

BENNINGTON SOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK



2023- 2024

The Mission of the Bennington Public Schools is to provide educational opportunities in a safe, caring environment that will prepare all students to meet the challenges of the future.



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PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook has been prepared for the students and parents/guardians of Bennington South Middle School. It presents guidelines and directions which will help answer questions regarding school policies. Please read the information carefully and keep this booklet for future reference. The practices and procedures outlined are presented in the best interests of all members of Bennington South Middle School. These pages are devoted to the rules that govern Bennington South Middle School. However, it is impossible to list the unique circumstances covered by every rule. The handbook does not form a contract and the school reserves the right to change or modify the handbook whenever it so chooses. We encourage parents and guardians to visit the school. We are proud of what happens at Bennington South Middle School, and we welcome any opportunity to share information about the education of your child. The staff at Bennington is always available to help you. Education is a cooperative effort between parents/guardians and teachers. By working together, we can provide the best educational experience possible for you and your child. If you have questions regarding the school, please feel free to contact us.

SCHOOL COLORS -- *Royal Blue and White*

SCHOOL MASCOT -- *Badger*

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT – *The mission of Bennington South Middle School is to promote learning experiences that challenge and empower students and faculty while developing the whole child and preparing them to be engaged citizens in a new and changing world.*

SCHOOL VISION -- *LEARN. GROW. LEAD*

SCHOOL PHONE – 402-238-3079
FAX – 402-243-0712

SCHOOL CONFERENCE – Eastern Midlands Conference

N.S.A.A. -- Class B

OFFICIAL WEBSITE

www.benningtonschools.org

I. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

- A. The Board of Education is the elected legislative body of School District #59. While it helps create many school policies, it must give complete approval to all school policies and activities. Board duties include the approval of appropriations, determination of taxes, and the employment of all school personnel.
- B. The Superintendent of Schools is the chief executive officer of the Bennington Public Schools. He/She is responsible for carrying out the policies and actions of the Board. He/She advises the Board on educational endeavors, recommends personnel, and is responsible for all school district activities, subject to the Board's sanction.
- C. The Principal of each building, under the supervision of the Superintendent, provides leadership for the faculty and staff and employs the authority delegated within the framework of Board policies.

II. PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

Bennington Public Schools are organized in a 6 - 3 - 4 plan. This implies that a student has six years of Elementary school training (K-5), three years of Middle School training (6-8), and four years of Middle

school (9-12). Bennington is a fully accredited school by the Nebraska State Department and the North Central Accreditation of Schools.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

The Middle School Principal, Assistant Principal/Activities Director, and Counselor's offices are located on your right as you enter the main entrance of the building.

Principal – Lucas Apfelbeck
 Assistant Principal/Activities Director – Erika Hiemstra
 School Resource Officer – Tony Ramaeker

IV. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The primary concern of the counselor is to aid students who have questions concerning academic, personal, or social life. This is accomplished through private conferences and group discussion. The counselor discusses questions with students concerning future courses and possible vocations and careers.

The goal of the guidance program is to help students develop an understanding and acceptance of themselves so they may make intelligent vocational, educational and social choices. Students are assisted in formulating goals, which are unique to their personal talents, capacities, and interests. Guidance can help the students believe in themselves, to respect themselves and others, and to recognize that achievement can be a personally satisfying experience when goals are clarified. Counseling is the heart of the guidance service. It is defined as the process of an experienced and qualified individual helping a second person to understand oneself.

The following services are provided through the Counseling Office: self-evaluation, transitions to middle school and transitions to middle school programs, college and career readiness, studying vocational and career options, counseling students individually and in groups, administering individual and group tests, conferring with parents regarding student progress and concerns, making referrals to various agencies, scheduling classes and assisting with curriculum planning, and conducting follow-up studies with various groups.

6-8 Guidance Counselor – Jackie Muller and Amy Sather

STAFF		
Mr. Lucas Apfelbeck	Principal	lapfelbeck@bennps.org
Mrs. Erika Hiemstra	Assistant Principal/Activities Director	ehiemstra@bennps.org
Mrs. Jackie Muller	6-8 Guidance Counselor	jmuller@bennps.org
Mrs. Amy Sather	6-8 Guidance Counselor	asather@bennps.org
Mrs. Janel Taylor	6-8 Academic/Behavior Interventionist	jtaylor@bennps.org
Ms. Megan Norton	School Psychologist	mnorton@bennps.org
Mrs. Jill Yosten	School Nurse	jyosten@bennps.org
Mrs. Sara Marxsen	Administrative and Activities Assistant	smarxsen@bennps.org
	Attendance/Office and Health Room Assistant	
Mr. Tony Ramaeker	School Resource Officer	tramaeker@bennps.org
Ms. Angie Mitchell	Head Cook	amitchell@bennps.org
Mr. Rob Loptin	Head Maintenance	rloptin@bennps.org
Ms. Allison Snurr	Life Skills Program	asnurr@bennps.org
Ms. Madisen Kanger	Speech-Language Pathologist:	mkanger@bennps.org

Ms. Abby Fitzgerald Ms. Calena Ohlson	High Ability Learning (HAL) Teacher	afitzgerald@bennps.org cohlson@bennps.org
Mrs. Lisa Schonhoff	English Language Learner (ELL) Teacher	lschonhoff@bennps.org

6th Grade Teachers	6A	6B
Science	Mrs. Angie Lowe	Mr. Trent Stryker
Math	Mrs. Doni Coulter	Mr. Scott Heese
Reading	Mrs. Emily Dangel	Mr. Jay Thayer
English	Mr. Chris Showman	Mrs. Barb Kruid
Social Studies	Mr. Craig Nichols	Mr. Scott Heese, Mr. Trent Stryker, Mrs. Barb Kruid, Mr. Jay Thayer
Resource	Ms. Mindy Andrus Mrs. Marla Kratochvil	

7th Grade Teachers	7A	7B
Science	Mr. Jeremy Bohaboj	Mrs. Marissa Hoff and Ms. Maddy Kraft
Math	Mr. Cole Gray	Ms. Maddy Kraft
Reading	Ms. Andrea Salic	Ms. Marissa Hoff
English	Mrs. Christine Denker	Ms. Marissa Hoff and Mr. Scott Cerny
Social Studies	Mrs. Allie Palmer	Mr. Scott Cerny
Resource	Ms. Sarah Serrano Mrs. Marla Kratochvil	

8th Grade Teachers	8A	8B
Science	Mrs. Bri Dacy	Mr. Andy Scott
Math	Mrs. Lindsey Merrill	Mrs. Satarah Reardon
Reading	Mrs. Kelly Taylor	Mrs. Danielle Adams
English	Ms. Madison Clark	Mrs. Danielle Adams and Mrs. Satarah Reardon
Social Studies	Mr. Krambeck	Mr. Andy Scott and Mrs. Satarah Reardon
Resource	Mr. Paul Donelson	

EXPLORATORY	Teacher(s)
Art	Ms. Kim Stroberg
Band	Mr. Landon Barada
Chorus	Ms. Olivia Engel
Computers	Mrs. Jessica Kinning
General Music	Mrs. Angie Nabower
Health	Mrs. Machaela Jacobs
Media Center	Mrs. Konni In den Bosch
P.E.	Mrs. Victoria Frolio and Mr. Blaze Glinski
Speech/Drama	Ms. Deidre Dewald
Tech and Living	Mrs. Jane Becker and Mr. Jacob Mattes
World Language	Mrs. Rebecca Bryan and Ms. Kenna Frank

I. RELEASE OF PUPIL RECORDS

It shall be the policy of this school to release student transcripts to schools, employers, and military organizations upon request provided the minor student and/or the parents/guardians have signed a release form authorizing the school to do so. In some instances, organizations requesting this information have received written approval from the student to request this information. If the agency provides this verification, the school will honor that request. If a student is 18 years of age or older, no parental/guardian signature is necessary to release the student data.

Information

1. School officials may have access to only records in which there is a legitimate educational interest, unless a parent has given written and dated consent for the access. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if an official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility and effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible. School officials include employees of the school and consultants contracted by the school including the school attorney. A school official who violates this restriction shall be subject to disciplinary action.
2. When requested, school district personnel may release directory information such as: student's name, address, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, photograph and other likeness, and other similar information. Directory information will not be released for commercial use without permission of the superintendent or designee.
3. Students and parents/guardians of students may inform the school district or school district personnel in writing that any or all of the directory information should not be released without their prior consent.
4. Bennington Public Schools may provide address and telephone listings through the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Parents/guardians and secondary students have the right to request that Bennington Public Schools not provide this information (i.e., not provide the student's name, address, and telephone listing) to military recruiters or institutions of higher education, without their prior written parental/guardian consent. Bennington Public Schools will comply with any such request.
5. Upon request, Bennington Public Schools discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student intends to enroll. This is only if the information is for purposes related to the student's enrollment.
6. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Bennington Public Schools, District 59, Douglas County, Nebraska to comply with the requirements of FERPA.
 - a) The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are: **Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.**
 - b) A copy of the Bennington Public Schools Formal Hearing Procedure can be obtained by contacting the Superintendent of Schools.

VI. MANDATORY AGES OF ATTENDANCE

Mandatory ages of attendance for truancy purposes are as follows: The mandatory ages of attendance are age 6 (as of January 1 of the then current school year) to age 18. Attendance is not mandatory for a child who: (1) has obtained a middle school diploma by meeting statutory graduation requirements; (2) has completed the program of instruction offered by a school which elects pursuant to law not to meet accreditation or approval requirements; (3) has reached 18 years of age; (4) has reached the age of 16 years and such child's parent or guardian has signed a notarized release discontinuing the enrollment of the child on a form provided by the school (must be obtained from the principal's office). In addition to a signed notarized release form, the superintendent's designee (Principal) shall conduct an exit interview if the child is (a) enrolled in Bennington South Middle School, or (b) resides in the school district and is enrolled in a private, denominational, or parochial school.

ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is essential for students to obtain maximum opportunities from the educational program. Parents and students are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Students shall attend school unless excused by the principal of their attendance center. The administration will follow Nebraska Statute 79-208 and 209 when dealing with attendance issues.

Excessive absenteeism is the failure to attend school for a minimum number of days established in the school calendar by the board, with or without reasonable cause.

The superintendent shall designate the principal as the attendance officer. The principal will investigate the report of any child who may be in violation of the state's compulsory attendance status. The principal may assemble an attendance team that will facilitate implementation of the attendance plan and will be responsible for oversight of attendance strategies.

If any student has accumulated a total of, eight (8) absences in a school year or the hourly equivalent, the school shall render all services to compel the student's attendance. These services shall include the following:

1. Verbal or written communication by school officials with the person or persons who have legal or actual charge or control of any child; and
2. A meeting or meetings between a school attendance officer, school social worker a school administrator or designee, the person who has legal or actual control of the child, and the student (when appropriate) to address the barriers to attendance. The result of the meeting or meetings shall be to develop a collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance. The plan shall consider, but not be limited to:
 - Illness related to physical or behavioral health of the child
 - Educational counseling
 - Educational evaluation
 - Referral to community agencies for economic services
 - Family or individual counseling
 - Assisting the family in working with other community services.

If the parent/guardian refuses to participate in such meetings or service offers as part of the attendance plan, the principal shall place documentation of such refusal in the child's attendance records.

Notification:

1. If a student has accumulated eight (8) absences in a school year or the hourly equivalent, the District will send written notice to the student's parents or guardians regarding the State mandatory attendance and excessive absenteeism laws.
2. If a student has accumulated fifteen (15) absences in a school year or the hourly equivalent, the District will send written notice to the student's parents or guardians regarding the State mandatory attendance and excessive absenteeism laws.
3. If a student is absent more than twenty (20) days in a school year or the hourly equivalent, the attendance officer may file a report with the county attorney of the county in which the student resides. The District shall notify the student's family in writing prior to referring the student to the county attorney. The report shall state that the District has made the efforts required by this policy and that the collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance has not been successful and the District recommends county attorney intervention. The report shall include all relevant information regarding the student's attendance and excessive absenteeism. Illness that makes attendance impossible or impracticable shall not be the basis for referral to the county attorney.
4. If a student has a history of being chronically absent from school, the District shall render any and all services in the District's power to compel the student to attend school at any time the attendance officer deems necessary. This may include filing a report with the county attorney of the county in which the student resides prior to twenty (20) days, or the hour equivalent, of absence in a school year.

Reporting Excessive Absenteeism to the County Attorney.

If a student is unexcused absent more than 20 days per year or hourly equivalent the attendance officer may file a report with the County Attorney of the county in which such person violating the compulsory attendance laws (i.e., the child, the child's parent, or the person who has legal or active charge or control of the child) resides. When reporting excessive absenteeism, the attendance officer shall inform the county attorney whether the excessive absences are due to documented illnesses that make attendance impossible or impractical. This may be done by informing the County Attorney of either the number of absences due to such illnesses or that the attendance officer is of the opinion that prosecution is not warranted. This report will contain the following information:

1. Identification information including address, phone number, date of birth - any relevant information regarding student's status, residence and parent/guardian status.
2. A complete attendance record including all previous years obtainable of absences, tardies and information regarding any waivers, etc., on record.
3. A record of steps made to gain compliance including calls, conferences, letters, etc., by building, district and any other agencies or individuals that may be involved.
4. A copy of the final certified letter to the parent/guardian notifying them of this action.
5. A copy of the attendance requirement.
6. Any other information that may be deemed helpful to the County Attorney. This may include past actions, discipline records, knowledge of family/community problems, etc.

Attendance is coded at Bennington Public Schools as listed below.

E- Excused - family emergencies, events (examples could include a family wedding, funeral, or a family member being deployed with the military, or 50th wedding anniversary) - students can make up work for full credit

U– Unexcused - Parent or guardian will excuse the absence but the school does not recognize this particular absence as excused (examples would include: vacation, not following established state competition attendance protocols, taking a child to lunch, or consecutive days of illness without a doctor’s note) - students can make up work for full credit, but may be asked to do so before or after school.

MP– Medical Parent - a student is sick and a parent or guardian calls to verify they are home ill. - students can make up work for full credit

MD– Medical Doctor - a parent or guardian provides a doctor’s note to validate their absence from school. - students can make up work for full credit

T– Tardy - a student is tardy to school or to a class period throughout the day.

R– Truant - a student is absent from school and parent or guardian does not excuse the absence. - students may not make up work for credit and will receive a consequence for their absence.

CO – Counseling/Office – The student was accounted for at school and in the Counseling or Administrative Office. Student is responsible for the missing work at the discretion of the teacher.

SA - School Activity - a student is absent at a school sponsored activity. - students should have completed work prior to being absent at a school activity.

SS – State Spectator – The student followed proper attendance procedures established by the school administration. The student is responsible for completing work prior to the absence OR at the discretion of the teacher.

Below are a list of district procedures when recording excused and unexcused absences for all students.

1. Students missing four or more consecutive days due to illness are required to provide a professional’s medical note for those absences to be considered “excused.” If you are unable to provide a medical note for the illness, the entire length of the absence will be considered “unexcused.”
2. When a student is absent from school due to a family vacation, he or she will be considered “unexcused.”
3. The school district will only recognize school sponsored activities as excused absences. Any club activity (volleyball, softball, basketball, hockey, etc.) where a student is absent will be coded as a “U” and considered unexcused.

VII. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

- A. Statistical evidence supports the hypothesis that regular attendance and high grades are directly correlated. There is no substitute for regular attendance, and most classroom experiences cannot be duplicated. The Nebraska school laws require regular school attendance for all pupils of school age for the entire time that school is in session. In addition, business, industry, and institutions of higher education are viewing these records more closely, seeking individuals who are more stable and dependable.
- B. Regular attendance at school is the primary responsibility of each student and his/her parents/guardians.
- C. During the school year, it is expected that students will have routine dental and medical appointments. Whenever possible, these appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours, on weekends, or during school vacation periods. If appointments can only be made during school hours, students must bring a note of parental/guardian request to the school office at least one day before the student leaves

school for the appointment. Parents may also email the attendance secretary regarding the student's absence. In cases of emergency, the principal may waive this procedure. If a number of appointments must be made during school hours, these should be scheduled during the student's study period or during different periods throughout the school day. All students must report to the office after they have been absent.

