



***BENNINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK  
K-5***

**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.***

## **SCHOOL SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF BENNINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Stratford Elementary is a K-5 building with approximately **344** students. Many opportunities are available for student involvement beyond the elementary day in Bennington. Our community and parent involvement puts students first.

1. Our K-5 classrooms are self-contained with one homeroom teacher for the entire day.
2. All elementary students have specials which include Physical Education, Music, Art, Library/Technology.
3. The elementary guidance counselor presents social skills lessons to each classroom weekly. They also offer small group or individual counseling in specific areas of student need.
4. Our teachers are some of the Omaha/Metro area's finest educators. They are skilled teachers and truly care about students. We work closely with parents/guardians to provide the best possible educational experiences for our students.

The district is required by federal law to inform you that you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s). If you would like to request this information, please contact Dee Hoge at (402) 238-3044 and the information will be provided in a timely manner.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

#### **Student Entrances and Exits**

We will use two entrances this year.

- Main Doors (South side of the building) - Kdg and 1st grade
- Playground Doors (East side of the building) - 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th Grades

After school supervision is only provided at the main entrance of the elementary building. Parents/guardians are only allowed to use the northeast location for drop-off and pick-up procedures. Please be considerate of the 3:07 dismissal time.

#### **Dismissal**

Students will exit the building depending on their plan of departure.

Walkers will exit out of the main entrance at 3:00.

Bus students will exit on the North side in the bus loop at 3:00.

All other students will utilize either the main doors or east doors with their classroom teacher to arrive at the front of the building.

Students will be dismissed from their classroom teacher. Students who are picked up in the car line or by a parked parent will be in front of the building with their classroom teacher until their ride is available or seen.

Parents should remain on the south side of the crosswalk to alleviate any congestion on the main concrete path.

#### **Safety Patrol Posts**

**The Safety Patrol supervises from 7:45 to 8:05 and 3:05-3:15.**

Post 1 - Main crosswalk at the front of the building

Post 2 - Crosswalk on 171st Street

Post 3 - Crosswalk on Rachel Snowden (for Stratford Park students who walk)

Students are to cross only at guarded posts with help from the Safety Patrol. Students are to obey and respect safety patrol members to ensure a safe walk to and from school.

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# 2023 - BENNINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS - 2024

AUGUST 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

SEPTEMBER 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

OCTOBER 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

NOVEMBER 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

DECEMBER 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

## August 2023

11-15.....Staff Inservice  
16.....First Day of School/Early Staggered Dismissal

## September 2023

4.....Labor Day/No School  
13.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice

## October 2023

11.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice  
17-18.....Parent Teacher Conferences  
19.....Inservice/No School  
20.....No School  
23.....Second Quarter Begins

## November 2023

8.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice  
22-24.....Thanksgiving Break

## December 2023

6.....Early Staggered Dismissal  
21.....Early Staggered Dismissal  
22-29.....Winter Break

## January 2024

1.....Winter Break  
2.....Staff Inservice/No School  
3.....Second Semester Start  
15.....Martin Luther King Jr. Day/No School  
17.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice

## February 2024

7.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice  
13-14.....Parent Teacher Conferences  
15.....Inservice/No School  
16.....No School  
19.....President's Day/No School

## March 2024

11.....Fourth Quarter Start  
20.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice  
25-29.....Spring Break

## April 2024

9.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice  
16.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice

## May 2024

1.....Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice  
19.....Graduation  
21.....Last Day of School/Early Staggered Dismissal/Inservice  
22-24.....Snow Make-Up Days  
27.....Memorial Day/No School  
28-29.....Inservice

Conferences	*Snow make up days if needed- May 22, 23, 24
No School In-Service	
No School	
Early Staggered Dismissal Elem: 11:40 Middle: 11:50 High: 12:00	

JANUARY 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

FEBRUARY 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	

MARCH 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

APRIL 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

MAY 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22*	23*	24*
27	28	29	30	31

School Year August 16-May 21 - 176 Student Days- 8 Teacher Inservice Days - 186 Total Contract Days  
1 Contract Day for P/T Conferences - Summer School June 6-30 - Approved 02/08/2020 Revised 07/10/2023

