BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES

ADMISSIONS FOR THE CLASS OF 2025
GUIDE TO APPLYING

BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES
HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY
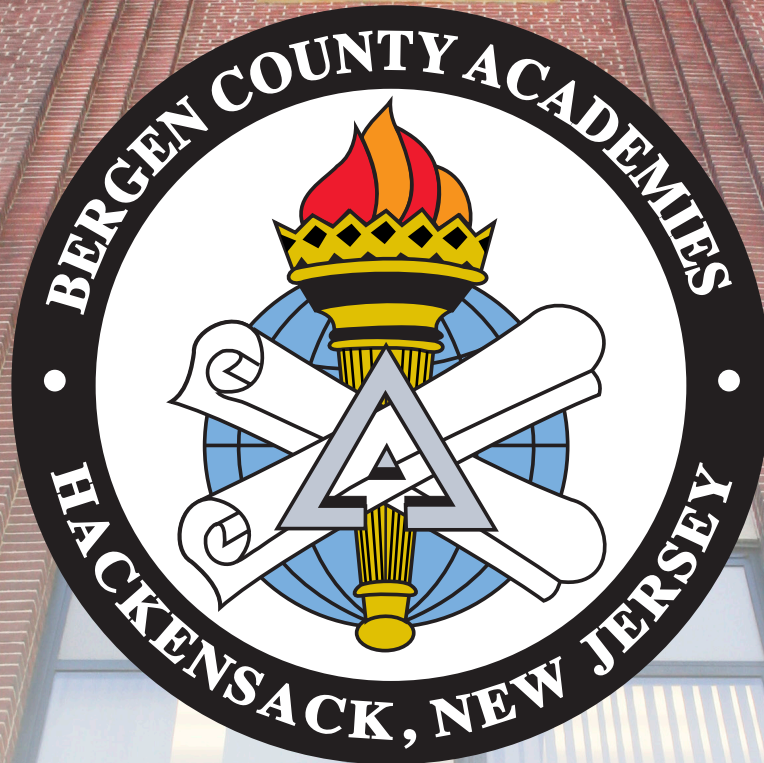
BELIEVE, CREATE, ACHIEVE

BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dr. John Grieco Campus • 200 Hackensack Avenue, Hackensack, New Jersey 07601

201-343-6000 • www.bergen.org

AN ACADEMIES EDUCATION

The Bergen County Academies offers students a unique high school experience that combines comprehensive academics with technical and professional courses. We encourage our students to choose an academy concentration based upon their interests rather than a future career choice.

Pursue your passion for science, fine art, engineering, medicine, technology, music, theatre, culinary arts, design, or finance—our programs will allow you to explore your interest while preparing you to meet the academic challenge of college. You may complement your studies with electives, projects, and clubs that cross academy boundaries; you are not limited to study in just one field. Students attain an academic background that prepares them well for postsecondary study in any field they choose.

THE ACADEMIES:

AAST
Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology

ABF
Academy for Business and Finance
(International Baccalaureate Option)

ACHA
Academy for Culinary Arts and
Hospitality Administration
(International Baccalaureate Option)

AEDT
Academy for Engineering Design Technology

AMST
Academy for Medical Science Technology

ATCS
Academy for Technology and Computer Science

AVPA
Academy for Visual and Performing Arts

For information on our curriculum and laboratory facilities, please visit our website: http://bcts.bergen.org.

STATE STUDENT ID (SID / NJ SMART ID):

Each student attending a public school in New Jersey is assigned a unique student identifier in NJ SMART to track that student's history within New Jersey longitudinally. This 10-digit number is printed on standardized tests and some report cards. Students may obtain this number from their school administrators/ counselors as well. Applicants who do not attend a public school in New Jersey must refer to the online application User Manual for instructions on how to proceed.

For more information about the SID, please go to http://www.state.nj.us/education/njsmart/sid/

It is mandatory that the applicant provides a personal e-mail address (Google account preferred) that is checked on a daily basis. This e-mail address should not be affiliated with a school or a business and should not be subjected to firewall restrictions.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, procedures and deadlines are subject to change. For current information, applicants must check the Admissions website at www.bergen.org or call the Admissions information line at (201) 343-6000 ext. 2321.

YOUR GUIDE TO APPLYING

Go to
studentadmissions.bergen.org

Phase 1:

- **Register online with user name, password, and state student ID (SID/NJ Smart ID)**
- **Submit Online Application (Deadline Monday, December 14, 2020)**
- **Give Recommendation Forms to three teachers and School Transcript Form to Guidance Counselor or School Official**
- **Take online test (see page 5)**

Late February:

All applicants receive decision letters indicating if they will or will not continue to Phase 2.