- D. Each absence must be covered by a signed note or email from a parent or guardian, stating the date and reason for the absence.
- E. The decision to miss school is the responsibility of the parent and student, in consultation with school officials, and should be made in consideration of the student's status in school. A student contemplating a planned absence from school for more than one day should be in communication with his or her teachers to develop a plan for completing missed work. Students and parents/guardians should avoid scheduling vacations during the days of final examinations.
- F. Parents/guardians will also be notified by mail when a student reaches their eighth absence for a semester. Parents/guardians will be notified when the tenth absence occurs to request a parent meeting. There, parents will have an opportunity to explain if the child's absences were due to: 1) Illness with doctor verification; or 2) Absences due to family emergency and/or special family/student need. If the parent/guardian cannot provide clear proof to substantiate items 1 and 2, an attendance contract will be completed to outline expectations and procedures for the remainder of the school year as related to absences.
- G. A student is tardy when he/she is not in the classroom when the bell starts to ring. If a student is tardy for his/her first period class, he/she will be required to obtain a tardy slip from the office before being admitted to class and will be marked excused or unexcused by the office. Tardies for periods Homeroom-9th will be recorded by the classroom teacher.

Emergencies will periodically occur causing a student to be late to school. Consequently, a student may be tardy four times without disciplinary consequences. Further tardiness (for all class periods 1-8) will result in the following disciplinary action:

- 3 Tardies: Administrative Conference
- 5 Tardies: 2 detentions or 4 lunch detentions
- 10 Tardies: 4 detentions, 8 lunch detentions, or 1 day of In School Suspension
- 11 or more Tardies: Administration will have the discretion to assign consequences that may include: detention(s), lunch detention(s), In-School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Activity Attendance Suspension, Supervised Passing, and/or Attendance Contract.

Each tardy is accumulated for periods Homeroom through 9th throughout the semester. The principal will deal with excessive unexcused tardies on an individual basis. When a student arrives more than 15 minutes late to any class period, it will be considered an unexcused absence and the student will be required to serve a detention.

- H. Students who skip classes are in violation of BSMS conduct rules. A skip (truancy) is defined as any absence that the school and parents/guardians do not approve or an absence that the principal will not accept as a reasonable absence: for example,

oversleeping, hair appointments, shopping, and other absences when the school is not properly notified.

- I. Students shall be present 5 of the 9 periods of the school day in order to participate in any school event, including practices, performances, or games. If the activity occurs before 5th period, the student must be in attendance all previous periods.
- J. No student will be excluded from, denied the benefit of, or discriminated against under any educational program or activity because of pregnancy or parenting responsibilities. Any absences accumulated due to pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, or care for an ill child, should not count towards any district policies in effect under compulsory attendance requirements. Pregnant or parenting students with excused absences or tardiness shall be treated like all other students with excused absences or tardiness for any other medical reasons. Pregnant or parenting students shall be allowed to participate in all activities including extracurricular activities throughout the student's pregnancy and following unless administrators determine such participation poses a significant risk of injury to the student or to others. A pregnant or parenting student may be asked to obtain certification from the student's licensed health care provider regarding the student's safe participation in an extracurricular activity when such certification may be required of students for other conditions which require the attention of a licensed health care provider. Pregnant or parenting students are here notified that they may request additional reasonable accommodations to ensure continued participation and enrollment in school.

Lactation:

The district will provide reasonable time and space to accommodate lactating students to express breast milk or breastfeed during the school day. Such accommodations will be in a location, other than a bathroom or closet that is private, clean, has an electrical outlet, a chair and is reasonably accessible. Students shall also be provided a food-safe refrigerator to store breast milk.

VIII. MAKE-UP WORK

1. No matter what the reason, if a student has missed any type of schoolwork, the course assignments must be made up in a manner acceptable to the teacher. **Students can be required to take tests and quizzes as soon as they return to school, if they had been assigned prior to the absence.** School Board policy #503.03 states that "students absences approved shall make up work missed and receive full credit". Ordinarily, students will be given one-day for each day absent to make-up work (five day or less). In the case of long-term absences (six days or more), the instructor and grade level administrator will determine when make-up work is due based on the difficulty of content and length of absence.
2. When a student has been suspended from school or has an unexcused absence they will be required to turn in make-up work at the end of the day on the day they return to school. Tests and quizzes can be made up upon return from a suspension or unexcused absence without penalty at a time determined by the classroom teacher.

3. If a student is going to be absent from school for an athletic event, field trip, or other school-sponsored activity, he/she is required to turn in all assignments requested by teachers prior to the absence, or in a manner acceptable by the teacher. If the student does not meet this requirement, the teacher will inform the sponsor of the event or the principal and the student will not be dismissed from school. Staff members can be informed of the students who will be absent in two ways: by activity sheets or by a list provided to staff members by the sponsor at least two days prior to the event. If the sponsor chooses to use activity sheets, the sponsor will provide them to the student. This sheet is to be returned to the sponsor, who turns them into the office. Students are not counted absent on school-sponsored trips.

IX. THE SCHOOL DAY

A. Visiting Bennington South Middle School:

Visitors will be admitted into the school through the request entry system located at the main entrance of the building. Upon entering the building, all visitors must immediately report to the main office to sign in and show identification. All guests will be given a visitor's badge to wear during their time at BSMS and will be escorted to and from the desired location.

- a. If you are here to pick up a student, the student will be called to the office to meet you. Upon completion of your visit, all visitors must check out in the main office and return the visitor badge. Additional questions concerning visitation can be directed to office staff or administration.
- b. All visitors wishing to speak with a staff member must schedule an appointment prior to his/her visit.
- c. Visits to classrooms, during the school day when students are present will be granted through the principal by appointment only. Only visitors who have appointments will be allowed to visit classrooms.

B. Interdisciplinary Teams

An interdisciplinary team is a group of teachers, usually from two to five persons who teach the core academic subjects, who share the same students, the same space, and the same schedule. Team teachers strive to integrate the academic program in which their common students are involved. Honoring a middle school philosophy, our Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Grades will each be divided into teams for the purpose of teaching social studies, math, science, English, and reading. Teaming allows teachers to work together, integrate curriculum, focus on student strengths/challenges, and provide assistance. Networking among teachers, parents/guardians, counselors, administrators, and special education is facilitated through the regularly scheduled team meetings. Teaming also fosters students' sense of belonging and builds on our positive school climate. *We are proudly a student-centered school, following a middle school philosophy.*

C. Exploratory Program

The exploratory program consists of all courses not a part of the interdisciplinary core structure. It is important middle level students are exposed to a wide variety of educational experiences that will assist them in making important future educational decisions.

Exploratory courses are short term (usually 6 weeks or alternate day schedules), project-oriented, hands-on, and promote a high level of student engagement/success. The learning activities are

often, but not always, completed within the class period.

D. Homeroom Advisor-Advisee Program

All students are assigned to a Homeroom group. Homerooms meet from 8:00 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. daily. This model is designed to meet the affective needs of the student and to promote positive peer relationships, a positive school climate, covers some of the Counseling Curriculum, and 21st Century Skills.

E. Assignment Notebook (Student Planners)

The student assignment notebook (Student Planner) is designed to provide the student with a simple method for recording daily assignments, long-term projects, quizzes and tests and for corridor passes to pass to another area of the building. Regular use of the assignment notebook will help the student manage his/her time more efficiently and will aid his/her overall organization.

The purpose of the assignment notebook is to provide an opportunity for students, with the help of parents/guardians and teachers, to focus on specific goals aimed at improving their academic performance. The notebook will also enable parents/guardians to monitor and support the classroom assignments given by the teachers.

How to use the assignment notebook:

- Students record class work assignments every day.
- Students record all future dates for major tests and projects as soon as they are assigned.
- The assignment notebook may also be used as a daily progress report for parents/guardians by teachers and parents/guardians signing the daily entries.

F. Leaving and/or Returning to School During The Day

Any student leaving school during the day must submit a written parent/guardian permission slip or e-mail to the office prior to a parent/guardian request to pick up a student. Students will be given a pass to report to the office at the specified dismissal time.

Any student who is leaving during the school day must be signed out in the office by an adult listed in SIMS or as an emergency contact. If a parent/guardian requests that a non-listed adult sign out their student, the school must receive notice by the parent/guardian **prior** to the student signing out.

Anyone signing a student out must show proof of identity to the office. Students must sign out in the office and wait in the office for their approved adult to arrive. If the student returns to school that same day, students must sign back in at the office and receive a pass back to class. Students who leave without proper permission will be considered truant. Failure to comply with this standard will be considered a major rule violation resulting in an administrative conference and potentially disciplinary action

G. Illness at School

Students who become ill during the school day are to report to the office. If the school nurse is present, he/she will help assess the situation. In his/her absence, the office staff will work with the student. Students will not be sent home until parents/guardians or emergency contacts have been notified.

H. School Lunch Program

Bennington Nutrition Services Meal Charges Procedures Bennington Nutrition Services is committed to serving nutritious meals to all students. In accordance with state and federal law, Bennington Public Schools adopts the following procedures to ensure school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. These procedures seek to allow students to receive the nutrition they need to be a successful learner, prevent public knowledge of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit nutrition services program.

Payment Methods Students and employees have use of a pre-paid school meal account. Payment methods to an individual's school meal account include the following:

1. Credit and debit card payments online through MySchoolBucks.com.
2. Payments in cash, check, money order or cashier's check can be accepted through either of the following methods:
 - a. Deposit money at the cash register in the cafeteria.
 - b. Mail payment to Nutrition Services, 11620 N. 156th Street, Bennington, NE, 68007. Please include the individual's name and ID number with payment.

Account Balances Parents/Guardians are responsible for all purchases made by their student(s) in the school cafeteria. When the school meal account balance reaches \$0.00 only meals may be charged to the account. Individuals who do not have a positive account balance shall not be allowed to purchase extra servings of meal components, such as an extra milk or an extra entrée, on their school meal account. Snack foods and beverages offered at the High School and Middle School will be cash sales only. Households may apply for meal benefits at any time during the school year. For questions on how to apply call 402-238-3044. The school district will make reasonable efforts to notify the families when school meal account balances are low. Families will be notified by an automated email system of a low balance once the school meal account balance reaches \$3.00. Additionally, the school district will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. The school district will coordinate communications with the families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Nutrition services will work with the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Options may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

Communication of Meal Charges Procedures The procedures and supporting information regarding meal charges shall be provided in writing to:

1. All households at or before the start of each school year.
2. Students and families who transfer into the district, at time of transfer.
3. All staff responsible for enforcing any aspect of the policy.

Please contact Mrs. Tracy Watsabaugh at twatsabaugh@bennps.org with questions on the school nutrition program.

Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

Email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Students must remain on the campus during lunchtime. Please note that the federal lunch program prohibits bringing in outside fast food items during the lunch period (McDonalds, Burger King, Subway, Runza, etc). All students must report to the Commons area during their entire assigned lunch period (students may be excused with a prearranged pass from a teacher).

I. Fire Drill, Severe Weather Drills, and Safety Drills

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION

	<p>HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <p>STUDENTS Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced Do business as usual</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <p>ADULTS Close and lock the door Account for students and adults Do business as usual</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>STUDENTS Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced Do business as usual</p>	<p>ADULTS Close and lock the door Account for students and adults Do business as usual</p>										
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	<p>SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <p>STUDENTS Return to inside of building Do business as usual</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <p>ADULTS Bring everyone indoors Lock outside doors Increase situational awareness Account for students and adults Do business as usual</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>STUDENTS Return to inside of building Do business as usual</p>	<p>ADULTS Bring everyone indoors Lock outside doors Increase situational awareness Account for students and adults Do business as usual</p>										
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	<p>LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <p>STUDENTS Move away from sight Maintain silence Do not open the door</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <p>ADULTS Recover students from hallway if possible Lock the classroom door Turn out the lights Move away from sight Maintain silence Do not open the door Prepare to evade or defend</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>STUDENTS Move away from sight Maintain silence Do not open the door</p>	<p>ADULTS Recover students from hallway if possible Lock the classroom door Turn out the lights Move away from sight Maintain silence Do not open the door Prepare to evade or defend</p>										
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Teachers will give students instructions to follow during drills. There will be no talking or running during the drills. Everyone must leave the building when the fire alarm rings. In the event of a school-wide emergency, school officials will communicate with parents in every form possible. In the event of an off-campus evacuation, please do not immediately proceed to the school, a re-unification site will be established by the school or first responders and the location will be communicated to parents as soon as possible.

J. School Closing

State law requires school to be in session a minimum of 175 days. Our calendar ranges from 175-177 days each year. In cases of inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, the decision to close school, delay starting time, or dismiss early will be announced over radio station KFAB (1110), television stations KETV, KMTV, WOWT, and KPTM. The School Messenger System will also provide school closing information to all patrons who have subscribed to the service. Reports in the morning will be around 6:30 a.m. If more days are used for inclement weather than the number scheduled, time will be made up Saturdays or at the end of the school year.

K. Badger Buzz (Daily Announcements) and Monthly Newsletter

Daily announcements will be read to students at the beginning of homeroom. The daily announcements will also be posted on the school website. Information for the announcements should be given to the middle school secretary by 7:45 a.m. The monthly newsletter will be mailed out the first of each month. A copy of it will be posted on the school website.

L. Campus Hours

School hours are 8:00 A.M. to 3:10 P.M. Monday through Friday. The building is unlocked for student arrival at 7:40 A.M. Prior to that time, students must use the door buzzer entry system located at the main entry on the North side of the building to gain admittance.

The campus will close daily at 3:45 for all students not involved in a supervised activity such as athletics, clubs or individual work with a teacher. **All students not involved in an afterschool activity must be off campus by 3:45 P.M. Students' safety is our top priority and supervision cannot be guaranteed beyond organized activities after 3:45 P.M.** Counseling Team members and/or administrators will contact parents/guardians of students who habitually remain on campus/unsupervised.

M. Student Passes

If a student wishes to confer with a teacher or counselor during a guided study period, he/she should have that teacher issue a pass from their planner prior to the guided study period to present to the guided study teacher.

Students must be issued a pass by staff to leave the classroom. Students in halls or restrooms during class time must have their signed planner or a pass with them. Privileges may be taken away from students not following appropriate pass procedures.

N. Passing Periods

Passing periods will be three minutes in length. This will allow ample time to get from one classroom to the next. Headphones and airpods should not be worn during passing periods. Failure to comply may result in consequences or confiscation of the item(s).

