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, art, computers, music, theatre, cooking, 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 and clubs that cross academy boundaries; you are not limited to study in just one field. Students receive a fine 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)

ACHA
Academy for Culinary Arts and Hospitality Administration

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.

Bergen County Academies is committed to following the visionary leadership of Dr. John Grieco, who was Superintendent from the inception of the Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology in 1992.

Dr. John Grieco
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 Tuesday, December 15, 2015)
- Give Recommendation Forms to three teachers and School Transcript Form to Guidance Counselor or School Official
- Print Admissions Test Ticket
- Take entrance test (must bring 6-digit validation number and student ID)

Phase 2:
Go on an interview

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

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.

Information pertaining to a student’s admission status is never released over the phone or by e-mail.
**What Determines Admission?**

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

- You must be in the 8th grade by September 2015
- You must be a resident of Bergen County when you complete your online application
- You will begin your 9th grade year in September of 2016; we do not accept transfer students or upperclassmen

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

On test days, we will ask students for a current school photo ID or passport and Admissions Test Ticket (expired passports can be used as ID as long as the expiration date is no more than 1 year). Use of calculators and cell phones are not allowed during any portion of the test.

**The English Test**

Students are given forty-five minutes to read an article 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, with the first twenty being generally easier than the last twenty. Students who take algebra and geometry in middle school typically fare better on our entrance test.

All math questions are multiple choice, with five possible answers. Random guessing will, on the average, neither help nor hurt your score.

**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. There are companies that teach courses designed to prepare students for our test. Based on student comments, it is not clear to us that students who take prep courses do any better than students who practice doing problems on their own. If you are ill on the test date, do not take the test. The make-up test date will be given during the following week. E-mail us at Admissions@bergen.org to take the makeup test.

**The Interview**

By late February, all applicants receive decision letters by regular mail 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.

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**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*). This will allow you to start your online application. Go to studentadmissions.bergen.org

Your **user name** and **password** will allow you to gain access to the application website. **You must provide an e-mail address 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 9 steps. All sections must be completed by the deadline of **Tuesday, December 15, 2015** 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.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Process Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Edit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Enter Personal Information</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Select Campus(es)</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Select Test Date</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Enter Essay/Accomplishments</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Enter Reference Names</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Review Your Application</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Submit</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Open For Edit</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Print School Forms and Admissions Ticket</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Print Forms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before you start the application, print and read the User Manual.

**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.

**Step 3:** Select the test date.

The entrance test is MANDATORY in order for a student's completed application to be considered. If you are applying to:

- **Bergen County Academies only:**
  
  200 Hackensack Ave, Hackensack

- **Bergen County Academies and Bergen County Technical High School:** You must select a test date at 200 Hackensack Ave, Hackensack location. Your test results will be shared with both campuses.

- **Bergen County Technical High School only:**
  
  504 Route 46 West, Teterboro

**Step 4:** 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 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 5:** Enter Reference Names. Provide us the names 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 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 your entrance test location and date. **Record your validation number; have it with you on the day of your entrance test along with your ID.** 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 7. You MUST resubmit every time you open for edit otherwise your validation number will NOT be valid.**

**Step 9:** Print your Admissions Test Ticket with Validation Number, Transcript, and Recommendation forms and your Case Manager Form (if applicable). You must give all forms to your counselor and teachers by the December 15 application deadline.

Bring your Admissions Ticket with you on the day of your entrance test. You will not be admitted into the test without your Admissions Test Ticket and ID.
**Frequently Asked Questions on Admission to Bergen County Academies**

For more information, contact Admissions@bergen.org

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**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. All students are required to pass the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) as a condition of graduation.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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 high school district. That number is based on the enrollment of the local high school.

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**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.

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**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, both the middle school and the high school send us the student’s transcripts.

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**Can my son change his first choice academy once he has applied?**
Yes! Choices can be changed until Friday, January 22nd. Once a student has been accepted into one of our academies, the preferences cannot be changed.

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**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 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 mail all documents to us.

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**Can my daughter apply again next year?**
No. Due to the structure of our curriculum, students can only apply once.

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**Can my son change his test date after he has selected it?**
We recommend that test times are chosen carefully. There are 2 test sessions per day. You may change your test session as long as there are seats available at that particular time - until the application deadline (Dec. 15, 2015). Once all seats are filled for a particular session, you will not be able to select it online (Step 3 of application). If you are unable to make it to a session you have chosen, you may come in as a walk-in to another session. Please note that due to space limitations we are not always able to accommodate walk-ins. Afternoon sessions have more seats than morning sessions.

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**What if it snows on the test day?**
In the event of inclement weather, the test may be postponed to a subsequent weekend. A recorded message will be available at 201.343.6000 ext. 2321 and information will be posted on our web site at www.bergen.org/admissions.

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**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.

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**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. 15, 2015)

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**My daughter has a passport but it is expired. Can she use it as ID for her admissions test?**
We will accept passports as ID as long as the expiration date is no more than one year. Annual school photos are also acceptable.
Frequently Asked Questions on Admission to Bergen County Academies

For more information, contact Admissions@bergen.org

Will the results for the PARCC test be considered?
PARCC test results will not be considered for admission this year.

What was my daughter's score on the entrance test?

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 entrance 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 entrance 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.

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/
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