Phase 2:

Interview

Mid April:

Students who interview receive YES or NO letters

Phase 3:

- **Submit Declaration of Intent**
- **Take placement test for Math and World Language**

Above is the Admissions process chart showing the 3 phases of our application

In late February (the end of Phase 1), all applicants to the Bergen County Academies are notified of their application status by regular mail. All applicants receive decision letters indicating if they will or will not continue to Phase 2.

Interview invitations are mailed to students who will be continuing on to Phase 2. Only students who we interview will receive YES or NO letters in mid-April.

Students agree to abide by the pledge below when they complete the online application to the Bergen County Technical School District

By registering to take the BCTS Admissions test, I hereby pledge to complete the assessment with honor and integrity, and, in doing so, to present work that is entirely my own, finalized without the benefit of using devices such as phones, calculators, SMART watches, or any other technology whatsoever. I will neither receive nor provide unauthorized assistance to others in the course of, or following the administration of the test. I will not provide to any other person(s), via the posting of test questions or answers online, or by referring to test content in person, verbally, or in any writing, e-mail, form of social media, or other form or manner whatsoever, or otherwise. I understand that my violation of these requirements may result in the invalidation of my application for admission.

What Determines Admission?

In order for you to apply to the Bergen County Academies,

- Primary residence must be in Bergen County

- Only 8th grade students can apply

- If accepted, student will begin 9th grade year in September 2021 and graduate in 2025. Transferring into Bergen County Academies is not permitted.

Our entrance test consists of two parts and is described below.

The English Test

Students are given a total of forty-five minutes to read a passage and write an essay response. The essay is scored using the following criteria: comprehension (shows understanding), insight (establishes a clear thesis), organization (paragraphs are structured properly and are in a logical sequence), support (supports the thesis with relevant facts from the passage), style (written in a clear, mature voice) and grammar/spelling.

The Math Test

The math test consists of 40 multiple choice questions for which students are given sixty minutes. The questions focus on basic math skills and word problems. Students who take algebra and geometry in middle school typically fare better on our entrance test. All math questions are multiple choice.

How should you prepare for the test?

We have placed a sample test on our website. Visit "Downloads" at the Admissions website (www.bergen.org) to see the sample. Students who take prep courses do not have any advantage over students who do not take a prep course. If you are unable to test due to illness or for an unforeseen emergency, you must e-mail Admissions@bergen.org by January 11, 2021 to take the makeup test.

The Interview

By late February, all applicants receive decision letters indicating if they will or will not continue to Phase 2 (the interview). Students who have not been invited to interview will not continue to Phase 2.

Applications for all academies will be given individual interviews by a team of teachers and / or guidance counselors. Applicants to AVPA- Theatre Arts and AVPA- Music academies will present an audition; applicants to the AVPA-Visual Arts will participate in a Visual Arts workshop, where they will be asked to present a portfolio. All information on the audition or portfolio will be sent to candidates chosen to interview.

Before you start the application, print and read the User Manual located on the application site - studentadmissions.bergen.org.

THE APPLICATION

To begin our application process, you must first register online with a user name, password, and state student ID (SID/NJ Smart ID*). We recommend using Internet Explorer (IE) or Firefox as your internet browser. Please allow pop-ups from the studentadmissions.bergen.org application site (see browser "Privacy & Security" settings).

Students must create a user name and password in order to apply. Go to studentadmissions.bergen.org

Login
User Name: [   ]
Password: [   ]
☐ Remember me next time.
[Log In]
Register
If you have not previously registered, click [Register]

Your **user name** and **password** will allow you to gain access to the application website. **You must provide a personal e-mail address (Google account/gmail) that you check daily.** During the admissions process, you will be contacted through this e-mail if we should have any information or questions for you.

Once you register, you may login with your user name and password, which you previously set up.

Our online application has 8 steps. All steps must be completed by the deadline of **Monday, December 14, 2020** in order for the application to be valid.

After you register, click on "Apply Now" to begin the process.

*All students attending a public school in New Jersey have a SID/NJ Smart ID. Please ask your guidance counselor for this. Applicants who attend a private school, or a school that is not in New Jersey, should refer to the User Manual for instructions on how to proceed.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Application for the Bergen County Technical Schools (Academies, Bergen Tech/Teterboro)**

Apply Now</td></tr>
</table>

This online checklist covers the steps involved in completing your application. After each step is completed, the "X" will change to a check mark. You may make changes by clicking the "Edit" box.