O. Class Period Schedule

6 TH GRADE		7 TH GRADE		8 TH GRADE	
HOMEROOM	8:00-8:10	HOMEROOM	8:00-8:10	HOMEROOM	8:00-8:10
PERIOD 1	8:13-8:55 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 1	8:13-8:55 EXPLORATORY	PERIOD 1	8:13-8:55 ACADEMIC
PERIOD 2	8:58-9:40 GUIDED STUDY	PERIOD 2	8:58-9:40 EXPLORATORY	PERIOD 2	8:58-9:40 ACADEMIC
PERIOD 3	9:43-10:25 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 3	9:43-10:25 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 3	9:43-10:25 GUIDED STUDY
PERIOD 4	10:28-11:10 EXPLORATORY	PERIOD 4	10:28-11:10 GUIDED STUDY	PERIOD 4	10:28-11:10 ACADEMIC
PERIOD 5	11:13- 11:37 STUDENT SUPPORT	PERIOD 5	7B Class: 11:13 - 11:43 Lunch: 11:44 - 12:14 Class: 12:15 - 12:28 7A Class: 11:13 - 11:57 Lunch: 11:58 - 12:28	PERIOD 5	8A Lunch: 11:13 - 11:43 Class: 11:44 - 12:27 8B Class: 11:13 - 11:27 Lunch: 11:28 - 11:58 Class: 12:00 - 12:27
PERIOD 6*	6B Class: 11:40 - 12:12 Lunch: 12:13 - 12:43 Class: 12:44 - 12:55 6A Class: 11:40 - 12:23 Lunch: 12:24 - 12:54	PERIOD 6	12:30 - 12:54 STUDENT SUPPORT	PERIOD 6	12:30-12:54 STUDENT SUPPORT
PERIOD 7	12:57-1:40 EXPLORATORY	PERIOD 7	12:57 - 1:40 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 7	12:57-1:40 ACADEMIC
PERIOD 8	1:43-2:25 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 8	1:43-2:25 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 8	1:43-2:25 EXPLORATORY
PERIOD 9	2:28-3:10 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 9	2:28-3:10 ACADEMIC	PERIOD 9	2:28-3:10 EXPLORATORY

P. Late Assignments

It is the responsibility of all students to turn in their assignments in a timely manner. Teachers may require students to stay after school for 30 minutes or come 30 minutes before school to make up late work. Teachers will notify parents/ guardians by phone or email. If a student does not report, parents will be notified by the principal or designee. Students who are chronically

missing work may be required to stay after school regularly, Monday-Thursday. If this becomes necessary, parents will be informed by the principal. The goal of the school is to provide middle school students opportunities to turn in their late homework. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of each individual teacher and will be covered in their syllabi.

Students, who come to class without assignments adequately completed may be required to attend an after school detention that day or a detention the next day. The after school detention center will be open Monday – Thursday from 3:15pm to 3:45pm. The individual teacher will determine whether the assignment is “adequately completed.” Failure to serve a detention will result in parental notification and additional consequences assigned by the grade level administrator. All students who are involved in extra-curricular activities must serve their detentions at the regularly scheduled time and they must report to their practices immediately after their detention is finished. Rescheduling requests will be considered by the principal on an individual basis. Students will be required to complete the school assigned activities; they may not use cell phones or other electronic devices unless it’s needed to complete homework.

X. Bus Service

The Bennington Public Schools provides free transportation to and from school at designated pick up, drop off or stopping points, at such times and according to such routes as determined by the Bennington Public Schools for resident students who live more than four miles from the school they attend. Transportation may also be provided for school activities as determined by the Bennington School.

Transportation Department coordinators are Mr. Jeremy Edens – jedens@bennps.org and Mr. Matthew Derry – mderry@bennps.org The Transportation Department can be reached by phone at 402-238-2902.

Transportation may also be provided to resident students who live less than four miles from the schoolhouse. They may use this service at a cost of \$175.00 per semester per student (\$350 maximum per semester per family). Payments may be paid by the month, by the semester, or annually. A \$5.00 per-day per-student fee will be charged to occasional riders when and as determined appropriate by the Bennington Public Schools. Each of these situations will be handled on an individual basis depending on distance from the schoolhouse they attend and the established bus routes.

Transportation fees assessed by Bennington Public Schools may be reduced for children eligible for free or reduced-price lunches or breakfasts under the School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act (or extenuating circumstances) upon request. If approved, the fee will be 25% of annual transportation fees for students eligible for free lunches or breakfasts and 50% of annual transportation fees for students eligible for reduced-price lunches or breakfasts. Applications for reduction of school transportation fees will be submitted, online, to the Director of Transportation, accompanied by sufficient documentation to establish that the child is eligible for free or reduced-price lunches or breakfasts under the School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act.

The Bennington Public Schools may end any or all transportation services, which may be provided at any time if it is determined to be in the school’s best interests.

Parents/guardians must notify the school when a child is planning to ride a different bus or needs to be dropped off at a location different from his regular stop. If a student requests the change without parental/guardian notification, the driver will not allow the change to be made.

Parents/guardians and students should review the following bus rules together to assist in making our transportation system safe and pleasant for all who ride:

1. School transportation is a privilege.
2. Students may be assigned seats on the bus.

3. Students need to be ready and in place when the bus arrives. At the end of the school day buses will leave five minutes after middle school dismissal. All students riding the bus must report promptly after dismissal.
4. Students are to remain seated at all times when the bus is moving.
5. Students will not be allowed to extend any body part or throw any item out of the bus windows.
6. Aisles are to remain open and free for movement of students entering or leaving the bus.
7. Disruptions by students will not be tolerated. This includes loud voices, vulgar language, fighting, harassment of other students, or any actions that threaten the safety of the other students.
8. Students are to cross only in front of the bus after looking both directions for on-coming traffic.
9. Students and/or parents/guardians are legally responsible for any damage to school owned property.
10. The back door is to be used only in case of emergency; always use the front door for entering and leaving the bus.

All bus behavior rules apply to activities and field trips as well as transportation to and from school.

XI. MISCELLANEOUS RULES

A. Hall & Locker Room Lockers

The school assumes no responsibility for items taken from the lockers. Students will be provided a locker with an attached lock. It is the responsibility of the student to properly lock their locker. Students are to keep lockers clean at all times. Lockers are not the private property of any student, but rather, equipment issued to the student by the school. Lockers may be inspected at the discretion of the administration. Students are asked not to share their locker combinations. Students are not to change lockers without permission. Only school locks can be used on all school lockers. Lockers will not have any decorations posted unless approved by the building administration.

B. Search and Seizure

School lockers are the exclusive property of the district. School lockers may be opened or searched by certificated staff members without notice and without student consent. Students, students' possessions, and automobiles may be searched whenever there is a reasonable suspicion that the student possesses any illegal substance or object which is in violation of law or District Policy, or which could cause bodily harm or damage to property. The principal or his designee may confiscate any illegal substance or object which is in violation of law or District Policy, or which could cause bodily harm or damage to property. As part of the district's effort to keep the middle school safe and free from illegal drugs, the middle school principal may authorize the use of law enforcement drug detection dogs to search school lockers and cars parked in the school parking lot. The refusal of a student to consent or submit to a reasonable search and/or to surrender objects or substances found, as a result of such search may be grounds for discipline. School authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. Items of contraband may include, but are not limited to, non prescription controlled substances, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, apparatus used for controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, weapons, explosives, poisons, stolen property and dangerous objects as defined in Policy 504.11. Such items are not to be possessed by a student without specific permission of the building principal while they are on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and

while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

Multiple students occupying the same bathroom stall may result in an immediate search by the administration. Consequences may follow a referral for multiple students in a bathroom stall.

C. Dating Violence

Bennington Public Schools prohibits behavior that has a negative impact on student health, welfare, safety, and the school's learning environment. Incidents of dating violence will not be tolerated on school grounds, in district vehicles, or at school sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events.

Dating violence is defined as a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner. Dating partner means any person, regardless of gender, involved in an intimate relationship with another person primarily characterized by the expectation of affectionate involvement whether casual, serious or long-term.

D. Public Displays of Affection/Aggression

Students are not allowed to display affection for each other at school. Such things as holding hands, embracing, and kissing are inappropriate behavior during school hours. Students are expected to conduct themselves with maturity.

Aggressive play or intimidating/bullying behavior is prohibited. Students who intimidate/bully or are involved in any form of harassment, verbal/non-verbal or physical, will be considered in violation of board policy #504.51.

E. Telephone

1. The school's phones are business phones and are not to be used by students during the school day unless they have received permission.
2. If messages are of an emergency nature, they will be delivered directly to the student in the classroom.
3. It is the expectation that cell phones should be stored in students' lockers between the hours of 8:00 am and 3:10 pm. Usage in classrooms is up to the discretion of each individual teacher. Students need to be aware of their teacher's expectations regarding these electronic devices. Failure to comply with appropriate electronic device etiquette may result in disciplinary action. **If a student is using a cell phone or electronic device in violation of school or classroom rules, the student will have the item confiscated and turned in to the administration.** Confiscated cell phones and other electronic devices may be picked up at the end of the day by students in the administration office unless the object seized is dangerous, contrary to law or school policy, or has been turned over to legal authorities. On the second offense, the student's parent/guardian may retrieve the device at the end of the school day in the administrative office. Failure to give the cell phone or other electronic device to a staff member upon request will be considered insubordination resulting in disciplinary action. Repeated infractions of the

Bennington cellular phone or other electronic device guidelines will result in escalated consequences.

4. Any student caught using their cell phone to bully or harass another student will be subject to disciplinary action.

F. Possession of Nuisance Devices

Students are encouraged to bring only necessary materials to school in order to maintain a school environment where all students may reach their potential. Unnecessary items can be a distraction to the learning environment and create unnecessary opportunities for theft in which the school cannot be held responsible. Any item that is disruptive to the educational environment will be considered nuisance items and will not be allowed in classrooms, except at the discretion of an individual teacher. Students can expect to have these items confiscated by staff and administration; the items will be turned into the office.

G. Parking

Students are to park in designated student parking areas. There are no reserved parking areas for students. All parking is first come first serve. Parking in an unauthorized area may result in a fine, a car boot, or loss of parking privileges. Students are to use only the 168th street entrance. The Bennington Road entrance is for bus traffic and staff parking only. All parking/drop off traffic will enter and exit at the 168th street entrance. Drop-off traffic may continue straight ahead to the drop-off loop. There is no parking in the drop-off loop. Student and public parking is to the left of the main 168th street entrance. Students may not park in the teacher parking section during school hours. Students are not allowed to park in the loading dock area or teacher parking lot at any time. Students need to fill out a form in the office if they plan on driving to school.

- By parking on school grounds, students give consent to have their car searched by school officials when reasonable suspicion exists.
- All Vehicles must be street legal and only take up one parking stall in the lot. Farm equipment, ATVs, go karts, etc. will not be allowed.

H. Posters

Any student, group, or organization needs to have the approval of the sponsor and the principal before hanging any poster or sign. You must utilize the tack strips in the hallways to display posters, no taping up of posters, and those who put posters up must also remove them in a timely manner.

I. Food and Beverage

Students may have a water bottle with them during the day. No other beverages will be allowed during the school day. Students must adhere to individual teacher's procedures for beverages and food in the classroom. Teachers have the discretion in what is allowed in their classroom. Failure to comply with teacher procedures may result in teacher/administrator consequences.

J. Fund-Raising Activities

School organizations are regularly involved in revenue-producing projects to support planned activities. Since School District tax money cannot be used to finance these activities, each organization must decide which activities it wishes to conduct and is responsible for the costs involved. Each student involved in any of these projects must assume full responsibility for the products issued to him/her for selling. The student will be held accountable for returning the product

or money or both to the office depending upon the sales. Each organization shall have the right to establish policies related to the projects. Refer to Board Policy 506.08. All fundraising must be approved by administration prior to any selling activity.

K. Lost and Found

The office maintains a small lost and found area. Any article left in the classroom or found in the building should be turned in to one of the secretaries. Articles may be claimed with proper identification. Appropriate safeguards should always prevail. Large amounts of money or valuables should not be brought to school. If brought to school by necessity, such items should be checked in at the office for safe keeping until after school hours.

L. Text books

All basic texts are provided to students during the school year. Texts are to be kept clean and in good condition. Fines are assessed for damaged texts. The teacher will handle end of the year textbook fines and as the fines are collected they will be turned into the office:

1. Books lost or damaged beyond repair – full value of replacement.
2. Backs or covers broken -- \$12.50 per book (over 2 years old) \$25.00 per book (less than 2 years old).
3. Pages torn and un-mended -- \$.50 per page (not to exceed the value).
4. Ink writing, spots, etc-- \$.25 per page.
5. Pencil marks – students must erase these marks.

M. Financial Indebtedness

Financial indebtedness is something that cannot be ignored or put off. School policy states that all course credit will be frozen and transcripts will be withheld until all financial obligations have been cleared with the school. Students or parents/guardians must also reimburse the school district the actual cost of replacing books or materials, the rebinding of books, or the value of replacing school property.

Students who willfully cause damage to school property will be responsible for the cost of the damage including labor. They will also receive disciplinary consequences for their actions.

N. School Assemblies

All students should express their school spirit through hand clapping (no whistling or shouting) during any assemblies held during the year. Performers are our guests; and students must respect them and their peers at all times during these performances. These programs, which quite often include our own students, are provided for our educational benefit. Therefore, we should show interest and consideration toward all presenters and performers. The same courtesy should be extended to students and teachers from other schools. Parents will receive notification from the administration when an outside entity will be presenting to the student body.

O. Student Spectators

Students are encouraged to attend all of the school activities offered by Bennington Schools. School spirit is encouraged at all times. School spirit means loyalty to all Bennington South Middle School and high school activities and their participants while demonstrating respect for the opposing team's participants, coaches, and fans as well as the game officials. If a student chooses to leave during an event, he/she will not be allowed to return. [Exceptions: 1) Students may attend two different events being hosted at Bennington on the same night; and 2) Students may return during a day-long tournament.] BSMS students are not allowed to bring outside containers into the gym during school activities. Students will need to pay to get into events. You can pay by cash or purchase an activity card.

P. Visitors

All visitors are required to first stop in the office, show proper ID, sign in to logbook and receive a visitor's badge before being escorted by a staff member to other parts of the building. Friends or siblings of students will not be allowed to visit classrooms or join students for lunch without administrative approval.

Q. Asbestos Notification

The Institute for Environmental Assessment has been retained by the Bennington Public Schools to review and prepare an asbestos management plan identifying the presence of asbestos, if any, within any of the school district buildings. The district will conduct periodic surveillance of all asbestos materials on an annual basis. This periodic surveillance has been conducted to provide continuous assessment to assure safety conscious management of any asbestos materials in all buildings. The detailed plan and updated information for each building, or for the entire district, is open to public review and is located in the office of each building. If you have questions, please contact the Superintendent at 402-238-3044.

R. Media Center Rules

The Library Media Center is available for your information needs and reading enjoyment from 7:35 a.m. to 3:35 p.m. Students should come to use the library resources to help the library serve you better and make your library time more productive, please follow these rules:

1. Upon entering the library, students must log in the electronic log. You must have a pass. Please make sure to sign out when you leave.
2. Work quietly. If you need to talk, talk quietly. If you need to leave the library for any reason during the class period, notify the librarian.
3. Books may be checked out for two-week intervals. The due date is stamped on the inside cover of the book. Books may be renewed unless another patron has the book on hold.
4. Books should be returned to the circulation desk on or before the stamped due date. Students returning books after the due date has expired will be assessed a fine of 5 cents per day. Once a fine of \$1.00 has been accrued, the student will no longer be able to check out books until the fine is paid in full.
5. Do not put checked-out books back on the shelves. You will be held accountable for any overdue fines that these books incur.

6. Replacement of ruined or lost books is the responsibility of the student to whom the book is checked out. A fine may also be charged for books that are damaged.

S. Option Enrollment Program

Any student wishing to enroll in the option enrollment program must meet the deadlines prior to March 15 and all other guidelines set forth in the School Board policies. Option enrollment is the duty of the Bennington Public Schools District Office– please contact 402-238-2447.

T. Internet Use

Bennington South Middle School Internet use is granted to students, and is monitored by staff and a software filtering service. Inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action and loss of Internet privileges. Parents /guardians who wish to have their student(s) not allowed usage of the Internet should contact their grade-level administrator. (See addendum XX).

U. School Ceremonies and Observances and Memorials

Bennington Public Schools will continue school ceremonies and observances, which have become a tradition and a custom of the education program. Such ceremonies or observances shall have a secular purpose and shall not advocate or sponsor a particular religion. Students who do not wish to participate in these activities may be silent during the ceremony or observance or receive permission from the principal to be excused from the ceremony for religious reason in compliance with board policy. Requests for remembering or memorializing a person or event shall be approved by the Superintendent and/or building principal. Major school ceremonies such as graduation, awards, and scholarship events are not appropriate for significant memorial activities. School-wide recognition of anniversary dates will not occur. District counseling services may be made available to provide support. Temporary memorial symbols displayed on school grounds will be limited to a maximum of one month past the occurrence being memorialized. Requests may be made to memorialize an individual or event in the school yearbook or one edition of the school newspaper/newsletter. Information may be included on a “Memorial Page,” but should be limited to the name, photo, dates of birth/death, and school activities in which the student or staff member participated.