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Mrs. Allyson Slobotski	<b>Mr. Steve Shannon</b>	Mr. Tim Dreessen
<b>Mr. Jeremy Dick</b>	Mrs. Kara Neuverth	<b>Mrs. Kristi Ryan</b>

## **ADMINISTRATION**

<b>Dr. Aaron Plas, Superintendent</b>	<b>Mrs. Katie Lethcoe, Heritage Elementary Principal</b>
Dr. Dee Hoge, Assistant Superintendent	<b>Mr. Craig Theis, Stratford Elementary Principal</b>
Dr. Shannon Thoendel, Assistant Director of CIA	Mrs. Renee Rucker, Middle School North Principal
Dr. Matt Blomenkamp, Assistant Superintendent	Mr. Matthew Wilson, Middle School North Asst. Principal
<b>Mr. Daniel Bombeck, Student Services Director</b>	<b>Mr. Lucas Apfelbeck, Middle School South Principal</b>
Mr. Chad Boyes, Anchor Pointe Elementary Principal	<b>Mrs. Erika Hiemstra Middle School South Asst. Principal</b>
Mrs. Danielle Robb, Bennington Elementary Principal	Dr. Greg Lamberty, H.S. Principal
Mrs. Alison Evangelisti, Pine Creek Elementary Principal	Mr. Cody Bobolz, H.S. Asst. Principal
<b>Mrs. Krista Bendell, Pine Creek Asst. Principal</b>	Mr. Christopher Kessell, H.S. Athletic Director

## **TEACHERS / STAFF**

Mrs. Megan Bousquet	Kindergarten	Mrs. Jordyn Stryker	Music
Mrs. Megan Schwing	Kindergarten	Ms. Jennifer Callahan	Reading Interventionist
Miss Elise Ratigan	Kindergarten	Mrs. Jennifer Flynn	Math Interventionist
Mrs. Chelsy Scholtz	Grade 1	Mrs. Erika Hanke	Library-Media/Tech
Mrs. Michelle Shively	Grade 1	Mrs. Teresa Rischling	P.E.
Miss Taryn Wilhelms	Grade 1	Ms. Abby Fitzgerald	HAL
Mrs. Allie Carlson	Grade 2	Mrs. Calena Ohlson	HAL
Mrs. Alexandra Phillips	Grade 2	Miss. Austina Falcone	Counselor
Mrs. Kinsey Poulas	Grade 2	Mrs. Ann Bouaphakeo	ELL Teacher
Miss Jadie DeLange	Grade 2	Mr. Ted Blocher	Maintenance
Mrs. Megan Hall	Grade 3	Mr. Gary Baker	Resource Officer
Mr. William Longo	Grade 3		B/A School Director
Mrs. Kelly Lum	Grade 3	Mrs. Jennifer West	Office/Health Para
Mrs. Haydn Loosbrock	Grade 4	Mrs. Kelly Witt	Secretary
Mr. Andrew Miner	Grade 4	Mrs. Kimberly Johnson	Para-Aide
Mrs. Nikki Rowe	Grade 4	Mrs. Erin McCune	Para-Aide
Mrs. Kaylee Brenner	Grade 5	Mrs. Coleen Donahoe	Para-Aide
Mrs. Brandi Edens	Grade 5	Mrs. Taylor Willis	Para-Aide
Mrs. Zackary Hoffman	Grade 5	Miss Millie Mitchell	ELL Para-Aide
Miss. Stephanie Gillespie	Resource	Mrs. Jill Yosten	Nurse
Miss. Emilee Soucie	Resource	Ms. Janet Snyder	Food Service
Mrs. Taylor Giroux	Speech Pathologist		Food Service
Mrs. Megan Norton	Psychologist		Food Service
Mrs. Molly Fisher	Art		



**WELCOME TO STRATFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**9303 N. 171ST STREET**  
**BENNINGTON, NEBRASKA 68007**  
**(402) 238-2941 Fax # (402) 243-0719**  
[www.benningtonschools.org](http://www.benningtonschools.org)

This handbook has been prepared for the students and parents/guardians of Bennington Elementary School. It presents guidelines and directions, which will help to answer questions regarding our school. 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 our school. The handbook does not form a contract and the school reserves the right to change or modify the handbook whenever it so chooses. Parents/guardians and other school friends are encouraged to visit school. We are proud of what happens at Bennington 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 will make this year a successful educational experience for you and your child. If you have questions regarding the school, please contact us. We are here for the children and community.

