William S. Cohen School has identified goals, action strategies, and a professional development program as part of its school improvement plan to meet this challenge. During the initial years of implementation, greater numbers of students have shown proficiency in reading, mathematics, and science as demonstrated by meeting or exceeding the standards on the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA). Our task is to continue our efforts to assist all students in meeting these expectations. A major intervention this year are two courses called Reading Extensions and Math Extensions. Based upon a review of past performance, some students will be scheduled into one or both of these classes. Students registered for these classes will be scheduled with a teacher for instruction one day a week for reading and/or one day a week for math in lieu of a study hall.

We are excited about offering this intervention and the impact that it could have on assisting more students to move into the "Meets the Standard" category of the Maine Educational Assessment. In essence these students will be scheduled for 36 additional periods of small group instruction per year in reading and/or 36 additional periods of small group instruction per year in math targeting areas to help them better meet the Grade Level Expectations through successful participation in the NECAP.

Should your child be scheduled into the math extension or reading extension classes and you have questions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher, the Guidance Counselor or the Principal.

Mark Your Calendar

SEPTEMBER 1ST	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL	SEPTEMBER 24TH	TEACHER INSERVICE DAY
SEPTEMBER 7TH	OPEN HOUSE	OCTOBER 11TH	NO SCHOOL-COLUMBUS DAY
SEPTEMBER 20TH	SCHOOL PHOTOS	OCTOBER 12TH/13TH	PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

School Photos

Mark your calendar - School photos will be taken on Monday, September 20, 2010.

Student First Day Packets

Each student will receive from their homeroom teacher a "FIRST DAY PACKET". This packet will contain important information that needs to be filled out by the student's parent/guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher **immediately**. This will allow the Main Office to have current information on each student.