V. Recording of Others

To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of student information, no person is authorized to record or transmit any sound or image of any person (including themselves) without the prior consent of the person or persons being recorded or whose image or sound is being transmitted. This prohibition applies to all persons, including staff, students and community members, regardless of the content or context of the image or sound; however, this provision shall not apply to District-sponsored athletic or activity events where the focus of the recording or transmission is on the student performances or activity. Nothing in this provision shall prohibit the recording of an Individualized Education Program meeting if the recording is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the IEP or the IEP

process or to implement other parental rights guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

W. Regulated Electronic Devices

Any prohibited items or devices brought to school or school events may be confiscated by district staff. Prohibited items will be turned over to the student's parents or guardian on request unless the object seized is dangerous, contrary to law, or has been turned over to legal authorities.

Prohibited devices shall include any item which is sufficiently annoying, offensive, unpleasant, or obnoxious that it substantially interferes with or materially disrupts the educational process.

In addition to any prohibitions on electronic devices defined in the student handbook, students shall not use electronic devices for recording or transmitting photographs, images or sounds of other persons without direct administrative approval and consent of all person(s) being recorded, other than the recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public. Students shall not use electronic devices at any time where there is an expectation of privacy. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.

X. Safe to Help

Safe 2 Help is a national crisis and safety hotline available to students, parents, and staff of Bennington and is provided free of charge. The purpose of Safe 2 Help is to protect the safety of students and staff of Bennington Public Schools while maintaining a safe and positive learning environment. Students may submit a report via the Safe 2 Help online link or app. All reports received by the administration and SRO will be reviewed for accuracy and investigated as personnel and resources allow during the school day. Students found in violation of the code of conduct will receive consequences by the administration and/or SRO. Additionally, students who file a report with Safe 2 Help and the report is unfounded, inaccurate, or inappropriate could face consequences from the administration:

1. False Complaints - False accusations or complaints against another student or staff member.
2. False Alarm or Report– Purposely making a false alarm or false report, or purposely furnishing false information or making a communication or statement, whether verbal, written or electronic, concerning the existence of any bomb, explosive device, weapon, firearm, dangerous chemical substance, or biochemical or terroristic device, or concerning an intent or attempt to be made to kill, injure, or intimidate any individual to use, possess, or bring onto district property or to any district activity or event any bomb, explosive device, weapon, firearm, dangerous chemical substance, or biochemical or terroristic device, or concerning the need for medical, police, or emergency services or procedures. Neb. Rev. Stat. §§28-907 and 1221; Neb. Rev. Stat. §79–267 (10).
3. False Allegations Against Staff - Any knowingly or recklessly false allegation against a staff member, written, spoken or otherwise communicated which is harmful to the reputation of the staff member, or which may impede the ability of the staff member to perform assigned duties.
4. False Allegations Against Student(s) – Any knowingly or intentional false report or allegation against a student which is harmful to the reputation and learning experience of the student or impedes the ability to learn and/or attend school.

XII. STUDENT DRESS

The Bennington School District recognizes that student dress styles do change. However, if a style demonstrates that it substantially disrupts or has a material interference with school activities, constitutes a threat to the safety or health of self and/or others, or is in violation of any state or federal

statute, it will not be permitted at school. Ideally, within these limitations the decision regarding attire and grooming shall be left to the good judgment and responsibility of the individual and parents.

- a. No student will be permitted to dress in a manner which sets him or her apart from the usual dress expected of students (dress which might cause the educational process to be interrupted or become a threat to the safety of the individual student or the student body).
- b. Examples of student dress that violate the dress code: Printed words or slogans that promote or advertise alcohol, smoking, drugs, profanity, sex, double-meaning, or otherwise inappropriate at school; jewelry that is a potential danger to self or others (animal collars/chains); shirts, shorts, or pants that reveal undergarments; tops that do not cover the back and abdomen; headgear not related to religious beliefs or health conditions.
- c. Students may be directed by staff to comply with dress code. Failure to comply with staff requests or instruction will result in an administrative referral and possible consequences.
- d. Students should not wear clothing or hairstyles that are hazardous in school activities such as shop, lab work, physical education, or art; or block their vision; or restrict their movement. Teachers in lab areas may have grooming or dress rules to assure a safe environment. Students are required to adhere to such rules.
- e. Hooded sweatshirts are allowed as long as the hoods are not used. Students who do not comply with this reasonable standard will be required to put the sweatshirt in their locker for the remainder of the school day. No blankets will be allowed.
- f. Shoes must be worn at all times on school grounds.

XIII.HEALTH AND SAFETY

A. School Nurse

1. The School Nurse is an integral part of the total education program. The Visiting Nurses Association is funded by private contract. The Bennington Schools typically receive nurse's services three full days a week.
2. The location of the nurse's office varies. The Nurse will not treat walk-ins when she is on site. In an emergency, students must report to the office.
3. Medication should be given at home whenever possible. When it is necessary for a student to take medication during school hours, the parents/guardians must complete the Medication Authorization Form in the school office or on the school website. **It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide any medication given at school and ensures its safe travel to and from school. All medication must be sent to school in the original container and will be stored securely on arrival at school.**
4. Temperatures of 100 degrees or above, diarrhea, and/or vomiting are signals warranting immediate dismissal conditions. Children who have vomited, had diarrhea, or a fever of 100 degrees or above during the night or prior to school need to remain at home, fever free for 24 hours. Most viruses are highly contagious for 24 hours after the vomiting/diarrhea has occurred.
5. Students in 7th grade will be screened for height, weight, audio, and dental as well as new students to the district in 6th and 8th grade.

6. Students identified with nits attached less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the base of the hair shaft or identified with live lice will be referred to parents for treatment and receive further monitoring to avoid re-infestation.

7. Exclusion Period for Contagious Diseases

● Mumps	9 days or until swelling disappears
● Scarlet fever	7 days from onset or 24 hours after antibiotics
● Chicken pox	7 days from onset
● Measles	7 days from onset
● 3 Day Measles	5 days
● Whooping Cough	21 days
● Impetigo	Until completely healed/physician permission
● Pink Eye	Until treated by a doctor and eyes are clear
● Scabies	Until first treatment by doctor
● Hepatitis	Until physician approves return
● Lice	1 day after treatment/no visible nits

B. Medication Regulation

1. Bennington Public Schools is not to administer any prescribed medication without the approval of parents/guardians and doctor. No unauthorized medication (aspirin, Tylenol, etc.) shall be administered by the school nurse or any school staff member. No personnel of Bennington Public Schools will prescribe medication at any time. The staff is not allowed to give students any prescription or non-prescription medication. Students may use non-prescribed medication, but may not distribute non-prescribed (over the counter) medication to peers. Distribution of any type of medication will be in violation of the Code of Conduct.

2. When a student must take medication, which has been prescribed by a doctor during the hours the student is in school, the following procedure is to be followed:

- a. All medication is to be brought to the office when the student arrives at school in the morning. Parents are required to conduct an exact count of the medication, if the medicine is controlled, and present it to the school along with the medication. Upon medication arrival at school, the health office will also conduct a count of the medication. The medication count must match that provided by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will be contacted to conduct a medication count if a count is not provided or if a discrepancy in the count occurs.
- b. Only one-month supply shall be brought at a time unless otherwise indicated by the parent/guardian and attending physician.
- c. The label on the medication shall include the student's name, physician's name, date and directions to be followed. This should contain the original container and label.
- d. All medications will be stored in the office at all times. Students should not keep medication with them or in the lockers.
- e. Medication will only be used by the student in the office and in front of the office staff or the principal.
- f. Teachers will give students permission to go to the office to take the medication.

C. Student Self-Management of Medications for Diabetes and Asthma/Anaphylaxis

Parents/Guardians may request that their child/children be allowed to administer medication for Asthma, Diabetes, Anaphylaxis (both Diabetes and Anaphylaxis must be self-administered in the nurse's office under the care of the health para or nurse). The parent will need to follow the following procedures.

1. The parent/guardian will be required to request for self-management of medications in writing.
2. The parent/guardian will need written verification from a physician or other health care professional who prescribed the medication for treatment indicating the condition and specific medications including: name and purpose and dosage that may be self-managed.
3. The building administrator and school nurse will review the request and physician's verification for approval.

Once the request has been approved the school and parent/guardian in consultation with the student's physician, will develop a plan for the self-management of the student's medication. The plan will include the following items.

1. Identify the health care services the student may receive at the school relating to the condition;
2. Evaluate the student's understanding of and ability to self-manage his/her condition;
3. Permit regular monitoring of the student's self-management of his/her condition by a regularly credentialed health care professional; and
4. Be signed by the student's parent/guardian and the physician responsible for the treatment of the student's condition;
5. The plan will include procedures for storage and access to backup supplies of such prescription medication as well as the procedure for reporting when the student has administered medication;
6. The disciplinary procedures regarding the misuse or threatened misuse of medications and supplies, as well notification procedures if discipline action is necessary.

The Parent/Guardian shall sign a statement that:

- A. The district and its employees and agents are not liable for any injury or death arising from the student's self-management of his/her condition; and
- B. Shall indemnify and hold harmless the district and its employees and agent against a claim arising from the student's self-management of his/her condition.
- C. Any injury to others as a result of the student's self-medication shall be the parents'/guardians' responsibility.

XIV. PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICIES

- A. The physical education dress for girls and boys is gym shorts, t-shirt, and socks. All students must wear tennis shoes for safety reasons while using the gym. Students must furnish their own towels.
- B. All gym clothes and shoes should be marked with the owner's name.

- C. The gym should not be used as a play area during practice for non-athletic activities. Students will not be able to use the weight room, gym, or locker room areas without a teacher supervising. Students cannot be in these areas without a teacher present. Coaches/sponsors should check with the Activities Director prior to use of the gym(s) outside of regular school hours. The Activities Director will maintain a schedule and record of facility use for BSMS.

XV. SCHOLASTIC POLICIES

- A. Grading System: Please see our district website for access to our district grading framework, or click the link below.

- a. <http://www.benningtonschools.org/documents/Grading%20Framework%202007-2018.pdf>

- B. Grading is based on all facets of classroom performance.

Grading Scale:

Regular Courses

A = 100-93

B = 92-86

C = 85-77

D = 76-70

F = Below 70

C. Grade Reports

- a. Bennington Public Schools' students will receive their hexter report once every 6 weeks. Student grades will start new each Hexter. We will not be averaging the Hexters together to come up with semester grades. Report cards will not be sent home, but you can access them online through the school's website (www.benningtonschools.org) on the Nebsis Family Account.
- b. Parent/Guardian conferences may be scheduled at any time, although we will continue to have them twice a year (ex: October and February).
- c. On-line grades will be available to all parents/guardians. Parents/Guardians may view their child/children's grades by using the Nebsis accessed from Bennington School's website (www.benningtonschools.org). Parents and students will each receive log-in information to access this secure website. The information provided is secure. Parents/Guardians will be able to access their child/children's grades, attendance and discipline records. All information provided will be updated on a weekly basis.

D. Extra Help

Students are encouraged to seek extra help from teachers if an assignment is not understood, if the work is difficult, or if he/she has been absent and missed assignments or class instruction. Students should arrange a conference with their teacher before or after school or at a time convenient to both during the day. A teacher may request a student stay after school if it is apparent he/she is having difficulty with work.

E. Academic Dishonesty

Students who are academically dishonest (cheating) must meet with their teacher and grade level administrator, and parents will be notified as soon as it is appropriate to do so. Consequences could range from an administrative conference to short term suspension for cheating. At the conclusion of

the meeting with teacher(s) and administrator(s), students will be allowed to make up work on their own time.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) may be used in support of student education. Support for AI learning includes students being educated about the uses of AI, risks posed by AI, applications for learning with AI, and limitations of AI related to student learning and achievement. Students who utilize or substitute AI in place of their own scholastic work are in violation of the Academic Dishonesty policy. (6288)

F. New Student Registration

New students entering Bennington Public Schools during an academic year in progress complete the enroll new students process online through www.benningtonschools.org

- i. A certified copy of the student's birth certificate issued by the state in which the child was born, upon first enrollment time. Shall be provided within 30 days of enrollment.
- ii. Evidence of a physical examination if they are entering the 7th grade or, in the case of a transfer from out-of-state; 7th grade physical may not meet sports' physical criteria unless it says – eligible for sports, without restrictions.
- iii. Updated Immunization records.
- iv. A transcript/release of records from the previous school or current/proposed class schedule
- v. Online enrollment approval through the Superintendent's office of an in-district address.

A student who fails to meet the foregoing requirements shall not be permitted to enroll or to enter school, or if provisionally enrolled or enrolled without compliance, shall not be permitted to continue in school until evidence of compliance or an exemption from compliance is given. New students and parents/guardians will register in the Counselor's office. New students will not start classes the same day they complete the online enrollment process.

G. Failing a Course

Middle School students must pass their courses before moving on to the next grade level. In a case where the student has failed a course the teacher, parent(s), administration, and counselor will work together to determine the next step for that student.

H. Music Courses Drop/Add

At end of term or by special circumstances and are approved by the administration

I. Part-time Students

Bennington South Middle School students interested wanting part-time status are to see the counselor for eligibility. Parents/guardian will meet with the principal before approval is granted. LB 821 allows students who are residents of the Bennington District, but attend another public, private, denominational, parochial school, or home school to attend Bennington South Middle School on a part-time basis. Parents need to complete the Enroll new student online process through www.benningtonschools.org to confirm residency in the district. Both the student and parents/guardians will be required to meet with the counselor and principal to provide proof of

residence and to determine a class schedule. While the student is attending they will be required to follow all rules in the student handbook.

J. Hazing

Hazing or initiation by a school organization, groups, clubs, teams or individuals are prohibited. Anyone engaging in hazing or initiation behavior will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Hazing is any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership with any school organization. The school will follow Neb. Statute 79-2, 101 to 2, 102 when dealing with hazing.

K. Behavioral Awareness Point of Contact

Each Bennington Public Schools building has a behavioral awareness point of contact that is trained in behavioral awareness and has knowledge of community service providers and other resources that are available for the students and families in the district. The contact shall maintain or have access to a registry of local mental health and counseling resources for the students and families. The behavioral awareness point of contact shall coordinate access to support services for students whenever possible. If information for an external support service is provided to an individual minor student, school personnel shall notify a parent or guardian of the contact in writing unless such recommendation involves law enforcement or child protective services. The Bennington Public Schools Behavioral Awareness Point of Contacts for Bennington South Middle School is Mrs. Jackie Muller – jmuller@bennps.org - 402-238-3079

XVI. STUDENT CONDUCT

PBS: Positive Behavior Support is a school-wide system of acknowledging positive student behavior. When programs and initiatives focus on building respectful and trusting relationships among school staff, families, and community members they are more effective in creating and sustaining connections that support student achievement. The PBS introduces Bennington's school wide expectations. These expectations are taught to all students for specific areas in the building as explained below in the chart. Students will be acknowledged for consistently meeting these expectations

	Be Respectful	Be Responsible	Be SAFE
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Listen to teacher ▶ Follow instructions ▶ Be courteous to others in words and actions ▶ Treat others' property with care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Treat school property with care ▶ Come to class prepared ▶ Be safe ▶ Throw trash away, recycle when possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ On Time ▶ On Task ▶ Do your BEST
Hallway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pace and Space ▶ Hands and feet to self ▶ Use an acceptable volume ▶ Treat others' property with care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Keep hallways clean ▶ Move with a purpose ▶ Have your agenda book ▶ Keep your locker locked & organized ▶ Throw trash away, recycle when possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Keep your pace during passing periods ▶ Be aware of the time
Locker Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Knock and be acknowledged before entering office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Keep your locker locked & organized ▶ Pick up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Be dressed on time

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Hands and feet to self ▶ Treat others' property with care ▶ Be considerate of others privacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Have the proper attire 	
Commons/ Lunchroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Follow directions ▶ Hands and feet to self ▶ Be courteous to others ▶ Walk to lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Keep area clean ▶ Put trays, silverware, chairs, etc. in their proper place ▶ Throw trash away, recycle when possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Remain in Commons ▶ Stay in your place in line
Bathroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Be considerate of others privacy ▶ Use facilities appropriately ▶ Keep area clean ▶ Treat others' property with care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Practice good hygiene ▶ Report problems to an adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Take care of needs quickly ▶ Use the assigned student restroom

General Rules of Conduct

The Board of Education recognizes that a major function of school is the development of socially productive behavior on the part of students. It also recognizes that student behavior should not disrupt the educational process or constitute a threat to the health and safety of others.