Teacher Hours	7:50-3:50	Bennington Elementary School	(402) 238-2690
Office Hours	7:40-3:50	Pine Creek Elementary School	(402) 238-2372
Elementary Students	8:05-3:07	Heritage Elementary School	(402) 238-2095
Students to Classrooms	8:05	Anchor Pointe Elementary School	(402) 238-2166
		Bennington Middle School	(402) 238-3082
		Bennington Secondary School	(402) 238-2447
		Bennington School Fax	(402) 238-2185
		Superintendent's Office	(402) 238-3044

**MISSION STATEMENT OF BENNINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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.

School Colors: Royal Blue and White

School Mascot: The Badger

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION**

Board of Education - 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. Its duties include the approval of appropriations, determination of taxes, and the employment of all school personnel.

Superintendent of Schools - The Superintendent is the chief executive officer of the Bennington Public Schools. He is responsible for carrying out the policies and actions of the Board. He advises the Board on educational endeavors, recommends personnel, and is responsible for all school district activities, subject to the Board's final approval.

Principal - 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.

**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 Junior High training (6-8), and four years of High School (9-12). Bennington is a fully accredited school by the North Central Association of Schools and AdvancED.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**

The front office is located on the south side of the school facility off of Rachel Snowden Road. The address is: 9303 171st Street Bennington, NE 68007.

### **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents/guardians and other patrons of the district are welcome and encouraged to visit school. It is a boost to your child's pride when you come to school. However, out of courtesy to the classroom teachers and students, we ask you to please call the office to check their schedules and make arrangements prior to visiting the classrooms. Please follow guidelines indicated below:

1. When visiting the school, please report to the office to register as a guest and receive a visitor's pass before going to the designated classroom or activity. All visitors must enter through the elementary office. During larger functions such as assemblies, room parties, etc., visitor's passes may be waived; however, we would still appreciate you checking in with the office on these occasions.
3. Due to classroom space availability and respect for the learning environment, children not enrolled in school are discouraged from visiting during school hours.
4. All visitors to the schools must respect the learning environment and maintain proper behavior and decorum.

The district may restrict the use of its buildings and grounds or restrict access to school property by issuing no trespassing commands and/or stay away/no trespassing letters when deemed necessary by the superintendent when any individual or group:

1. is determined to present a risk to the safety of others,
2. presents a disruption to the learning environment,
3. fails to follow proper check-in and identification procedures, or
4. does not have a legitimate purpose to be present on school grounds of activities.

In the event a person prohibited by this or other board policies is on district property or is attending a district sponsored event, the superintendent or building principal will tell the person he/she must leave and will notify the person they are not permitted back on the premises.

### **The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015**

#### **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.

## **SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS**

Stratford Elementary School is a special place to learn. Teachers and parents/guardians are partners in the process of educating and preparing our children for the future. We, like you, are interested and committed to the total development of your child. We pledge our best effort. Research indicates that the best schools, the best teachers, or the best principals are not as important to a child's achievement in school as parents/guardians. You have more opportunities to motivate, stimulate, and assist your child on the journey to success than anyone or anything else. Your involvement, attitude and support are vital components in the success of your child at school and in the home environment.

The teacher has the responsibility of educating and nurturing students in an academic and social environment. At Stratford Elementary, students also have responsibilities. Children are expected to conduct themselves according to school rules, including rules on the bus, in the classroom, in the lunchroom, on the playground, in the halls and to/from school. Students shall be courteous, safe, respectful and self-disciplined in all contact with classmates, parents/guardians, school personnel and visitors to the school. It is the position of Bennington Public Schools that the best learning takes place in a calm, disciplined atmosphere with students who desire to do their best.

It is the philosophy of the school that discipline is an ongoing teaching process that fosters respect and dignity for all individuals. It is proactive and developmentally appropriate. It stresses growth, individual responsibility, and problem solving in a collaborative effort among students, parents/guardians, educators, and the community. **In order for Bennington Students to successfully achieve these expectations, Stratford Elementary has four all school expectations that will be reviewed and practiced regularly.**

### **The all-school expectations for Stratford Elementary School are as follows:**

1. Be respectful;
2. Be responsible;
3. Be safe; and
4. Be kind.

All efforts for positive approaches and recognition of students will help deter any inappropriate behaviors.

