

What to expect your 1st year with Bismarck Public Schools!



**BISMARCK
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*College, career,
community ready*

**Hughes Educational Center
(Registration & Administration)
806 North Washington St.
(701) 323-4110 phone
(701) 323-4001 fax
www.bismarckschools.org**

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We are so glad you chose Bismarck Public Schools (BPS) for your child's education! We have served kids and families for over 140 years. We put together this information from questions commonly asked by our 1st-year parents no matter what grades your kids are in! We hope you find it helpful.

After School Programs: After school care, 3-6 pm, is provided for a fee. BLAST (222-6771) schools are Centennial, Grimsrud, Liberty, Miller, Murphy, Northridge, Prairie Rose, Solheim & Sunrise. MREC (751-4041) schools are Lincoln, Moses, Myhre, Pioneer and Will-Moore. Roosevelt and Highland Acres run their own program, so call those schools directly.

Allergies: We want to work with you and your child concerning a food or other allergy. Alert the school about any potentially harmful allergies.

Breakfast & Lunch: Menus are posted at www.bismarckschools.org, Departments, Child Nutrition. Costs are also listed. Breakfast starts at 7:45 am and ends before 8:30; ask the school office for exact times! Lunch is staggered by grade level. Each child will receive a meal number that will remain the same each year they are enrolled in BPS. You can deposit money in your child's account online under Child Nutrition or pay at the school office. You can check PowerSchool for the account balance. Parents who wish to join their child for lunch on his/her birthday must call the school office in advance.

Check In & Out Procedure: If your child is late to school or must leave early for an appointment, check in and out at the school office. Try to make medical and other appointments before or after school.

Code of Conduct: Students, staff, parents and school visitors are expected to behave appropriately in any school setting, on or off campus, as well as in any verbal, written or electronic communications including social media.

Custody Issues: There is a brochure about divorce and custody issues on the school district web site at www.bismarckschools.org under Parents. It explains parental rights in divorce situations as they relates to a child's education.

Daily Schedule: Elementary schools typically start at 8:35 am; end at 3:05 pm. Music, library, recess, physical education, and lunch days/times are different for each classroom. Ask the teacher for details. Children must wear appropriate shoes for phys. ed. and return library books on certain days, so it's important to help your child learn the schedule! Middle schools 8:10-3:20; High schools 8:25-3:25.

Discipline: Each school has a discipline policy/procedure listed in the Student Handbook. Please review this with your child each year.

District Testing: In grades K-5, the school district uses Aimsweb to measure student progress in both reading and math. This assessment is administered in the fall, winter and spring. We also use Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing in reading and math 3 times per year in grades 3-8. This assessment is also administered in the spring to grades 2, 9, and 10. The ND State Assessments (NDSA) is given in grades 3-8 and 11 each spring; National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is given in grades 4, 8 and 11 every other year. Grades 9 and 10 take an ACT assessment called Aspire. All grade 11 students participate in the spring ACT.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedure: Watch school newsletters for information about safe driving around the school when dropping off/picking up your child.

Emergencies: If there's an emergency situation at a school (tornado, fire, firearms, etc.), parents will be notified by text, phone and email, so it is VERY important that your information is current with each school your students attend. Do NOT call, text or email your children or go to the school during an emergency as you can endanger them, others, and yourself. Watch for announcements regarding where to go to be reunited with your student. At that time, you must show proper I.D. to pick up your children.

Fundraisers: All students in grades K-5 are asked to participate in school fundraisers sponsored by the parent organization. These are short-term projects and should be completed as soon as the information comes home. As a safety precaution, we do not encourage students to go door-to-door; we prefer them to contact friends or family members.

Kindergarten Registration: Register incoming kindergarten students starting in January prior to the fall the child would start. (See Registration.)

Medications (prescription/over-the-counter): All schools have trained staff to administer student medications. In some cases, students may be allowed to self-administer with their parent/health provider's authorization. Parents must bring medication in its original container to the office and fill out a form regarding how/when doses are administered.

Online Payments: MyPaymentsPlus (MPP) provides an easy-to-use, efficient way to make payments quickly and securely anytime. BPS uses MPP to accept electronic payments (debit/ACH/credit) for fees, lunch accounts, facility rental, activity passes, etc. Visit www2.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome.