- A.** The following rules and standards of conduct shall govern student behavior where it occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the school and being used for a school purpose, in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or an employee's designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. Violation of these rules and standards shall constitute grounds for assignment of detention, Saturday school, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, mandatory reassignment, or suspension of the privilege of participation in extra-curricular activities, contests, or performances.

1. No student shall:
 - (a) Use violence, force, coercion, threat, sexual harassment, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes or making any communication that a reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of intent to harm or cause injury to another. Students who intimidate or are involved in any form of harassment verbal/non-verbal or physical will be considered in violation of Board Policy 504.18.
 - (b) Willfully cause or attempt to cause substantial damage to property, steal, or attempt to steal property of substantial value, repeatedly damage or steal property, or set or attempt to set a fire of any magnitude. Students will be held financially responsible for damage.
 - (c) Cause or attempt to cause personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student.

- (d) Threaten or intimidate any student for any purpose. Students who intimidate or are involved in any form of harassment verbal/non-verbal or physical will be considered in violation of Board Policy 504.18
- (e) Knowingly possess, handle, or transmit any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon (minimum consequence short-term suspension).
- (f) Engage in selling, using, possessing or dispensing of alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. The term "under the influence" has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol or illegal substances on the breath or person of a student. Also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.
- (g) Exhibit public indecency or sexual conduct.
- (h) Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if a complaint alleging such conduct is filed in a court of competent jurisdiction.
- (i) Engage in any unlawful activity as determined by the United States or the State of Nebraska.
- (j) Willfully disobey any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or voice disrespect to those in authority (Willfully disobeying is considered insubordination).
- (k) Use language, written or oral, or exhibit conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion.
- (l) Be truant or fail to attend assigned classes or activities; or be tardy to school, assigned classes or activities.
- (m) Dress in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety, the health and safety of others, or is distracting to the extent that it interferes with the educational process.
- (n) Willfully violate the behavioral expectations for those students riding Bennington Public School buses.
- (o) Engage in bullying, which includes any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or a school employee's designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events. The purpose of this rule is to provide a physically safe and emotionally secure environment for all students and staff.

- (p) Repeatedly violate any of the rules adopted by the Bennington Public School District Board of Education.
- (q) The knowing and intentional use of force in causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer, or student, except if caused by accident, self-defense, or on the reasonable belief that the force used was necessary to protect some other person and the extent of force used was reasonably believed to be necessary, or the knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a dangerous weapon other than a firearm.

A student who engages in the following conduct shall be expelled for the remainder of the school year in which it took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester, and if the expulsion for such conduct takes place during the second semester, the expulsion shall remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year, with the condition that such action may be modified or terminated by the school district during the expulsion period on such terms as the administration may establish:

- (r) Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes shall be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

The term "dangerous object" shall include noxious or flammable material, fireworks, devices intended to administer an electric shock (tasers, electric batons, prods, or stun guns) chemical weapons (i.e. mace, pepper spray), martial arts weapons or other instruments including those which eject a projectile or substance of any kind, or any replica or facsimile of any of the above, whether functional or nonfunctional, whether designed for use as a weapon or for some other use.

Parents of students found to possess weapons or dangerous objects or look-a-likes on school property shall be notified of the incident. Confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects shall be reported to the law enforcement officials, and students will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

Students bringing firearms as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921 to school or knowingly possessing firearms at school may be expelled for a period of not less than one year. Students bringing to school or possessing dangerous weapons, including firearms, will be referred to law enforcement authorities. The superintendent shall have the authority to recommend this expulsion requirement be modified for students on a case-by-case basis. For purposes of this portion of this policy, the term "firearm" includes, but is not limited to, any weapon which is designed to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer for such a weapon, or any explosive, incendiary or poison gas.

Weapons or dangerous objects under the control of law enforcement officials shall be exempt from this policy. Firearms kept in a locked firearm rack that is on a motor vehicle or that are contained within a private vehicle operated by a nonstudent adult that are not loaded are also exempt. Firearms also may be possessed by a person for the purpose of using them, with the approval of the school, in a historical reenactment, in a hunter education program, or as part of an honor guard. The principal may allow authorized persons to display weapons or other dangerous objects or look-a-likes for educational purposes and must be kept in a designated location during the school day. Such a display shall also be exempt from this policy.

Bringing a firearm or other dangerous weapon to school for any reason is discouraged; however, a student will not be subject to disciplinary action if the item is brought or possessed under the following conditions:

- a. Prior written permission to bring the firearm or other dangerous weapon to school is obtained from the student's teacher, building administrator and parent.
- b. The purpose of having the firearm or other dangerous weapon in school is for a legitimate educational function.
- c. A plan for its transportation into and from the school, its storage while in the school building and how it will be displayed must be developed with the prior written approval by the teacher and building administrator. Such plan shall require that such item will be in the possession and/or supervision of an adult staff member at all times
- d. The firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be in an inoperable condition while it is on school grounds.

B. Consequence Guidelines

The following Code of Conduct is used as a guide by Bennington South Middle School and Bennington South Middle School to conduct administrative disciplinary action and has been approved by the Board of Education. The Code of Conduct allows for interpretation by the administrative team due to circumstances and the severity and/or frequency of the incident.

BULLYING OR HARASSMENT				
Infraction		Definition	Minimum	Maximum
BHC	Race/Color	Intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on actual or perceived race, color, or national origin. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion
BHD	Disability	Intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on actual or perceived disability. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion
BHG	General	Intimidation or abusive behavior toward another student. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion
BHO	Sexual Orientation	Intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on actual or perceived sexual orientation. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion

BHR	Religion	Intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on actual or perceived religion. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion
BHS	Sexual	Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Gender-based harassment or bullying is nonsexual intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on the student's actual or perceived sex, including harassment based on gender-identity, gender expression, and nonconformity with gender stereotypes. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion

PHYSICAL AGGRESSION, THREATS, AND INTIMIDATION				
Infraction		Definition	Minimum	Maximum
ATT	Physical Attack	An actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his/her will, or the intentional causing of bodily harm to an individual. Physical attack or fight does not include rape.		
ATT	Physical Attack (w/out injury)	An actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his/her will that places another person in reasonable harm's way - includes pushing and shoving.	Admin conference	Short-Term Suspension Contact Authorities
ATT	Physical Attack (w/ injury)	An actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his/her will, or the intentional causing of bodily harm to an individual. Physical attack or fight does not include rape.	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
ATT	Fighting (1st Offense)	Mutual attempt to physically harm another person through mutual physical contact (potential for continued fighting can be considered in consequences administered)	In-School Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Contact Authorities
ATT	(2nd Offense)	Mutual attempt to physically harm another person through mutual physical contact (potential for continued fighting can be considered in consequences administered)	Short-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
PAS	Physical Attack on Staff	An actual or intentional touching or striking of a teacher, school employee, or any volunteer against his/her will, or the intentional causing of bodily harm to an individual.	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities

RAP	Rape or Attempted Rape	Forced sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal, or oral penetration). This includes sodomy and penetration with a foreign object. Both male and female students can be victims of rape. Rape is not defined as a physical attack or fight.	One-Year Expulsion	One-Year Expulsion Contact Authorities
SEX	Sexual Assault	Threatened rape, fondling, indecent liberties, or child molestation. Both male and female students can be victims of sexual assault. Classification of these incidents should take into consideration the age and developmentally appropriate behavior of the offender.	One-Year Expulsion	One-Year Expulsion Contact Authorities
THR	Threats and Intimidation	A threat refers to an act where there was no physical contact between the offender and victim but the victim felt that physical harm could have occurred based on the verbal or nonverbal communication by the offender. This includes nonverbal threats (e.g., brandishing a weapon), and verbal threats of physical harm which are made in person. Threats made over the telephone or threatening letters are excluded.		
THR	Level One Threat	Using a threat as a common expression or in a context the recipient does not feel threatened, frightened, or coerced (i.e. "I could just kill you for that.")	Admin Conference	Short-Term Suspension
THR	Level Two Threat	Using an expression or an implied or veiled threat with the intent of threatening, frightening, or coercing another and the recipient feels threatened, frightened, or coerced ("I will kill you.")	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Contact Authorities
THR	Level Three Threat	Threatening to kill or injure another person or threatening to damage property with potential for injury	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
THR	Repeated Threats	Threatening another student or staff member more than one time	Detention(s)	Expulsion Contact Authorities
THR	Threatening w/ an Object	Threatening another person with an object which could be used as a weapon (Must resemble a real weapon) Threatening to use any type of explosive device to injure a person(s) or to destroy property.	Short-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities

DRUGS, TOBACCO, AND ALCOHOL				
Infraction		Definition	Minimum	Maximum
PUA	Possession, Distribution, or Use of Alcohol	Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of an alcoholic liquor as defined in Nebraska Statute 53-103.02; or being under the influence of alcoholic liquor.		
PUA	Possession or Use of Alcohol (1st Offense)	Possession or use of alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol at school, on any school property, or at any school event.	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Contact

				Authorities
PUA	Possession or Use of Alcohol (2nd Offense)	Possession or use of alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol at school, on any school property, or at any school event.	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
PUA	Distribution of Alcohol	Distribution or attempted distribution of alcohol to any other person	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
PUD	Possession, Distribution or Use of Drugs	The use, possession, sale, or solicitation of drugs as identified in 21 U.S.C. Section 812(c) - This does not include tobacco or alcohol		
PUD	Possession or Use of Drugs (1st Offense)	Possession or use of illegal drugs or look-a-like drugs, or possession of a prescribed medication by a student for whom the medication was not prescribed; or possession or use of drug paraphernalia.	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Contact Authorities
PUD	Possession or Use of Drugs (2nd Offense)	Possession or use of illegal drugs or look-a-like drugs, or possession of a prescribed medication by a student for whom the medication was not prescribed.	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
PUD	Distribution of Drugs	Distribution or attempted distribution to any other person, of an illegal narcotic drug, controlled substance, look-a-like substance, drug paraphernalia, or prescription medication	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
PUD	Distribution of Drugs	Distribution or attempted distribution to any other person of non-prescribed medications	Admin Conference	Short-Term Suspension
PDP	Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	Possession of drug paraphernalia either on person, backpack, or in school locker. Paraphernalia shall include all equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used or intended for use in the manufacturing, injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing substances into the human body.	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Contact Authorities
PUT	Possession or Use of Tobacco or Tobacco/Nicotine Products	Possession or use of any tobacco product or look alike, e-cigarettes, vapes, CBD Oil, and inhalants	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Contact Authorities
PUT	Distribution or Attempted Distribution of Tobacco or Tobacco/Nicotine Products	Distribution or attempted distribution of tobacco or tobacco products including e-cigarettes, vapes, CBD Oil, and inhalants	Short Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Contact Authorities

ROBBERY, THEFT, AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY

Infraction		Definition	Minimum	Maximum
DOP	Destruction of Property	Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property	Admin Conference	Expulsion Contact Authorities
ROB	Robbery	Taking or attempting to take anything of value that is owned by another person or organization under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence an/or by putting the victim in fear. A key difference between robbery and theft/larceny is that robbery involves a threat or assault.	Short-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
STE	Theft	Stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value.	Short-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities

VIOLATION OF SCHOOL RULES

Infraction		Definition	Minimum	Maximum
BFL	Bodily Fluids Intentional Dispersing	Intentionally spitting, throwing, wimping, or dispersing bodily fluids on or to another student or staff member	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension
CEL	Cell Phone Misuse	Usage of cell phones within school hours and/or without permission from staff.	Administrative Conference	Short-Term Suspension Confiscation of Device
COM	Computer Misuse/Abuse	Utilization of any electronic device or program that disrupts the educational environment; damage to, misuse of, or interference with computer programs or computer-stored information belonging to the District or to other students.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion
DIS	Dishonesty	Being dishonest in a way that interferes with the educational process, cheating on assessments, and/or plagiarism	Admin Conference	Long-Term Suspension
DRB	Disruptive Behavior	Behavior or possession of a material that disrupts the educational environment.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion
DRE	Dress Code	Wearing clothing that does not comply with the dress code outlined in Section XII of the Student Handbook or otherwise disrupts the learning environment.	Admin Conference - Clothing Changed or Corrected	Short-Term Suspension
IBB	Inappropriate Behavior	Actions, words, or gestures that are considered unacceptable, disrespectful, disruptive, or harmful within the middle school environment. These behaviors can	Administrative Conference	Long Term Suspension

		negatively impact the learning experience, create an uncomfortable or unsafe atmosphere, and interfere with the rights and well-being of others		
INA	Inappropriate Remarks	Written or oral language that is reasonably offensive, disruptive, or demeaning. This can include written language or gestures.	Administrative Conference	Long Term Suspension
INS	Insubordination - Failure to do	Refusal to cooperate and comply with staff instructions.	Administrative Conference	Expulsion
MOB	Misbehavior on Bus	Refusal to comply with bus safety rules and expectations.	Administrative Conference	Suspension from Bus

WEAPONS– FIREARMS– ARSON– NUISANCE ITEMS

Infraction		Definition	Minimum	Maximum
AFA	Arson or Fire Alarm	Intentionally starting a fire or pulling the fire alarm	Short-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
PUN	Possession/Use Nuisance Item	Possessing, transmitting, or using non-violent disruptive items (i.e. stink bombs, squirt guns snowballs, water balloons) that interfere with the educational process.	Detention(s)	Long-Term Suspension
PUW	Possession or Use of Weapons	A weapon is any instrument or object used or could be used with the intent to threaten, injure, or kill. This includes look-alikes if they are used to threaten others.		
PUW	Firearms	Knowingly possessing, handling, transmitting, using, intimidating with or threatening with any firearm explosive, destructive device (any weapon that will expel a projectile by the action of explosion).	1 year Expulsion	Legal Authorities
PUW	Other Guns	Using, intimidating with, threatening with, possessing on one's person, handling, storing in locker, or transmitting any paintball gun, soft air gun, bb gun, or pellet gun	Long-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities
PUW	Other Weapons	Possessing, using, or threatening with any weapon that might be used to injure a person (brass knuckles, knives, throwing stars, etc.)	Short-Term Suspension	Expulsion Contact Authorities

C. Reporting Law Violations

Under State law, district administrators are required to contact police whenever it is known or suspected that a student has violated the Nebraska Criminal Code. Cases of law violations or suspected law violations by students will be reported to the Bennington Police Department and to the student's parents or guardian as soon as possible. The school district shall refer all incidents of student discipline for violation of the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act to the Bennington Police Department.

D. Sanctions

The Superintendent, the principal or their designees are delegated full authority and are authorized to take all action appropriate or necessary to implement student disciplinary sanctions in the Bennington Public Schools. The decision to exclude would be made after the principal or designee has investigated the facts, given the student oral or written notice of the charges against him/her, and provided an opportunity for the student to present his/her version. A complete copy of the due process procedures is available upon request from the building principal. Once a suspension or expulsion decision has been delivered by an administrator, students may not attend/participate in any extra-curricular activity until that suspension/expulsion has been completed.