## **Levels of Intervention**

**Classroom teachers utilize building wide expectations along with classroom routines and procedures to support behavior within the classroom. When behaviors are unable to be modified successfully with teacher support, students may visit the office of administration for further assistance.**

## **Serious Behavior Clause**

There are three occasions when it will become necessary for adults to take immediate steps to help a child learn an alternative way of acting.

*The "BIG 3 OFFENSES" are:*

1. When a child or children are in physical danger. -- When touching or physical contact that causes bodily harm has occurred. EXAMPLES: Hitting – Biting – Scratching – Kicking – Spitting – Bullying

## Behavior

2. When a child or children are in emotional / verbal / physical distress. -- When a child is testing his/her abilities and pushes beyond the limits of respect by using abusive language or actions. -- When a child is exhibiting threatening behavior / harmful teasing / bullying behavior. EXAMPLES: "I'll kill you!" – "I'll hurt you if you tell." - Racial Slurs - Sexual Slurs - "You're fat, ugly, etc." - Nonverbal gestures hurtful to others. Any bullying behavior as noted below.
3. Interrupting the teacher or students within the learning environment. EXAMPLES: Blatant refusal to cooperate with others, mocking others, sassing back to the teacher, lying, basic disrespect, etc. At such times, immediate action or removal from the group will be taken. The student will be referred to the principal.

Bullying: Any intentionally hostile or offensive verbal, written, graphic, demonstrative, or physical act that has the purpose of exerting domination over another student through the act of intimidating, frightening, hazing, oppressing, or adversely controlling the student, and that is disruptive to the educational process. This may include, but is not limited to verbal, graphic, or written activities such as name-calling, taunting, blackmailing, inciting to fight, terrorizing, or physical activities such as poking, blocking or impeding, following, hair pulling, mock hitting, motions, intentionally bumping, tripping, and damaging clothing. *Bullying is defined as a mean or hurtful behavior that is one-sided, unfair, **and** keeps happening.*

Harassment: Intentionally hurtful, demeaning or disparaging acts, words symbolic representations or behavior that is disruptive to the educational process in the form of (verbal, physical, visual, or graphic actions such as name calling, taunting, mocking, slander, humiliating, defaming, teasing, pestering, derogatory remarks, jokes, or drawings) Harassment prohibited by the school district includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, marital status, or disability, sex, veteran status, age, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other prohibited status.

AN AUTOMATIC OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION WILL OCCUR FOR POSSESSION OF A DEADLY WEAPON. TERRORISTIC THREATS OF ANY KIND WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE REFERRED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.

## **Publications**

The Bennington School District sends a weekly email titled, The Badger Update, and publishes an informative newsletter, *Horizons*, distributed quarterly to all residents through the local postage system. In addition, a weekly elementary bulletin is sent electronically to each family providing a current email address. A paper copy may be requested to be sent home with the youngest child attending school. All publications are utilized to update everyone on current school happenings and other community events and may be found at [www.benningtonschools.org](http://www.benningtonschools.org).

## **Report Cards and Portfolios**

There are four official reporting periods during our school year, which are also referred to as quarters. Report cards (3-5), or a portfolio review/achievement summary (K-2) is completed each quarter. The Report Card and a Mid Term Report will be posted quarterly in grades 3-5 on the Parent Web Access.

### Grading System

A = 4.0 = 100-93  
B = 3.0 = 92-86  
C = 2.0 = 85-77  
D = 1.0 = 76-70  
F = 0.0 = Below 70

### Portfolios

Portfolios are a collection of the student's work samples. The Portfolio indicates the child's developmental progress rather than the specific grades for an academic area. Progress towards the Nebraska Standards is also included.

The complete approved Grading Framework can be found at [www.benningtonschools.org](http://www.benningtonschools.org).

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year and are noted on the calendar in the front of this booklet. Sign up for conferences will be done electronically through SignUp Genius. The links will be sent a few weeks prior to conferences to allow time for scheduling. Additional conferences and progress reports may be scheduled at any time by contacting the classroom teacher.