Open Houses: K-5 schools have kindergarten open houses in the spring; all schools have fall open houses, usually right before school starts so students can see their classroom, meet teachers, bring their supplies, etc. Dates are listed on each school website or at www.bismarckschools.org. Please note that this is not a time for parents to have a meeting with the teacher. If you'd like to discuss specific issues regarding your child, ask to set up an appointment.

Parent Organization: Each school has a PTO, PTA, PAC or Booster group that meets on a regular basis. To get involved, call the school!

Parent-Teacher Conferences: These take place in the fall and spring. A note will come home from the teacher suggesting a date and time to meet. Please return this as soon as possible. Conferences usually last about 15 minutes. Parents should review their child's grades in PowerSchool and bring any questions to the conference. Academic and social issues can/will be covered during the meeting. In K-5, unless specifically requested by the teacher, the student does not attend the parent conference. If at any time you have questions or concerns before the conference dates, please email, call or make arrangements to meet with your child's teacher before or after school. Regular, open communication is vital to your child's education!

PowerSchool: PowerSchool is an online tool to help parents check student grades, attendance, meal account balances, etc. You will be issued a number and password by your child's school. Teachers in grades 4-12 all use it for grading; however, it's optional for teachers in grades K-3.

Registration: To register any student, complete the forms online at www.bismarckschools.org under Registration. Gather necessary documents and make an appointment at our district offices at Hughes Educational Center, 806 N. Washington St., 701-323-4110. Students are placed based on where they live or see "Transfers" for details.

Report Cards: In grades K-8, students get number grades of 1-4 based on their progress. 1 means the student has a beginning knowledge of the grade level standard; 2 means the child has partial understanding; 3 means the student is proficient; 4 means the child's understanding exceeds the standard. In grades 9-12, traditional letter grades are used.

School Events: Read emailed school newsletters and check school websites for details and updates on concerts, PTO events, Grandparents Day, etc.

School Safety: We have a comprehensive district plan, as well as individual school safety plans. We do regular fire, tornado and other safety drills such as lock downs. We employ playground supervisors during the school day. We discourage students from coming to school early or staying late on the playground because supervision is not provided during that time. For a brochure on Student Safety, go to www.bismarckschools.org under Parents.

School Supplies: Supply lists are posted on each school website for grades K-8. Earphones for computer labs and other items may also be needed. High school teachers discuss what school supplies are needed in each class once school begins.

Snacks/Birthday Treats: We prefer students eat healthy snacks in the classroom. Please send things like fruits, vegetables, pretzels, string cheese, etc. For a complete list, go to www.bismarckschools.org, Departments, Child Nutrition.

Special Services: BPS provides a variety of special services, such as Title I Reading, Levels of Service Gifted & Talented program, Counseling, Special Education, English Learner, Indian Education, and Students in Transition (homeless). To learn more, call 701-323-4000.

Tardy: If a K-5 student arrives at school after 9:30 am, it will count as a half day absence. School Board policy mandates schools to send letters to parents after 5 and 10 absences or tardies. After the 15th absence/tardy, you may be invited to a meeting with school personnel to address the issue.

Transfers: If your child is just starting with BPS and you wish to request a different school than the one your child is assigned, you can fill out a transfer request at registration time. Transfers are approved on a space available basis. If your child is transferring in from another district, we will request school records from that district.

Transportation: BPS provides transportation for K-5 elementary students who live in the school district and are more than a half mile from the school they are assigned to in their attendance area. Busing is also available to students who are within the BPS school district boundaries and who live more than one mile from Horizon, Simle, and Wachter Middle Schools and Bismarck, Century and Legacy High Schools. Students who have requested a transfer are not bused. Transportation is provided for special needs students as assigned by the Special Needs Dept. and eligible Head Start students. Register at www.bismarckschools.org, Departments, then Transportation or call 701-323-4500.

Weather-Related Cancellations: During inclement weather, the Superintendents decide by 5 am whether buses will run or school will be held. Information is sent via email, phone and text to all parents and sent news media and posted on line. If weather turns bad during the day, school will NOT be dismissed, but you may pick up your child early by signing out at the school office.