- 1) **Short-term Suspensions** - Such short-term suspension shall be made only after the administrator investigated the alleged conduct or violation and determined that such suspension is necessary to help any student to further school purposes or to prevent an interference with school purposes. Before such short-term suspension shall take effect the student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against him/her and an explanation of the evidence the authorities have. He/she shall have an opportunity to present his/her version of the incident. The administrator shall send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct, or violation and the reason for the action taken. The administrator shall make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parents or guardian before or at the time the student returns to school.
- 2) **Emergency Exclusions** - Any student may be excluded from school under the following circumstances:
 - a) If the student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and poses an imminent threat to the health or safety of the school community; or
 - b) If the student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself, herself, or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.
 - c) Any emergency exclusion shall be based upon a clear factual situation warranting it and shall last no longer than is necessary to avoid the dangers described above.
 - d) If the emergency exclusion will be for five school days or less, the procedures for a short-term suspension shall be followed. If the Superintendent or his or her designee determines that an emergency exclusion shall extend beyond five days, a hearing is to be held and a final determination made within ten school days after the initial date of exclusion. Such procedures shall substantially comply with the procedures set forth in this policy for a long-term suspension or expulsion, and be modified only to the extent necessary to accomplish the hearing and determination within this shorter time period.

E. Long-term Suspension, Expulsion and Mandatory Reassignment

1. Long-Term Suspension shall mean the exclusion of a student from attendance in all schools in this district for a period exceeding five school days but less than twenty school days.
2. Expulsion shall mean exclusion from attendance in all schools within the system for a period of time not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect, unless the misconduct occurred within ten (10) school days prior to the end of the first semester in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or within

ten (10) school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year. Such action may be modified or terminated by the school district at any time during the expulsion period. In addition, the following shall apply to any expulsion: In the case of a student bringing a weapon to school in violation of the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act, such student shall be expelled from school for a period of not less than one year. The superintendent, on a case-by-case basis, and to be in compliance with state law, may reduce said expulsion. Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year shall be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year. The hearing examiner shall conduct the review after the hearing examiner has given notice of the review to the student and the student's parent or guardian. This review shall be limited to newly discovered evidence or evidence of changes in the student's circumstances occurring since the original hearing. This review may lead to a recommendation by the hearing examiner that the student be readmitted for the upcoming school year. If the Board of Education or a committee of such Board took the final action to expel the student, the student may be readmitted only by action of the Board. Otherwise, the student may be readmitted by action of the Superintendent, State Statute 79-4, 196.

3. Mandatory reassignment shall mean the involuntary transfer of a student to another school in connection with any disciplinary action.

F. **Procedures** to be followed if an administrator makes a decision to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment:

1. On the date of the decision, a written charge and a summary of the evidence supporting such charge shall be filed with the superintendent. The school shall, within two school days of the decision, send a written notice by registered or certified mail to the student and the student's parent or guardian, informing them of the rights established under this act;
2. Such written notice shall include the following:
 - (a) The rule or standard of conduct allegedly violated and the acts of the student alleged to constitute a cause for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, including a summary of the evidence to be presented against the student;
 - (b) The penalty, if any, which the principal has recommended in the charge, and any other penalty to which the student may be subject;
 - (c) A statement that the student shall have a right to a hearing, upon request, on the specified charges, before long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, for the disciplinary purposes can be invoked;
 - (d) A description of the hearing procedures provided by this act, along with procedures for appealing any decision rendered at the hearing;
 - (e) A statement that the principal, legal counsel for the school, the student, the student's parents or the student's representative or guardian shall have the right (1) to examine the student's academic and disciplinary records and any affidavits to be used at the hearing concerning the alleged misconduct, and the right (2) to know the identity of the

- witnesses to appear at the hearing and the substance of their testimony;
and
- (f) A form on which the student, student's parents, or guardian may request a hearing to be signed by such parties and delivered to the principal or Superintendent in person or by registered or certified mail; and
 - (g) Nothing in this act shall preclude the student, the student's parents, guardian or representative from discussing and settling the matter with appropriate school personnel prior to the hearing stage.
 - (h) Parents will receive written notification from the administration within 48 hours of the suspension / expulsion.

If a hearing is requested within five days of the receipt of the written notice by the student, the student's parents or guardian as described in these rules and regulations, the Superintendent shall appoint a hearing examiner and all of the provisions of the Nebraska statutes which relate to such a hearing shall be adhered to. (See Section of State Statutes 79-254 to 79-291, R.R.S., et seq.)

G. Other Disciplinary Action

Administrative and teaching personnel may take other disciplinary action regarding student behavior when deemed reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or to prevent interference with the educational process, which may include, but is not limited to, counseling, parent/guardian conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, detentions, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, etc.

Extended Suspensions - If the principal determined that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of interference with an educational function or school purpose or a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees or school volunteers, and a notice of intent to discipline the student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the Superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment takes effect if no hearing is requested or, if a hearing is requested, the date the hearing examiner makes the report of his or her findings.

The Superintendent, the principal or their designees are delegated full authority and are authorized to take all action appropriate or necessary to implement student disciplinary sanctions in the Bennington Public Schools. The decision to exclude would be made after the principal or designee has investigated the facts, given the student oral or written notice of the charges against him/her, and provided an opportunity for the student to present his/her version. A complete copy of due process procedures is available upon request from the building principal.

H. Saturday School:

1. Saturday School assignments will consist of three hours. The students will serve from 7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. The doors to the school will open at 7:15 a.m. and be closed at 7:45 a.m. Students will be given a ten-minute break at 9:00 a.m.
2. Student responsibilities and expected behaviors for Saturday School are:
 - a. Students must be on time and prepared to work at 7:30 a.m.
 - b. Students must have enough schoolwork to do during Saturday School.
 - c. Students are expected to stay on task and follow Saturday School Supervisors instructions.
 - d. Any activity the supervisor sees as unacceptable such as (sleeping, have gum/candy, arguing, or bring nuisance devices) will result in dismissal from Saturday School and will result in a suspension.

- e. A parent/guardian must notify the principal, if the student is unable to serve due to illness. This notification must be made by 7:30 a.m. on the assigned Saturday. If not, the absence will be considered a skipped Saturday School.
 - f. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone or email of Saturday School assignments and the student will receive written notice from the Principal or designee on the Thursday or Friday prior to any Saturday School assignment.
3. Students who have inappropriate behavior during Saturday School will earn the following consequences:
- a. Students who show up late to or skip a Saturday School will be assigned a one day suspension the following week. Parents will be notified by the administration of the suspension Monday morning.
 - b. Students who skip a second time will be suspended for three days the following week. Parents/guardians must also meet with the building administrator.

I. Discipline Procedures

In the case of activity rules a student or their parents/guardians can appeal the Activity Director's decision to the building principal. The Activity Director will present all information regarding their decision to the principal. After the school's case has been presented the parents/guardians and student will be given the opportunity to present reasons for appealing the Activity Director's decision. After both sides have been presented the principal will render a decision. If a hearing is required, the parents/guardians and student will be notified of their right for a hearing.

XVII. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A. Extra-Curricular Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in one or more of the extra-curricular activities offered by Bennington South Middle School. A student has the opportunity to display leadership talents and gain valuable experiences by taking part in the activity program. Rule 10 by the State of Nebraska states that interscholastic sports at the middle school level are for 7th and 8th grade students only. The activities available are:

- Student Senate (members are elected)
- Volleyball
- Football
- Girls' and Boys' Basketball
- Girls' and Boys' Wrestling
- Girls' and Boys' Track & Field
- Girls' and Boys' Cross Country
- Band and Special Music groups
- Math Club
- Art Club
- Yearbook
- Cooking Club
- Service Club
- Game Club
- Fitness Club
- Reading Club
- Writing Club
- Robotics
- Marimba Club
- Jazz Band
- Diversity Club

All students participating in these activities must follow the Activity Rules for Bennington South Middle School.

B. Activity Rules for Bennington South Middle School

Understanding the activity rule is vital to your participation in school activities. Both parents/guardians and students need to understand that honesty and cooperation with school officials concerning this policy are of vital importance. Parents/guardians and athletes please take time to read and discuss all items in the Activity Rules.

PHILOSOPHY: The Bennington South Middle School activity program is an important part of the total school program. Those students who participate in this program reflect the image of the school and the community of Bennington.

This philosophy is firmly based on the belief that there is more to the activity program than playing the game or participating. During the season, participants must maintain a high standard of conduct, which will enable them to function and perform to the best of their abilities. Therefore, the sponsors and the administration of Bennington South Middle School will not tolerate the use of, alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs by student athletes and all other activity participants.

The philosophy of the Bennington South Middle School activity program is also based on the belief that student participants are representatives of Bennington South Middle School and the community of Bennington for as long as they participate in the activity program. As such, their actions, both on and off the playing field, must be above reproach. Participant-related incidents, as well as the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, are considered improper behavior for student participants and are subject to penalties.

This philosophy recognizes the fact that there must be close cooperation between the sponsors, the participants, and the parents/guardians if the activity rules are to be successful and effective. The activity rules are for the benefit of all the students involved in activities. The school and the parents/guardians must share the responsibility of making sure that the rules are followed. If the school and parents/guardians work together to enforce these rules, it will ensure a smooth-running activity program and eliminate any problems that may occur.

All Activity Rules violations will be referred to the Activities Director.

1. **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR ACTIVITIES:** A student will be ineligible to compete or perform interscholastically if
 - a. He/she has below a 70% average in two classes
 - b. Each student must meet eligibility requirements by mid hexter and end of the hexter (report card). Grade checks will be done, and if the student is failing two or more courses, they will have seven calendar days to regain eligibility (students will still be eligible for all contests and practices during this seven day grace period). At the end of seven days and each subsequent Monday, reports will be run, and any student still failing two or more courses will be ineligible for all competition that week.
 - c. Eligibility is considered only for interscholastic activities, which are not requirements for a particular class.
 - d. Students will be required to attend before and after school practices unless the head coach or sponsor excuses them. Students who have medically verified illnesses will be provided time to make up work.

2. ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, DRUGS: There shall be no tolerance for drinking of alcoholic beverages, use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, or the use of illegal drugs. Student participants shall not remain in an area where alcoholic beverages are being used unless accompanied by their parents/guardians. Business establishments that also provide food and recreational activities are excluded.
 - a. Penalty –FIRST OFFENSE–OPTION A: If a student self-reports a violation within 72 hours of the violation they will sit out one contest. OPTION B: Student participants will be suspended for 25% of the current season's competition. This will not exceed 4 games or two weeks in the activity in which they are participating or the next activity they will be involved in.
 - b. Penalty –SECOND OFFENSE--Student will be suspended from all inter-scholastic activities for the remainder of the current school year.
 - c. Before action can be taken, student must freely admit to a violation or be observed violating the training rules by a member of a school faculty, administrative staff, a law enforcement officer, or an adult willing to come into school and make a formal statement.
 - d. A minor in possession conviction shall be regarded as a violation of Rule 2.
 - e. The options above will apply to drinking, selling, or possessing alcohol or using, selling, or possessing other illegal substances while school is not in session during summer vacation (training rules are observed year round). The beginning of the athletic calendar year will start the first day, after the last day of the academic calendar year (ex. last day of school is May 22nd, then the first day of the new athletic calendar year would be May 23rd, or the conclusion of a spring sport that extends past the last day of the academic calendar year (ex. golf and track)
 - f. The Activities Director's decision may be appealed to the Discipline Committee by the student or the student's parents/guardians.
3. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: A student will be ineligible to compete or perform interscholastically if
 - a. A student is charged/referred/cited/summoned with a misdemeanor (could exclude traffic tickets) during the school year as substantiated by law enforcement officials or school personal, may result in a one week suspension from all games, practices, and activities. A second offense during the school year will result in suspensions from all activities for the remainder of the year.
 - b. A student is charged/referred/cited/summoned with a felony during the school year as substantiated by law enforcement officials, may result in immediate suspension from all games, performances, events, practices, and activities until the matter is resolved to the satisfaction of the Bennington South Middle School administrative team.
4. PRACTICE SESSIONS: No participants shall miss a practice without first being excused by one of the coaching staff or sponsor of activity. If participants are not in school or are suddenly taken ill, they will bring their excuses when they return to school. If there is a conflict with another school activity, they must clear it with the sponsor before they miss the practice.

5. **SUSPENSIONS: STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND OR PARTICIPATE IN ANY EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY OR PRACTICE ON DAYS THEY HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED.** Students will be allowed to practice or compete after school on the final day of suspension.

6. **CONCUSSIONS – RETURN TO PLAY**

- (a) **No Physical Activity:** this period of time should be a minimum of 24 hours rest.
- (b) **Light Aerobic Exercise:** Walking, swimming or stationary biking at less than 70% of the maximum heart rate. NO resistance training.
- (c) **Sport Specific Exercise:** NO head impact activities. Exercises are designed to the movements required for the specific sport and are done close to full speed.
- (d) **Non-contact Training:** Begin to incorporate resistance training and coordination (catching, rebounding, spiking, etc...) exercises. Begin preparing the athlete for return to full contact activities.
- (e) **Full-contact Practice:** Participate in normal training activities as directed by the coaching staff while being observed by the medical staff.
- (f) **Return to Play:** Cleared for normal game play.
 - (1) Has been evaluated by a licensed health care professional and has received a written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from that professional;
 - (2) Has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student, parent or guardian.

** Failure to successfully complete any one step returns the athlete to step #1 on the progression. Every athlete is different and every concussion is different. Recommendations for athletes are that the return to play progression is done on a daily basis that results in a week-long progression to return to the sport activity.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

Training to recognize the symptoms of concussions and brain injuries and their proper medical treatment shall be made available to coaches of the district's athletic teams.

The district will provide information on concussions and brain injuries to athletes and their parents or guardians prior to the beginning of practice or competition including at least:

- 1. The signs and symptoms of concussions;
- 2. The risks posed by sustaining a concussion; and
- 3. The actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion including the notification of coaches.

A student participating on a school athletic team shall be removed from a practice or game when reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury in that activity after observation by a coach or a licensed health care professional who is professionally affiliated with or contracted by the school. Any parent or guardian who suspects a student has sustained a concussion is expected to immediately notify district coaches or administrators of the injury. Students who suspect they have sustained a concussion shall immediately make such notification.

The injured student shall not be permitted to participate in any school supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices or games, until the student;

- 1. has been evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional;

2. has received written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from the licensed healthcare professional;
3. has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student's parent or guardian.

If a student is reasonably suspected after observation of having sustained a concussion or brain injury and is removed from an athletic activity as required above, the parent or guardian of the student shall be notified by the school of the date and approximate time of the injury suffered by the student, the signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and any actions taken to treat the student.

The district shall establish a return to learn protocol for students that have sustained a concussion. The return to learn protocol shall recognize that students who have sustained a concussion and returned to school may need informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum, and monitoring by medical or academic staff until the student is fully recovered.

Concussions – Return to Learn Progression

- (a) **At Home Rest:** Stay at home; limit mental exertion and interaction especially with computers, phones, texting, television, video games and homework.
- (b) **At Home Light Mental Activity:** No more than 30 minutes of mental exertion. No prolonged concentration on any activity. Minimal interaction with TV, computer, phone or texting.
- (c) **School – Part time:** NO Testing, avoid loud noises, schedule a quiet area for the student to use if necessary (this includes lunch), modify the student schedule if necessary, allow for extra time in regards to the completion of homework. No physical activity.
- (d) **School – Part time:** Modified classroom testing, begin to decrease the additional time for the completion of homework. No standardized testing or physical activity.
- (e) **School – Part time:** Extend the amount of time a student is at school and in the classroom. Begin to remove the temporary accommodations that were in place for the student and progress back to a full normal day of school.
- (f) **School – Full time:** Return to physical active classes and full homework, testing, class participation.

** This progression will be different for each individual. Communication between the parents, athletic training staff, administration, teachers and athletes is essential to ensure that the athlete is not being placed in an environment that will adversely affect their recovery from a concussion or their academic performance.