### **Lost and Found**

A lost and found rack is located in the elementary commons. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to check the rack for missing items. Each quarter the lost and found box is reorganized and unclaimed items are donated to a local organization.

### **Student Telephone Use**

Students will be allowed to use the school phone for such things as medical illness, needed changes of clothing, or other reasons deemed appropriate by the teacher or school office.

### **Cell Phone/Smart Watch/Technology Device Use**

Cell phones, **Smart watches**, and other electronic device use during the hours of 7:30-3:30 is prohibited at school unless used for educational purposes. If use of a technology device is observed during school hours for a purpose other than an educational activity directed by a teacher, the item will be confiscated and require a parent/guardian to pick it up in the office. Students may use the office phone and messages may be relayed through the secretary.

Any student caught using their cell phone or other electronic device to bully or harass another student will lose the privilege of having their phone on school property for at least one month from the date of the offense. Electronic devices will be allowed for educational purposes. The responsibility for care and safety of the device is the responsibility of the student.

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.

### **Personal Items**

All items not benefiting or causing interruption to the educational process of students will be confiscated. The school is not responsible for the loss or damage of these items.

### **Teacher/Student Messages**

To help our students receive optimum learning time, neither students nor teachers will be interrupted during class to answer the telephone unless it is an emergency. Our phone system allows parents/guardians to leave messages on voicemail that can be returned at an appropriate time by the person you wish to contact. Teachers are available for telephone calls between 7:50-8:05 a.m. and 3:07-3:50 p.m.

### **Field Trips**

Each classroom completes field trips for educational enhancement. Generally a teaching unit accompanies the learning experience so that optimal education is gained from the trip. Bus transportation is provided for all students and classroom teachers. The district will provide a student sack lunch for students requesting to use their lunch card.

**All students must return to school on District provided transportation.** Once students arrive at school, parents may check them out through the office. Parents attending field trips are asked to follow school expectations. ***No other children are allowed to accompany a parent or guardian on a field trip. Some field trips may not***

*allow for parental participation.* Attendance on the field trip requires a parent-signed permission slip for each individual activity. All school-wide expectations will apply on field trips.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

We ask that all party invitations be mailed to students rather than distributed at school. Special deliveries such as flowers or balloons will be held in the office until late afternoon. Students will be notified to come and pick them up before dismissal.

### **Classroom Treats**

All food items distributed at school must be made in kitchens that are state licensed for food preparation. If you wish to provide treats the following suggestions may help: individual packaged items, bakery items from a local grocery store, pre-packaged crackers, non-food items, etc. Please be aware and considerate of student food allergies such as those towards peanuts and tree nuts. We ask you to prearrange treats with the classroom teacher so alternative treats may be offered to those unable to participate. Treats will only be distributed to those students and staff in their assigned classroom.

### **Classroom Parties**

Elementary PTOs sponsor the classroom parties. Parties are scheduled three times a year - a "Fall" party in October, a "Winter Holiday" party in December, and a "Valentines Day" party in February. At the end of the year students also participate in a "Fun Day". Parent help is always needed for these events and appreciated.

### **Recess**

Bennington Public Schools strives to make recess safe and enjoyable for all students. All students participate in at least one scheduled daily recess period and sometimes more, depending on their classroom. Therefore, you will want to make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the changing Nebraska weather conditions. Layering clothing is the best option for cold mornings and hot afternoons. During inclement weather (rain or severe wind chill conditions) students will have indoor recess. Please note that during school hours our playground is not accessible to the public due to the safety and protection of the students. Physical activity and student socialization is an important part of recess. Students are required to participate in recess and will not be excused from participation without a doctor's note verifying the reason. Students may be held from recess due to academic assistance, completion of assignments, or misconduct.

### **Physical Education**

Physical education is a required elementary course. Student wellness and gross-motor development is a crucial objective of the elementary curriculum. In order to meet this objective, student participation in physical activity is mandatory. Student release from physical activity requires a doctor's note. Prolonged dismissal from class may require an alternative assignment or further documentation from a doctor. Tennis shoes need to be brought to school for P.E. use to protect the floor and keep it clean. Students not wearing tennis shoes will need to participate in their stocking feet, which puts students in danger of slipping and falling in the gym. Children are encouraged to bring a pair of tennis shoes and leave them at school for the year.