Bergen County Technical Schools Application Process

Step	Process Description	Status	Edit
1	Enter Personal Information	✔	Edit
2	Select Campus	✔	Edit
3	Enter Essay/Accomplishments	✔	Edit
4	Enter Reference Names	✔	Edit
5	Upload Student Photo	✔	Edit
6	Review Your Application	✔	Preview
7	Submit	✔	Submit
8	Open For Edit		Open For Edit
9	Print School Forms		Print Forms

✔ Step completed   ✖ Step to be done

Step 1: Start application. Enter personal information.

Step 2: Select Campus(es). This allows you to apply to Bergen County Academies, Hackensack and/or Bergen County Technical High School, Teterboro. You may have a first and second choice for both schools. Most students are accepted into their first choice.

The entrance test is MANDATORY in order for a student's completed application to be considered.

Students who applied to Bergen County Academies and/or Bergen County Technical High School, Teterboro will take their admissions test online January 9th or 10th, 2021. Details will be emailed to the applicant after the application deadline.

Step 3: You **must** write a separate essay for **each** school you are applying to.

Essay for Bergen County Academies, Hackensack: In 400 words or less, tell us about yourself and why you would like to join your choices of academies.

If you have any activities, and/or have received any accolades and would like to share this with the Committee, please do so in 100 words or less within the same box.

Essay for Bergen County Technical High School, Teterboro: In 400 words or less, tell us why you would like to join your choice of program(s).

Step 4: Enter Reference Names and e-mail addresses. Provide us the names and e-mail addresses of your teachers who will be writing your Math, English and Science recommendations. The English and Science teachers should have taught you in grades 7 or 8. The Math teacher should be teaching you currently in grade 8.

Only **one** set of Recommendation Forms is needed even if you are applying to both campuses. **Please do not contact us to inquire if we have received your school transcripts and recommendations; we will contact your school directly if any information is needed.**

Step 5: Upload student photo (jpg only). Upload one head shot of the student, passport size 2"x 2", 5MB). This will be used for identification purposes at the Admissions test and interview.

Step 6: Preview your application. Look over your application and make sure you have completed all steps to your satisfaction.

Step 7: Submit. When you have submitted your application, you will be e-mailed a six-digit validation number and message automatically to tell you about registering for your entrance test. **Record your validation number; have it with you on the day of your entrance test**. If you do not receive this e-mail, please check your spam/junk mailbox.

Step 8: Open for Edit. If, after you submit your application, you would like to edit some steps, you may do so at this step. **Make sure to save your revisions by going back to Step 6.** You **MUST** resubmit every time you open for edit otherwise your validation number will NOT be valid.

Step 9: Print your Transcript, Recommendation forms, and your Case Manager Form (if applicable). You must give all forms to your counselor and teachers by the December 14 application deadline. Print the Admissions Test Instructions and follow the instructions at least one week prior to testing.

Online Test Instructions

1. Create personal e-mail (Google account)

2. Complete/Submit online application by December 14, 2020
   • Receive confirmation e-mail with validation number

3. By December 21, 2020, receive test information by e-mail.

4. Take online Admissions test

Frequently Asked Questions on Admission to Bergen County Academies

For more information, contact Admissions@bergen.org

Why can I not use the work e-mail address of my parent/ guardian or my school e-mail address as my primary e-mail address?

E-mails are the primary method of communication between the Admissions Department and the applicants and their families. Many schools and businesses have firewalls that do not allow communication from sources outside their organizations. This means that e-mails sent from those addresses may never be received by us. Similarly, our Admissions e-mails may not be received by you if sent to a school or business e-mail address. To avoid missed information, it is mandatory that the applicant's primary e-mail address is a personal e-mail (Google account preferred) that is checked on a daily basis.

Do you accept students with learning disabilities?

Yes. Students with disabilities are provided academic support and speech, language, and counseling services in accordance with their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans. In order to provide proper accommodations for the entrance test, please refer to the Case Manager form (Step 9/Print Forms). If you have ever had a 504 or IEP and require assistance in your choice of academy, you must contact our School Social Worker, Mr. Jon Bercovici at jonber@bergen.org.

My son is home schooled. How will you evaluate him?

Home schooled students receive the same consideration as other students. They must provide standardized test scores for each of the middle school years, recommendation forms from instructors who are not family members, and take our entrance test.

We do not live in Bergen County. Can my daughter apply?

No. The primary residence of the child must be in Bergen County; additionally, the applicant must be enrolled in the school district of the primary residence. An applicant attending a private school not in Bergen County will be asked to provide proof of residency prior to taking the admissions test.

Are there limits on how many students can be accepted from one town?

There is a limit on the number of students we can accept from a school district. That number is based on the enrollment of the local high school.

