

ISLAND HEIGHTS GRADE SCHOOL

115 Summit Avenue, P.O. Box 329

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www.islandheights.k12.nj.us



LISA A. ROYER

Superintendent/Principal

CRAIG LORENTZEN

Business Administrator

September 11, 2025

Dear Fifth & Sixth Grade Families,

We're excited to share that all students in the 5th and 6th grade classes will be going on a special field trip to the Bayshore Center in Bivalve, New Jersey to participate in an educational program aboard New Jersey's official Tall Ship, the AJ Meerwald. We anticipate this trip will be funded by our Island Heights Education Foundation through a grant submitted this Summer.

Trip Details:

- **Date:** Tuesday, October 7th
- **Location:** Bayshore Center, Bivalve, NJ
- **Leaving School:** 9:30 am
- **Travel Time:** Approximately 1.5 hours each way
- **Program Duration:** 4 hours
- **Return to School:** Around 4:30 PM

Important Reminders:

- The ship is docked in a **low-lying area**, and the dock is often **wet and muddy**. Please have your child wear **rubber boots or old shoes** and **clothes that can get messy**.
- Students must bring a **bagged lunch** (no glass containers). All items must be **disposable**, as there will be no opportunity to bring anything back after lunch.

Below is a brief description of the day's activities so you and your child know what to expect:

Bayshore Center's Home Port Program combines shipboard activities with landside programs to give students a 360-degree view of this one-of-a-kind environment.

During the Sail:

Students take part in an educational sail aboard the authentically restored 1928 oyster schooner A.J. Meerwald, New Jersey's official Tall Ship. After donning life vests and learning about vessel safety, your group will participate in an immersive, hands-on adventure aboard ship. Depending on weather and other conditions, activities may include:

- Work together to raise the sails and understand the physics of sail power
- Help haul a trawl net to discover local marine life
- Explore the complex food web that supports thriving estuary life
- Take a turn at the wheel and discover vessel steering mechanisms
- Read a simple nautical chart and spot aids to navigation
- Unpack an oysterman's gear and learn about life long ago onboard an oystering vessel
- Take in the sights and sounds of the Delaware Bay during a brief silent observation time
- Learn the history of the A. J. Meerwald and maybe even sing a shanty or two!

Back on Land:

- Students deepen their knowledge with a shore-based museum exploration as they rotate through three learning stations.
- They'll dissect a real oyster to learn about this amazing creature and its role in bay ecology and history.
- Then, they'll use primary sources and "read" artifacts to explore shoreside trades that supported the oyster industry: shucking and processing, boatbuilding, metalsmithing, and more.
- Finally, the whole group participates in a shell bagging activity to support oyster restoration projects in the Bay. Every student leaves with a personal connection to the Delaware and its Bayshore, and an understanding that they can make a difference in protecting our natural resources.

We hope this will be a fun, memorable, and educational experience for your child. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Please fill out the attached permission slip and return it to school with your child.

Warm Regards,

Mrs. Royer
Superintendent/Principal

Mrs. Andrews
Supervisor of Student Services

Mr. Bruner
Sixth Grade Teacher

Mrs. Major
Fifth Grade Teacher

Mrs. Olsen
School Nurse

Mrs. Smutz
School Secretary

ISLAND HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent/Principal

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Class Trip Parent Notification Form

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child will be going on a class trip to: Bayshore Center at Bivalve, NJ AJ Meerwald

On the following day: Tuesday, October 7th, 2025

The students will leave Island Heights Grade School at 9:30 AM

and return approximately at 4:30 PM

****No cell phones, smart watches or electronic devices are allowed on class trips.***

A bagged lunch will be required.

Please have your child dress in rubber boots/old shoes and clothes that can get messy.

Please sign and return this form as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

IHGS Staff

I am aware that my child _____ will

be going on a class trip to: Bayshore Center at Bivalve, NJ on Tuesday, October 7th, 2025.

Parent Guardian Signature

Date