### **Hall Lockers**

Students will be provided a locker. Due to the amount of lockers, many students will share with one other student. The school assumes no responsibility for items taken from the lockers. 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 use the combination lock. Students are not to change lockers without permission (Board Policy #504.09).

### **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 including, but not limited to, purses, bags 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 can 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 school safe and free from illegal drugs, the 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 (Board Policy #504.16).

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The school district serves many 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 and in other natural environments. School age special education students are served in the least-restrictive environment. ***For further information contact the Student Services Director in the District Office at (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 an animal to attend events for which a fee is charged. The school district will comply with applicable federal and state laws, regulations and rules regarding the use of service animals by disabled students.

Service animals include guide dogs, hearing dogs, signal dogs, and any dog or animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a disabled student. Service animals do not include pets, farm animals, wild or exotic animals, or any animals whose function is to provide crime deterrent effects, emotional support, comfort, companionship, therapeutic benefits, or to promote emotional well-being. (Policy 508.010 - Service Animals)

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.

### **Counseling Services**

**Bennington Public Schools** is proud of their elementary counseling service options. **Our counselors provide classroom lessons to help students see the multiple ways social skills can be used to communicate more effectively. They are also available for private counseling for any student needing their assistance.** Parents/guardians are welcome to call them directly to answer any questions you might have in this area of development.

Families are also provided counseling services through Arbor Family Counseling, an independent counseling firm contracted by the District. Each student may receive two free confidential sessions through Arbor Family. For more information please contact **the elementary office.**

## **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. If the agency provides this **verification**, the school will honor that request. If a student is 18 years of age or older, no parental signature is necessary to release the student data.

### **Directory Information**

1. School officials may have access to only those records in which they have a legitimate educational interest, unless the parent has given written and dated consent for the access. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the 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 or 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, the Bennington Public Schools discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, if the information is for purposes related to the student's enrollment.
  - a. 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.
  - b. 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.**
  - c. A copy of the Bennington Public Schools' Formal Hearing Procedure can be obtained by contacting the Superintendent of Schools.

### **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**

School personnel will be at designated arrival doors at 7:50 a.m. to greet all students and let them in the building. Any student who arrives after 8:05 should go to the main entry to be let inside. School begins promptly at 8:05 a.m.



Breakfast students will be let in the building starting at 7:45.

### **MANDATORY AGES OF ATTENDANCE**

The mandatory ages of attendance for truancy purposes are as follows: 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 high 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 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); or (4) has reached the age of 18.

### **Minimum Age Requirements**

The district will not admit any child into kindergarten unless:

1. the child will reach the age of 5 years on or before July 31 on the current year;
2. the child will reach the age of five years by October 15th of the current year; and
  - a. the parent provides an affidavit stating that the child attended kindergarten in another district, or
  - b. the family will be relocating to another district that allows admission within the current year, or
  - c. the child has demonstrated, through recognized assessment procedures approved by the board, his/her capability of carrying out the work of the beginner grade.

### **New Student Registration**

New students entering Bennington Public Schools either prior to or during an academic year in progress must go to [www.benningtonschools.org](http://www.benningtonschools.org) and begin the registration process. Parents are also asked to provide the following items:

- A certified copy of the student's birth certificate issued by the state in which the child was born, required by state law be provided within 30 days of enrollment;
- Evidence of a physical and eye examination if they are entering Kindergarten or in the case of a transfer from out of state;
- Updated Immunization/Health records;
- Transcripts sent from the previous school; and
- Verification 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.

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

1. Many students take pride in their attendance and punctuality record. This is a commendable characteristic and it is our desire to motivate more students to think positively and seriously about this aspect of their school record. 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 made up. 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.
2. Regular attendance at school is the primary responsibility of each student and his/her parents/guardians.
  - a. Below is how attendance will be coded at Bennington Public Schools.

E - Excused - family emergencies, celebrations, or events (examples could include a family wedding, or funeral, or a family member being deployed with the military) - 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, taking a child to lunch, or consecutive days of illness without a doctor's note) - students can make up work for full credit

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

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

- o *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." When a student is absent from school due to a family vacation, he or she will be considered "unexcused."*

- b. All students who arrive in the classroom after 8:05 a.m. yet before 9:00 a.m. will be deemed tardy. School Administration will determine if a tardy will be deemed excused based on provided documentation from the parent or guardian. Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. will be charged with an absence.