Do the admission criteria for the different academies vary?

The criteria are the same for all academies. The Academy for Visual and Performing Arts focuses on the student's audition or portfolio as well.

My daughter is planning to apply next year. She is taking Calculus and Advanced Literature at the high school level and has received some B grades. What will you focus on when evaluating her application – her grades or her advanced classes?

We consider all information supplied to us about a particular student including the application essay, scores on our entrance test, standardized test scores from middle school, teacher recommendations, and performance at our interview. While grades are certainly important, we also look at the level of the courses when evaluating the application. If a student is taking courses at the high school level, have both the middle school and the high school send us the student's transcripts.

Can my son change his first choice academy once he has applied?

Yes. Choices may be changed up to the application deadline Monday December 14, 2020. No exceptions will be made after this date.

How will I know if my daughter's school has sent all documentation including the school transcript, report cards, teacher recommendations and standardized test scores?

It is the student's responsibility to complete and submit the online application and hand in forms including the School Transcript, three Teacher Recommendations and Case Manager Form (if applicable) to the appropriate parties at their school. There is no need to contact us to inquire if the student's folder is complete. If any documents are missing, we will contact the school directly using the information that the student has provided online. We advise students to hand in school forms by the application deadline, so that there is enough time for their school to process and send all documents to us.

Please note: Parents/ guardians must sign all forms before prior to submitting them to school.

Can my daughter apply again next year?

No. Due to the structure of our curriculum, students can only apply once when they are in Grade 8.

Why are grades and test scores emphasized? What about attributes such as character, creativity and passion?

Unfortunately, character, creativity and passion are not quantifiable. It would be difficult to use so subjective a criterion to determine admission.

My son applied to Bergen County Academies and did not get accepted. Will his application be considered automatically for Bergen County Tech, Teterboro?

No. Your son's application will only be considered for Bergen County Technical High School, Teterboro if he selected both Bergen County Academies and Bergen County Technical High School, Teterboro on his application before the deadline (Dec. 14, 2020).

Frequently Asked Questions on Admission to Bergen County Academies

For more information, contact Admissions@bergen.org

Will the results for the NJSLA test be considered?
Yes. Counselors will forward all available NJSLA test results.

Why did my son receive a "No" letter after his interview?

I am confident in my daughter's abilities to succeed and I know she would be a good fit for the Academy. Could you please reconsider her for an interview?

I would like to know where my son failed to meet your criteria. Was it his test scores, essay, recommendation letter(s), or grades?

The answers to the questions above are similar and are frequently asked. Every year, we receive a large number of applications, many more than we could possibly accept. Regardless of whether a student receives an interview letter, we know that all students who apply to us will be successful as they continue their studies.

Our highly experienced Admissions Committee considers every application in its entirety and reviews all facets including the entrance essay, performance on the entrance test, standardized tests and academic reports, recommendations from teachers and the interview. We select students who demonstrate a genuine interest while meeting the criteria within their chosen academy. Needless to say, what we do request is that all applicants give the School Transcript and Recommendation forms to their counselor and teachers by the application deadline so that applicant folders are complete for Committee review by the time of the Admissions test.

Students who are interviewed and not accepted to the Academies are placed on our Wait List. Many times this decision reflects the strength of the applicant pool within the student's district, the limitations set by the administration of sending districts, and the accommodations on our campus. In order for a student to be selected from our Wait List, a student who has been accepted to the Academies must decline their acceptance. There is no ranking order on the Wait List. Additionally, we are unable to predict if and when a student will be reconsidered. Our Committee must adhere to guidelines when choosing from the Wait List. The guidelines include the Academy in which an accepted student has declined, if there is availability for a replacement in their district within the same Academy, and if there is a qualified candidate in their district.

Due to the highly confidential nature of the Admissions process, and to keep it unbiased for all applicants, we do not discuss how decisions are reached, the reasons why an applicant is not accepted, or why one applicant is selected over another. Additionally, we do not release an applicant's scores on the Admissions test. Since it is not a normed test, there is no way for applicants to know what the scores represent, and it would cause needless competition.

The Committee is very sensitive to the fact that we cannot accept every student who applies and realizes how much time and effort each student puts into the application process. The Bergen County Technical School District appreciates every student who shows interest in our schools. Regardless of whether an acceptance follows, every parent/guardian and student should be very proud of their accomplishments for taking this first step to building a strong academic future.

For Your Reference

Personal e-mail address: _____

Personal e-mail password: _____

Online application user name: _____

Online application password: _____

Academy choices .... 1. _____

2. _____

BCTS (Teterboro) choices 1. _____

2. _____

Validation number: _____