

Communicating with BPS Parents

Last update: 8/5/15

*Much of the communication you will receive from Bismarck Public schools will be sent by the school, teacher, district, or transportation department **via e-mail**. If you don't have access to email, please contact the school(s) to make other arrangements to receive important information. If you have something to add to this document, e-mail renae_walker@bismarckschools.org.*

Schools

- Kindergarten open houses: in April or May before fall kindergarten begins.
- K-12 fall open houses: shortly before or after school begins, depending on the school.
- Middle & high school orientation sessions for new students in August.
- Monthly e-mailed school newsletters during the school year; if you don't have e-mail, please contact your child's school(s) and they will arrange to get you a paper copy.
- Fall and spring parent-teacher conferences.
- PowerSchool: parents can sign up to see their child's assignments, grades, attendance, lunch account balance, etc. Go to www.bismarckschools.org/district/powerschool/ and click the blue PowerSchool button. Parents will need an access ID and password from the school for each student to create an account. Lunch balances cannot be accessed using a mobile app for an iPad or iPod. You'll need to use a computer to access that information.

Teachers

- Each teacher will choose how he or she will communicate with parents. Some use e-mail, classroom newsletters or web pages, social media, notes sent home in backpacks, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, or a combination of methods. Please ask your teacher(s) how they plan to communicate with parents throughout the school year, and how often.
- If you wish to e-mail your child's teacher(s), please review this information and graphic: If you have your PowerSchool information, you can e-mail your child's teachers directly from within PowerSchool (*see graphic below*). If you are unsure of what your PowerSchool login information is, contact the building secretary. If you know your login, you can find the teacher you are looking for and click their name to send them an e-mail.

PowerSchool

Bismarck ← If you have more than one child they will be listed here...

Navigation

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- School Bulletin

Grades and Attendance | Standards Grades

Grades and Attendance: Student, Bismarck

Exp	Attendance By Class										Course
	Last Week					This Week					
	M	T	W	H	F	M	T	W	H	F	
01(A)											AM Attendance Teacher, Bismarck
											PM Attendance Teacher, Bismarck
03(A)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Reading 4 Teacher, Bismarck

Find the Course teacher you are looking for and click on their name to send them an email...

District

- **PowerAnnouncement:** This is the Bismarck school district’s primary Parent Notification System. When you register your child(ren) for school, parents are automatically signed up to receive phone calls and e-mails. If you also wish to receive text messages, go to <http://www.bismarck.k12.nd.us/district/powerschool/>, click the blue PowerSchool button, log in, go to Power Announcement, and select Text Messages.
- **Emergency announcements/school cancellations:** These will be made via e-mail, text messages, and/or phone calls to parents via PowerAnnouncement. The information will also be posted online at www.bismarckschools.org under News/Updates, as well as on our Facebook page, Twitter, and local radio and TV channels.
- Monthly e-mailed newsletters from the school contain a “district” information page.
- **K-8 Friday Flier:** During the school year, the district e-mails this publication every other Friday. It contains information about community events and activities hosted by other non-profit organizations for children and families in Bismarck. Copies are also available at www.bismarckschools.org under the Parents tab on top.
- **Lunch Menus:** During the school year, the BPS Child Nutrition Dept. will e-mail monthly meal menus, as well as notices to parents who have low balances in their child’s lunch account. We prefer you sign up to put money into your child’s meal account (www.mypaymentsplus.com), but you can also stop by the school with a payment. If you need your student’s meal number or have questions about creating an account, please call your child’s school.

Busing

- The Bismarck Public School District contracts with Harlow's Bus Service to provide transportation for regular education students. Harlow's uses several instant notification systems so parents of bused students know if buses are running ahead or behind schedule:
- Twitter: To receive an instant notification via Twitter, you need a Twitter account. Go to www.twitter.com, enter your name, email, password, and then click on the "Sign up for Twitter" button. (If you already have a Twitter account, ignore this first step.) Once logged in, search for @BismarckRoutes and click the Follow button. If you have a smart phone, allow push notifications for the Twitter App so that you can receive Tweets instantly. If you are logging on to Twitter via a computer, click on the "Following" tab, then "@BismarckRoutes".
- Facebook: If you don't have a Facebook account, register at www.facebook.com. Once logged in to Facebook, search for Harlows SchoolBus and "friend" them to receive notifications on your home page. If you decide not to add us as a friend, check the Harlow's Facebook page for updates on bus delays.
- RainedOut: Go to www.rainedout.com and in the "search" box type "Harlow's School Bus Service, Inc." Next, click on the blue text that reads "Harlow's School Bus Service, Inc." to get to the registration screen. Choose to receive a text or email. Type your phone number or email address in the white box, check the "Agree to Terms/Services" box, then click "Start Signup" and enter your area code to verify that your phone number or email was entered correctly. After entering the verification code, you will see a list of bus numbers. Select which bus or buses you'd like to receive notifications for, then log out.
- Auto Dialing System: If you have provided Harlow's with a valid phone number, you will automatically receive some notifications by phone. You do not need to sign up.
- ZPass: Each student bused by Harlow's receives a ZPass. When students get on or off the bus, they will scan their ID card to confidentially track the date, time and location of their entry or exit from the bus. Harlow's can then respond to parent questions with real time data, know exactly who's on a bus during an emergency, locate potential missing children, analyze ridership patterns, and determine route efficiencies. Parents can access the same information by registering at www.zpassplus.com for instant push or text messages. If kids forget their pass, they can still ride the bus. There's a \$5 fee to replace a lost ZPass. For more information, call Rick Kramlich at Harlow's, (701) 224-1767.
- For additional busing questions, comments, or concerns, call (701) 224-1767 or e-mail bismarckroutes@harlowsbussales.com.