7. **GENERAL CONDUCT:** Good sportsmanship shall be observed during practice sessions and contests. Activity participants are expected to be positive and respectful at all times. Being arrested for or charged with a misdemeanor or felony may result in a restriction of activity participation.
8. **ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL ON DAY OF CONTEST:** Student athletes must attend school five class periods the day of a contest. Doctor's appointments, educational activities or funerals are exceptions. The Principal approves all exceptions. To receive credit in activities, students must take part in all public appearances of that activity unless excused by the sponsor.
9. **EQUIPMENT:** All equipment from one sport must be returned before the athlete can check out equipment for another sport.
10. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extra-curricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants are advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules

and regulations prior to the beginning of the season. Coaches/ sponsors will provide the students with training rules and practice procedures.

11. TO THE PARENTS/GUARDIANS: The training rules that are listed above have been kept to a minimum. We, at Bennington South Middle School, realize that it is impossible to cover every situation that might develop in the future. Each case not covered in the activity policy will be decided on its own merit. We sincerely request your cooperation in this matter. Good sportsmanship begins with adults. We thank you in advance for modeling positive and respectful behavior as a Bennington spectator and fan throughout the school year.

Each organization's constitution or bylaws must include eligibility criteria at least as rigorous as that spelled out in this handbook. Foreign exchange students and option students must meet the same criteria for eligibility as resident students.

C. Activity Passes

All Bennington students (grades 6-8) are encouraged to purchase an Activity Pass. Student Activity ticket prices will be \$35.00 for all students in grades K-12. Adult activity passes will be \$70, and \$160 for family activity passes (K-12 Bennington students and their legal parents and/or guardians.) These prices are for both middle school and senior high students. Students must have their activity pass to be admitted without being charged an entrance fee. Students who leave the activity before its conclusion will not be allowed back into the activity.

D. Dance Policies

1. Dances can be scheduled for grades 6-8. 9 -12 students will not be allowed to attend 6-8 grade dances and 6-8 students will not be allowed to attend 9 – 12 dances.
2. Students planning to attend any dance will be required to wear APPROPRIATE clothing for the particular event. Dances are for Bennington South Middle School students only.
3. Should any Bennington student, however, attempt to bring any non-resident student to a dance who is not his/her date, the Bennington student will be indefinitely suspended from all further dances until the policy breach is resolved. Faculty dance sponsors shall decide the authenticity of a date.
4. Depending on sport events and other circumstances different dances will have different starting times. No dance shall extend later than 9pm. Students leaving a dance must sign-out and will not be permitted to return.
5. The use or possession of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any other prohibited substance, or any damage to school property are subject to the same policies during dances as those that apply to the school day and activities.

E. Music

The Instrumental and Vocal Music programs offer a wide variety of musical activities. Band and Chorus is offered at the Middle School with some extra-curricular activity involved. Middle School general music is required for sixth and seventh graders. All other music classes are electives. Grades are given for each class. Private and small group instruction is also offered to students at no cost.

F. Activities Transportation

All teams attending a contest of any kind shall be accompanied by their sponsor, coach, or other faculty member designated to supervise. Athletic trips are made by school vehicle if at all possible. Therefore, all team members must travel with the team. Parents/guardians may transport only their student home from a contest or performance with clearance from the head coach, sponsor, or Principal.

G. Sportsmanship and School Spirit

The students of the Bennington Schools are consistently judged by the general public for moral and ethical conduct during school activities and for the control of their personal lives. Such judgments also reflect on the training received in the school, home, church, and community. Indeed, we want the public to praise and commend our students for their loyal support of school in all activities, but we also want the same public to be able to admire and extol them when victory is in the shadows of defeat. While no one admires a loss, the manner of its acceptance will create an image of respect, honor, and dignity for all Bennington students.

1. School spirit means loyalty to all functions of the school. A loyal student supports his school and does his utmost to keep his activity standards at the highest possible level. School spirit will mean cheering for our team, not against our opposition. To these goals, all Badgers should be dedicated.

H. Athletics

1. All athletics will be centered in one department under the Director of Activities. It shall be the duty of the director to coordinate all athletics under one program to facilitate unity and cooperation.
2. All boys and girls out for inter-scholastic athletics are required to have a physical examination by a doctor (Article 1-a, Section 9, of the N.S.A.A. rules). Any boy or girl out for athletics must also have his/her parents'/guardians' consent and physical examination before he/she is issued any equipment or permitted to engage in the activity. This consent must be written on the official NSAA form that also includes the insurance information.

I. District and State Contests

1. Only team members or individuals qualifying for district and state contests will be under the direct supervision of the school district.
2. Students wishing to attend district or state contests must have permission from a parent or guardian to leave school. Students that wish to participate in an extra-curricular activity that afternoon or evening (practice, concert, game, etc.) must attend a minimum of five class periods during the day.

J. Middle School Activities Philosophy

1. Middle School activities place an emphasis on involvement and fundamentals. Athletes involved with teams at Bennington South Middle School will have the opportunity to improve

their knowledge and individual skills for their sport(s). Various skill levels are present at the junior high level and the programs in place at Bennington South Middle School strive to provide a quality experience for each individual athlete regardless of their experience, knowledge or performance level.

2. Extra-curricular programs are created for middle school students to get them involved outside of the school day. Research indicates that participation in activities contributes to a student's success in his/her future years. Participating in activities and on athletic teams develops self-discipline, cooperation, commitment, accountability and leadership skills. In addition, extra-curricular activities expose students to a competitive environment where they are challenged to exceed expectations placed upon them as a member of Bennington South Middle School.

K. Mounts and Pyramids

No mounts or pyramids will be allowed during any school-sponsored activity, practice, or contest as dictated by the NSAA guidelines. This rule applies to both students and spectators.

XVIII. STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Student Senate:

The students of Bennington South Middle School execute their democratic responsibilities as citizens through Student Government. While the purpose of this organization may vary, the members develop leadership, positive attitudes, and practice the responsibilities of good citizenship. The Student Senate aims to promote good school spirit, assist in school functions, provide a forum of students' expression, build school morale, and promote student involvement. The Student Senate members will complete an application process. They will represent the class at the Student Senate meetings.

XIX. ADDENDUM

Parental/Community Involvement in Schools

It is the policy of this school district to foster and facilitate parental/guardians and community information about, and involvement in, the education of their children. Along these lines:

- A. Reasonable attempts by the district staff will be made to involve parents/guardians and community through frequent open communications, volunteer programs, progress reporting, and through the support of activities, which encourage involvement.
- B. Parents/guardians and other interested citizens are welcome to visit the schools and/or confer with principals and teachers concerning the school's programs by setting up an appointment prior to their visit. (Children should not be visitors without adults.) Persons seeking to disrupt the educational environment shall face those penalties established by the law, board policies, and administrative rules.
- C. Textbooks, tests, and other curriculum materials used in this school district are, and shall be, available for review at school upon request.

- D. Parents/guardians wishing to attend and monitor courses, assemblies, counseling sessions, and other instructional activities are welcome. Prior approval of and from the proper teacher, counselor, and administrator, is required.
- E. Testing shall occur in this school district as determined appropriate by district staff to assure proper measurement of educational progress and achievement. Results of such testing are made available to parents/guardians.
- F. The school district will excuse students from testing, surveys, classroom instruction, and other school experiences, upon written parental/guardian request, only under circumstances required by law. The proper teacher and administrator prior to, or as a part of, the granting of any parent/guardian request shall approve a plan for an acceptable alternative.
- G. Parents/guardians and others will be provided access to records of students according to law (e.g., Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1232 or Section 79-2,104, R.R.S., et seq.).

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at [\(800\) 877-8339](tel:8008778339). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call [\(866\) 632-9992](tel:8666329992). Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

403206672. Fax: [\(202\) 690-7442](tel:2026907442); or

403206912. Email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Bennington School District hereby gives this statement of compliance and intends to comply with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination. This school district intends to take any necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination.

The Bennington School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Students: Dr. Dan Bombeck, Director of student services, 11620 N 156th Street, Bennington, Ne 68007 402-238-3044 dbombeck@bennps.org.

Employees and others: Dr. Matt Blomenkamp, Assistant Superintendent, 11620 N 156th Street, Bennington, NE. 68007 402-238-3044 mblomenkamp@bennps.org.

Complaints or concerns involving discrimination or needs for accommodation or access should be addressed to the appropriate Coordinator. For further information about the anti-discrimination laws and regulation, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office for Civil Right in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), please contact OCR at 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, Missouri 64114, 816-268-0550 (voice), or 887-521-2172 (telecommunications device for the deaf), ocr.kansascity@ed.gov.

The Bennington School District is committed to offering employment and educational opportunity to its employees and students in a climate free of discrimination. Accordingly, unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation of any kind by District employees , including co-workers, non-employees (such as volunteers), third parties and others is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

NONDISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Employees or students should initially report all instances of discrimination, harassment or retaliation to their immediate supervisor or teacher or to the compliance coordinator designated to handle complaints of discrimination (designated coordinator). If the employee or student is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the supervisor or teacher, or if the supervisor or teacher is the problem, the employee or student may report the alleged discrimination, harassment or retaliation ("discrimination") to the designated coordinator, or in the case of students, to another staff person (such as a counselor or principal).

Other individuals may report alleged discrimination to the designated coordinator. If the designated coordinator is the person alleged to have committed the discriminatory act, then the complaint should be submitted to the Superintendent for assignment. A discrimination complaint form is attached to this grievance procedure and is available in the office of each District building, on the District's website, and from the designated coordinators.

District employees, supervisors and administrators must immediately report any complaints, reports, observations, or other information of alleged discrimination to the designated coordinator, even if that District employee is investigating the alleged discrimination as part of the District's student or employee disciplinary process, and provide the complainant with information for filing a complaint of discrimination, including a complaint form if requested, and contact information for the District's designated coordinator. If the District uses its disciplinary procedures to investigate and resolve an alleged discrimination complaint, those disciplinary procedures will comply with the District's standards for a prompt and equitable grievance procedure outlined in section below.

Under no circumstances will a person filing a complaint or grievance involving discrimination be retaliated against for filing the complaint or grievance.

PROCEDURES

Level One – Once the District receives a grievance, complaint or report alleging discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, or becomes aware of possible discriminatory conduct, the District will conduct a prompt, adequate, reliable, thorough, and impartial investigation to determine whether unlawful harassment occurred. If necessary, the District will take immediate, interim action or measures to protect the alleged victim and prevent further potential discrimination, harassment, or retaliation during the pending investigation. The alleged victim will be notified of his or her options to avoid contact with the alleged harasser, such as changing a class or prohibiting the alleged harasser from having any contact with the alleged victim pending the result of the District’s investigation. The District will minimize any burden on the alleged victim when taking interim measures to protect the alleged victim.

The District will complete its investigation within **ten (10) working days** after receiving a complaint or report, unless extenuating circumstances exist. Extenuating circumstances may include the unavailability of witnesses due to illness or incapacitation, or additional time needed because of the complexity of the investigation, the need for outside experts to evaluate the evidence (such as forensic evidence), or multiple complaints or victims. Extenuating circumstances do not include summer vacation, and if a designated compliance coordinator or investigator is unavailable, another coordinator or trained employee will be designated to conduct the investigation. If extenuating circumstances exist, the extended timeframe to complete the investigation will **not exceed ten (10) additional working days without the consent of the complainant**. Periodic status updates will be given to the parties, if necessary.

The District will send concurrently to the parties written notification of the decision (findings and any remedy) regarding the complaint within **ten (10) working days** after the investigation is completed. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C.11232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99, permits the District to disclose to a student who was discriminated against or harassed (victim), information about the sanction imposed upon a student who was found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment (student who discriminated) when the sanction directly relates to the victim. This includes an order that the student who discriminated stay away from the victim, or that the student who discriminated is prohibited from attending school for a period of time, or transferred to other classes.

Level Two – If a party is not satisfied with the findings or remedies (or both set forth in the decision, he or she may file an appeal in writing with the Superintendent within **ten (10) working days** after receiving the decision. The Superintendent will review the appeal and the investigative documentation and decision, conduct additional investigation, if necessary, and issue a written determination about the appeal within **ten (10) working days** after receiving the appeal. The party who filed the appeal will be sent the Superintendent’s determination at the time it is issued, and a copy will be sent to the designated compliance coordinator. [If the Superintendent is the subject of the complaint, the party will file the appeal directly with the Board.]

Level Three – If the party is not satisfied with the Superintendent’s determination, he or she may file an appeal in writing with the Board of Education **within ten (10) working days** after receiving the Superintendent’s determination. The Board of Education will review the appeal, the Superintendent’s determination, the investigative documentation and decision, and allow the party to address the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting to present his or her appeal. The Board will issue a written determination about the appeal **within thirty (30) working days** after receiving the appeal. The party who filed the appeal will be sent to the designated compliance coordinator. The Board’s determination, and any actions taken, will be final on behalf of the District.

Remedies – If the District knows or reasonably should know about possible discrimination, including harassment or violence, the District will take immediate, interim action or measures to protect the alleged victim, ensure the safety of the school community, and prevent further potential discrimination.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The school district serves approximately 100 students in district special education programs birth to 21 years of age. Young children with disabilities (birth through age three) are served in home-based programs. An early education center serves preschool students with disabilities. School age special education students are served in the least restrictive environment. For further information contact Mrs. Whitney Fagan, Student Service Coordinator at the Bennington Schools Central Office (402-238-3044).

PERMITTED PRESENCE OF SERVICE ANIMALS

An individual with a disability shall be permitted to be accompanied by his or her service animal in all areas where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go. A bona fide trainer of a service animal also has the right to be accompanied by such animal to attend events for which a fee is charged.

Service animals may be excluded from school premises if:

- a. The service animal is out of control and the service animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;
- b. The service animal is not housebroken; or
- c. The presence of the service animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

Student Fees Policy

The District's general policy is to provide for the free instruction in school in accordance with the Nebraska Constitution and state and federal law. This generally means that the District's policy is to provide free instruction for courses which are required by state law or regulation and to provide the staff facility, equipment, and materials necessary for such instruction, without charge or fee to the students.

The District does provide activities, programs, and services to children, which extend beyond the minimum level of constitutionally required free instruction. Students and their parents/guardians have historically contributed to the District's efforts to provide such activities, programs, and services. The District's general policy is to continue to encourage and, to the extent permitted by law, to require such student and parent contributions to enhance the educational program provided by the District.

Under the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act, the District is required to set forth in a policy its guidelines or policies for specific categories of student fees. The District does so by setting forth the following guidelines and policies. This policy is subject to further interpretation or guidance by administrative or Board regulations, which may be adopted from time to time. The Policy includes Table 1, which provides further specifics of student fees and materials required of students for the 2023-2024 school year. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to contact their building administration or their teachers or activity coaches and sponsors for further specifics.

Table 1

Middle School Program	General Description of Fee or Material	\$ Amount of Fee (Anticipated or Maximum) or Specific Material Required

General	Misuse of School Equipment and Property	The Student and Parent/guardian will be Responsible for Replacement Cost. Cost will vary.
General Supplies for Classroom	Classroom Supplies, Pens, Pencils, Notebooks and other optional supplies for a minimum of 6 academic classes	Cost will vary according to the number of items purchased.
Physical Education Classes	Appropriate clothing (non-specialized attire) Locks	Tennis shoes, socks, running shorts, and T-shirt. Locks - \$5 (if lost)
Industrial Technology/Art, special projects, science classes	Costs above standard assigned project. Appropriate clothing (non-specialized attire) Goggles – 1 pair provided per year. If lost or damaged students are required to purchase a new pair.	Fees will vary according to the size of student project. Old shirt for painting; other clothing which may get paint on it or otherwise be damaged; protective clothing; goggles.
Family Consumer Science	Cost above standard assigned project	Fees will vary according to the size of student project.
Music-Optional band courses	Musical Instruments	Musical Instruments and accessories (reeds, valve oil, etc.) Limited instruments available for use by all students.
Advanced math or science classes	Specialized calculators	Some calculators will be available at school. If lost or damaged a replacement fee will be assessed at the rate paid by the school. Students are encouraged but not required to purchase such equipment for their personal use.
All Curriculum Areas	Field Trips Meals	Sack lunches will be provided for all students by request. Regular pricing will apply.
School Meals		Breakfast - \$1.80 Adult Breakfast - \$2.65 Lunch - \$2.95 Adult Lunch - \$4.30 Milk - \$0.55 Prices are maximums based on one meal per day, will vary depending on the number of meals or items purchased by the student, and may be adjusted during the year.
End of the year lost or damage books	Damage fee or replacement cost	Fees and fines up to \$25.00 for damaged books. Lost or ruined books are charged the replacement cost up to \$100.
College entrance tests and preparation	Prep program and tests	Costs of college entrance tests prep courses are determined by the testing companies.
Yearbook - optional	School Book	Not to exceed \$60 per book.