- c. The following times show how the school day shall be divided in determining the length of an absence:

- i. 8:05—10:15=1/4 Day Absence
- ii. 10:16—12:00=1/2 Day Absence
- iii. 12:01—1:45=3/4 Day Absence
- iv. 1:46—3:07=Full Day Absence

- d. Student absences will be determined using the times listed above.

- 3. 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, a medical professional's note must be provided. If a number of appointments must be made during school hours, these should be scheduled during the student's lunch/recess period or during different times throughout the school day, so that one subject area is not affected on a routine basis. Please note that all students leaving before the 3:07 dismissal are considered absent from school. Illness requiring extended leave will require a doctor's note. During school hours, students will remain in class until the parent/guardian is present for pickup. This will ensure optimal time in class (Board Policy #503.03).

- 4. Each absence must be covered by a signed note, email, or telephone call from a parent or guardian stating the date and reason for the absence.

5. The decision to miss school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian 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.
6. Any student missing 8, 15, or 20 days per school year (**excused or unexcused**) will be notified by mail. Refer to Excessive Absenteeism Section for further information.
7. A student is tardy when he/she is not in the classroom with the bell at 8:05. If a student is tardy for class, he/she will be required to obtain a tardy slip from the office before being admitted to class. It will be marked excused or unexcused by the office. The student will receive a detention for every tardy after the fifth unexcused tardy. If a student in grades 4-5 receives more than eight tardies during a semester, he/she may be given an alternative time to complete missed school work. Tardies are cumulative for the semester.
8. Students shall be present by 12:00 p.m. in order to participate in any school event, including performances. If the activity occurs before 12:00 p.m. the student must be in attendance for all previous periods.

### **Superintendents Attendance Plan**

#### **NEBRASKA STATUTE - Section 79-209**

In all school districts in this state, any superintendent, principal, teacher, or member of the school board who knows of any violation of subsection (2) of section 79-201 shall within three days report such violation to the attendance officer of the school, who shall immediately investigate the case. When, of his or her personal knowledge or by report or complaint from any resident of the district, there is a violation of subsection (2) of section 79-201, the attendance officer shall immediately investigate such alleged violation.

All school boards shall have a written policy on attendance developed and annually reviewed in collaboration with the county attorney of the county in which the principal office of the school district is located. The policy shall include a provision indicating how the school district will handle cases in which excessive absences are due to illness. The policy shall also state the circumstances and number of absences or the hourly equivalent upon which the school shall render all services to address barriers to attendance. Such services shall include, but need not be limited to:

- (1) Verbal or written communication by school officials with the person or persons who have legal or actual charge or control of any child;
- (2) One or more meetings between, at a minimum, a school attendance officer, a school social worker or a school administrator or his or her designee, the person who has legal or actual charge or control of the child and the child, when appropriate, to attempt 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:

- (a.) The physical, mental, or behavioral health of the child;
- (b.) Educational counseling;
- (c.) Educational evaluation;
- (d.) Referral to community agencies for economic services;

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- (e.) Family or individual counseling;
- (f.) Assisting the family in working with other community services; and
- (g.) Referral to restorative justice practices or services.

(3) The school may report to the county attorney of the county in which the person resides when the school has documented the efforts it has made as required by subsection (2) of this section that the collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance has not been successful and that the child has been absent more than twenty days per year. The school shall notify the child's family in writing prior to referring the child to the county attorney.

Failure by the school to document the efforts required by subsection (2) of this section is a defense to prosecution under section 79-201 and adjudication for educational neglect under subdivision (3)(a) of section 43-247 and habitual truancy under subdivision (3)(b) of section 43-247. Illness that makes attendance impossible or impracticable shall not be the basis for referral to the county attorney.

(4) Nothing in this section shall preclude a county attorney from being involved at any stage in the process to address excessive absenteeism.

Sec. 79-2121 The superintendents of any school districts that are members of a learning community shall develop and participate in a plan by August 1, 2011, to reduce excessive absenteeism including a process to share information regarding at-risk youth with the goal of improving educational outcomes, providing effective interventions that impact risk factors, and reducing unnecessary penetration deeper into the juvenile justice system.

