

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Office of the Superintendent**

**MEMO**

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**DATE:** November 1, 2011  
**TO:** Parents  
**FROM:** Valerie A. Goger  
**RE:** School Closing Update

Halloween certainly played its tricks on us this year! Over the weekend, power was erratic at Oak Street School, working fine at times, and then flickering out at other times. By Sunday evening, it was totally out. Liberty Corner School had partial power until late Monday, and then the level dropped too low to support the boilers and we lost all heat. The other schools currently have full power. Beyond the loss of electricity and heat, the larger problem for the District was the dangerous driving and walking conditions. With so many street closures, we were advised that the buses would not be able to navigate their routes and that walking in many parts of the Township was not safe.

We do not know at this time when power and heat will be restored to Oak Street and Liberty Corner Schools. But in consultation with the Police Department, we believe the streets are navigable for the buses. School will resume tomorrow at Mount Prospect, Cedar Hill, William Annin, and Ridge. If power is restored, it will also resume at Oak Street and Liberty Corner, but we won't know that until this evening. We will send a blast message tonight stating which schools will be open tomorrow.

There remains a major traffic concern in the Homestead Village neighborhood. Fallen trees and wires are still preventing access to part of Peachtree Road, the entrance way to Cedar Hill School. Police will be stationed there tomorrow morning to assist car and bus arrivals. After dropping children at Cedar Hill School, parents may exit the neighborhood on Homestead Road, and make only a right turn onto South Finley. Or with careful maneuvering around wires, cars may wend through the neighborhood to exit onto Cross Road.

The New Jersey Department of Education considers these emergency closings the same as 'snow days' used by schools in the winter. Districts will be held to the 180 day school year requirement regardless of weather or other emergency conditions. We have a 183 day school calendar, which means we have three days built in for potential closings. We have now used two of those days, and of course have several months of cold weather ahead of us. If we exceed our three day allotment, we will need to make up that time beginning with the Friday of April recess, and working back towards the beginning of the week. Let's all hope for a mild winter!