Copies	Use of school copiers (except for one copy of the student file, which will be provided without charge).	Ten cents (.10) per page when charges apply.
1 to 1 Technology	Damage or replacement costs	Costs will vary between \$5 and \$20 with cooperative loss program, and between \$40 and \$100 without cooperative loss program. Total replacement will be \$200.
Extracurricular and other programs	General Description of Fee or Material	\$ Amount of Fee (Anticipated or Maximum) or Specific Material Required
Admission	Spectator fees for admission to events	Students may purchase an activity card for \$35 per year. Conference Tournaments, District and State events hosted by the school: cost to be set by NSAA/EMC.
Physicals	NSAA required athletic physicals	Cost varies – payable directly from student/parent to physician.
Football	Shoes and other optional attire	Costs will vary
Volleyball	Shoes and other optional attire	Costs will vary
Cross Country	Shoes and other optional attire	Costs will vary
Boys' and Girls' Basketball	Shoes and other optional attire	Costs will vary
Wrestling	Shoes and other optional attire	Costs will vary
Boys' and Girls' Track	Shoes and other optional attire	Costs will vary
All Athletic Activities	Medically Prescribed and other optional braces	Cost will vary
Instrumental Music	Reeds and other consumables, Instrument and other optional equipment	Costs will vary according to instrument
Vocal Music	Shoes and performance outfits	Costs will vary
Student Senate	State and national dues and activities	Currently no dues required

All Activities	Camps or other optional activities outside of the school year.	Costs will vary according to activity.
All Activities	Meal Costs for Overnight Events	The School will provide per meal stipend. If students choose meals beyond the stipend, they will be responsible for additional costs.
Camps and clinics	Registration and other costs of camps and clinics	Students are responsible for costs and equipment
Clubs	Clubs are considered extra-curricular and may require supplies, clothing or fees for special events	Cost will vary according to activity
Social & Recognition Activities		
School dances	School/Grade Level	Not to exceed \$15 per dance
Speech/Drama	Admission to events	Not to exceed \$15 per performance.
Picture packets	Optional – pictures are taken for the school yearbook	Students may purchase packets as desired and pay directly to the photo company
Trips; School Sponsored and Non-School Sponsored	Transportation, lodging, meals, admission to events, etc.	<p>Costs of school sponsored, class-related field trips will be paid for by the school. Parents may be encouraged but not required to pay for field trip costs of up to \$5.00 per student for each field trip to defray costs. (With administrative approval, the requested donation may be up to \$100.00 for special field trips). Meals on field trips will be at the expense of the student. School lunches will be provided as needed for free-reduced lunch eligible students.</p> <p>Students are responsible for costs of school sponsored trips where the trip is an extra-curricular activity. The maximum cost of such trips will be \$2,000 per student. If the trip is not school sponsored, the costs of the trip are not subject to this policy and no fee waivers will apply. A trip is not school sponsored if: it is not supervised or administered by the school, attendance on the trip does count towards graduation credit or grade advancement, and participation on the trip is voluntary for students.</p>

Notice Concerning Staff Qualifications for Title 1 Teachers

The ESSA of 2015 gives parents/guardians the right to get information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Upon request, Bennington Public Schools will give parents/guardians the following information about their child's classroom teacher:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or provisional teaching certificate
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher. You may also get information about other graduate certification or degrees held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree

We will also, upon request, tell parents/guardians whether their child is being provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, the qualifications of the paraprofessional.

The request for information should be made to an administrator in your child's school building. The information will be provided to you in a timely manner. Finally, Bennington Public Schools will give timely notice to you if your child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who does not meet the requirements.

XX. ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS, TECHNOLOGY AND THE INTERNET 606.06

We are pleased to offer the staff and students of the Bennington Public Schools access to the district computer network, including electronic mail ("e-mail") and the Internet. To gain access to electronic mail (e-mail) and the internet, all staff must sign and return the "Staff Agreement" form to the central office. Likewise, to gain access to e-mail and the Internet, all students attending the Bennington Public Schools must sign a "Student Agreement", and their parents must sign a "Parents Agreement", which will be kept on file.

Access to e-mail and the Internet will enable staff and students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards, while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. Students and parents should be warned that some material accessible by the internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. But ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their students should follow when using media and information resources. To that end, the Bennington Public Schools support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

A. E-Mail and Internet Rules:

1. General Rules

- (a) The e-mail and Internet networks are provided to staff and students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services is given to staff and students who have agreed to act in a responsible manner. Parental permission is required for student use. Access to e-mail and the Internet is a privilege, not a right.
- (b) Individual users of the district computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over those networks. Users will comply with district standards and will honor the agreements they have signed. Beyond clarification of such standards, the district is not responsible for restricting, monitoring, or controlling the communications of individuals utilizing the network.

- (c) Network storage areas shall be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files or any information stored or otherwise retained
- (d) Users should not expect, and the district does not warrant, that files stored on district servers will always be private.
- (e) The district will not be liable for purchases made by any user over the network. Users shall not make purchases of goods and/or services via the district's network.

2. Policy for Acceptable Use of Computers and Networks

The following policy for acceptable use of computers and networks, including Internet, shall apply to all district administrators, faculty, staff and students. All technology equipment shall be used under the supervision of the site administrator.

- (a) Users shall not erase, remake, or make unusable anyone else's computer, information, files, programs or disks. In addition to any other disciplinary action or legal action that may occur, any user violating this rule shall be liable for any and all damages for the replacement of any damage to the computer, information, files, programs or disks.
- (b) Users shall not let other persons use their name, log-on, password, or files for any reason (except for authorized staff members.)
- (c) Users shall not use or try to discover another user's password.
- (d) Users shall not use Bennington Public Schools computers or networks for non-instructional or non-administrative purposes (e.g., games or activities for personal profit).
- (e) Users shall not use the computer for unlawful purposes, such as illegal copying or installation of unauthorized software.
- (f) Users shall not copy, change, or transfer any software or documentation provided by the Bennington Public School District, teachers, or other students without permission from the network administrators.
- (g) Users shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of any computer's memory, file system, or software. Such software is often called a bug, virus, worm, Trojan horse, or similar name.
- (h) Users shall not use the computer to annoy or harass others with language, images, or threats. Users shall not access or create any obscene or objectionable information, language, or images.
- (i) Users shall not tamper with computers, networks, printers, or other associated equipment except as directed by the teacher or network administrator.

3. Penalties for Violation of Rules

All of the policies and procedures for acceptable use of computers and networks are intended to make the computers and networks more reliable for users. They are also

intended to minimize the burden of administrating the networks so that more time can be spent enhancing services.

Use of the computer to access telecommunications resources is a privilege and not a right. Violation of the policies and procedures of the Bennington Public Schools concerning the use of computers and networks may result in disciplinary action up to, and including, suspension and/or expulsion of students and suspension, termination, non-renewal or cancellation of the contract of an administrator, teacher or other school employee.

4. Use of Computer Access to Telecommunications Resources is a Privilege and Not a Right.

Violations of the policies and procedures of the Bennington Public Schools concerning the use of computers and networks will result in disciplinary actions being taken against individual administrators, faculty, staff and/or students who are in violation of said rules. Disciplinary action may include loss of access, in addition to other disciplinary or legal action.

B. Staff, Student and Parent Agreements.

The Administrators, Faculty and Staff Agreement, Students Agreement and Parents Agreement, in the forms attached hereto as Appendix "1", Appendix "2", and Appendix "3" respectively, are incorporated herein by this reference. They are also available through the online Nebsis family accounts. Signatures are completed electronically.

Handbook Addendum - Bennington Public Schools 1:1 Initiative

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Introduction

Bennington Public Schools is proud to offer our students in grades 6-12 Chromebooks for use at school and at home. The 1:1 Learning Initiative, which provides mobile computing and wireless technology to all students in these grades, has been designed to provide students with the skills and tools they need in school and for lifelong learning and success.

Computer Specifications

All students are issued one Chromebook and one Chromebook power supply. The laptop and the power adapter have been assigned serial numbers and asset tags by the District.

Please note that these devices require a Wi-Fi connection in order to be able to access the Internet. Chromebooks have limited offline functionality, but the full power of the device will be realized with an Internet connection.

Laptop Take-home Privileges

While all students will be issued a laptop for use at school, it will be up to individual families to decide whether or not they would like their students to bring their laptops home at the end of the school day. Before take-home privileges will be granted, parents/guardians and students must attend an orientation. At this orientation, parents/guardians may pay the cooperative loss fee and sign all the necessary agreements. Parents/guardians who do not attend the orientation will be required to receive a certificate of completion of a district-assigned 30-minute e-learning module before take-home privileges will be assigned.

The laptop, power supply, and case will all be collected at the end of the academic year or upon termination of the student's enrollment for maintenance, cleaning, and repair.

Any laptops not returned when requested will be reported to local law enforcement as stolen property.

Fees and Cooperative Loss Agreement

Families who would like to have take-home privileges for their students' Chromebooks may pay an annual, non-refundable fee of \$20. This fee provides for an 80% discount on up to four (4) repairs that must be conducted on the student's Chromebook during the school year.

After four (4) repairs in one school year, families will be responsible for 100% of the repair cost. Families who choose not to participate in the cooperative loss program will be responsible for the full cost of the repair each time.

With or without the cooperative loss agreement, damage that results in a complete loss of the Chromebook will result in a damage bill for the full replacement cost of the device.

The following table lists the costs for each event. Note that parts availability and pricing is subject to change. The information provided is accurate as of the most recent edition of this handbook.

Damage Type	With Cooperative Loss	Without Cooperative Loss
Broken Screen	\$12	\$60
Broken Bottom Cover	\$15	\$75
Broken Top Cover	\$15	\$75
Lost/broken Power Supply	\$8	\$40
Keyboard Replacement	\$15	\$75
Bezel	\$7	\$35
Total Loss	\$200	\$200

Repairs due to defects in workmanship or warranty service will be facilitated by the Technology Department.

Laptop Use at School

General

Laptops are intended to be used at school every day. Students are responsible for bringing their laptops to every class unless specifically advised by teachers not to bring them.

Laptops must be brought to school fully charged every day. Only use the provided charger to charge your laptop.

Students must comply with individual classroom teachers' rules.

No laptops will be allowed in the locker rooms at any time.

Laptops will not be permitted at the tables during lunch.

Laptop Software, Apps, and Settings

The presence of inappropriate material including (but not limited to) guns and weapons-related content, pornographic content, alcohol-, drug-, or gang-related symbols or pictures, or any other material deemed unacceptable by the school administration on the laptop or in the student's online storage will result in disciplinary action (see Computer Violations) and, where appropriate, referral to law enforcement.

Sound

Sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes. All students are advised to acquire headphones or earbuds. All Chromebooks are equipped with a standard 3.5mm headphone jack similar to what is found in most portable devices and cell phones.

Printing

Students will not be granted access to printers with their Chromebooks. They are able to print from release stations located in the school libraries.

Lunch

Students will not be permitted to use their Chromebooks during lunch.

Extracurricular Activities

Students will be allowed to take their laptops to extracurricular events at the discretion of the coach/sponsor.

If students bring their Chromebooks to an event, students and parents/guardians assume full responsibility for any loss, damage, or theft that may occur during the event.

Laptop Care

General

No food or drink is allowed next to your laptop.

Students may not carry the laptop with the screen open.

Under no circumstances should laptops or other technology be left in unsupervised areas.

Unsupervised areas include, but are not limited to: the school grounds and campus, common areas, unlocked classrooms or lockers, bathrooms, busses, cars, and hallways. Any computers left in these areas are in danger of being lost or stolen.

Students are not permitted to write, draw, or place stickers or labels on the laptop.

The laptop must be transported to and from school in the district-provided case or in a student-purchased bag or case approved by the district.

Students may install covers or cases on their laptops as long as the cases are removable and do not cause physical damage to the Chromebook.

Students should not under any circumstances repair, alter, or make changes to their laptops.

When students encounter a problem, they or a teacher should contact the Technology Help Desk.

Loaner laptops will be made available for students whose laptops are awaiting repair by the Technology Department. Students will be expected to return the loaner laptop by the end of the school day.

Student laptops will be labeled in the manner specified by the school district. Under no circumstances are students to modify, remove, or destroy these labels and markings.

Display Care

The laptop display can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The display is particularly vulnerable to damage from excessive pressure.

- Do not lean on the lid of your Chromebook when it is closed.
- Do not place anything in the laptop bag that will press against the case.
- Do not poke the screen.
- Do not place anything on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. pencils, pens, fingers, or headphones).
- Do not place your Chromebook in your backpack unless it is in a separate padded slot designed for laptops.

Misbehaviors and Consequences

Computer Violations

Bennington Public Schools has a zero tolerance policy on computer violations. Students who are not responsible users of technology will receive the following consequences:

- First Offense – Minimum: Admin Conference, Maximum: Long-Term Suspension
- Second Offense – Minimum: Detention(s), Maximum: Long-Term Suspension
- Third Offense – Minimum: Required attendance at Saturday Digital Citizenship class, take-home privileges revoked until the class is attended and passed, Maximum: Long-Term Suspension
- Fourth Offense – Determined by Administration

Forgotten or Uncharged Laptops

Teachers will expect that students come to school ready to learn and with their laptops in appropriate working order (charged, undamaged, and fully functioning). Students who forget to bring or charge their laptops will receive consequences at the teacher's discretion.

Unsupervised laptops will be confiscated by the staff and taken to the administrative office. Disciplinary action will be taken for leaving a laptop unattended.

IT Controls

The Technology Department has the right at any time to access student computers and school issued accounts, add or remove software, change settings, and/or remove local data on the Chromebook. It is up to students to make sure their data is safely stored.

Family Computing Tips

Computers are a resource tool. Bennington Public Schools strives to provide students with the skills and tools needed to support lifelong learning and success. While it is great to have your children learn to use the latest technology, spending too much time with video games and surfing the web can be unproductive. Due to federal regulations, Bennington Public Schools will filter and document usage on District-owned equipment at all times. Measures have been put in place to limit student access to harmful or inappropriate material both on and off school grounds. **No technology measure is perfect or will serve as an adequate substitute for parent/guardian involvement, communication, and supervision.** It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to supervise, manage, and monitor their children while they are not at school.

Parents and guardians should communicate with their children and set computer limits. Here are some examples:

- I will not give out personal information such as my address, phone number, parents' or guardians' work addresses/phone numbers, or the name and location of my school without parent or guardian permission.
- I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. I will report mean or uncomfortable messages to a trusted adult or teacher.
- I will talk with my children so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide on the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online, and appropriate areas for me to visit.
- Limit the hours during the day that your child is on the computer.

One of the District's goals with this initiative is to provide equitable technology access to families. Family members of the student with a school-issued laptop are permitted to use the laptop to check the school website, child's grades, etc. The student's use for school work should take priority over other family use. All users of the student's Chromebook are required to follow the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook as well as the District's Acceptable Use of Computers and Internet Policy.

When students are off-campus, a Wi-Fi Internet connection should be made available to enable access to all learning materials made available through the District. It is possible to complete some tasks (composing documents, creating spreadsheets and presentations, using offline apps) without an Internet connection. The District can provide contacts in the community to help qualifying families subscribe to affordable Internet services.