Revised 6.7.23

**Part-time Enrollment for Students of the District Attending Schools Other Than Bennington**

The parent /guardian or custodian of a student receiving instruction at a private, denominational or parochial school, or a school choosing not to meet accreditation or approval requirements may also enroll the student in the school district. The student shall be considered under dual enrollment and will be under the policies and administrative rules of Bennington. These policies and rules shall apply to the dual enrollment student in the same manner as the other students enrolled in the school district. These policies and administrative rules include, but are not limited to; athletic eligibility requirement rules governing student conduct, academic eligibility requirements and payment of fees required for participation. The parent, guardian, or custodian requesting part-time enrollment for the student should notify the superintendent on a form provided by the school principal.

**MAKE-UP WORK**

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 or turn in assignments as soon as they return to school if they had been assigned prior to the absence. School Board Policy #503.03 states that it is the responsibility of the student to complete the work missed. The student shall receive full credit for the work missed when the absence is deemed as excused. The date make-up work is due will be determined by the teacher based on the content studied and length of absence. Ordinarily, the student will be expected to complete make-up work issued due to short-term absences (five days or less) within five days after returning to school. It is the responsibility of the

student to prepare all materials and homework requiring completion before leaving the building. On a limited basis, a child will be allowed to re-enter the classroom during teacher duty hours, ending at 3:50.

When a student has been suspended from school or has an unexcused absence they will be required to turn in make-up work. Extensive make-up work will be contracted in writing. Requests for assignments will be handled through the elementary office and the classroom teacher.

## **THE SCHOOL DAY**

Throughout the year there may be reasons for students to leave the building during the day (sickness, forgotten articles at home, personal business, etc.). In such cases, students must go to the office for additional help with their needs. Students may not leave school without a parent/guardian present to sign them out of the building.

## **School Ceremonies and Observances**

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

## **Checking Students Out of the Building**

All students must be signed out at the office by a parent or guardian before leaving school for appointments or other family needs. A note in advance is helpful for the office and the classroom teacher. Please note that in the event of a school emergency or disaster, only persons noted on your emergency information are able to have the student released to them. Students will remain in class until the arrival of the parent/guardian.

Bennington Public Schools views your child's safety as a top priority. During a lockdown drill or situation, your child will not be released until it has been deemed safe or an all-clear signal has been issued.

## **Student Conduct**

The Board of Education recognizes that a major function of schools 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 students while students are on school grounds, school district property, or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or school operated transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. 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 extracurricular activities, contests, or performances (Board Policy #505).

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. Harassment on the basis of, but is not limited to: race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, marital status, disability, sex, veteran status, age, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other prohibited status, will not be tolerated. Forms of harassment may include, but are not limited to the following: verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse; repeated remarks of a demeaning nature; implied or explicit threats concerning one's

grades, achievements, etc., or demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at an individual. 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 that causes a disruption of school operations. 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, e-cigarettes, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, 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. Bullying is defined as a mean or hurtful behavior that is one-sided, unfair, and keeps happening.
- P. Repeatedly violate any of the rules adopted by the Bennington Public School District Board of Education.
- Q. 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:
  - a. 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
  - b. The knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of dangerous weapon other than a firearm.

- R. Knowingly and intentionally possessing, using, or transmitting a firearm on school grounds, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or during an educational function or event off school grounds, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. This conduct shall result in an expulsion for one calendar year. "Firearm" means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as that statute existed on January 1, 1995. That statute includes the following statement: "The term 'firearm' means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any destructive device." The Superintendent may modify such one-year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing.
- S. Bringing a firearm or other dangerous object to school for any reason is discouraged. 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. 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, with the approval of the school: (i) in a historical reenactment, (ii) in a hunter education program, or (iii) as part of an honor guard.
  - 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 a plan shall require that such item will be in the possession of an adult staff member at all times except for such limited time as is necessary to fulfill the educational function.
  - d. The firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be in an inoperable condition while it is on school grounds.

### **Reporting Law Violations**

Under State law, district administrators are required to contact law enforcement 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 law enforcement 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 law enforcement.

### **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 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.

### **Detention**

Detention will meet every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:10-3:45 in the assigned staff room. The staff will supervise detentions. Students will be assigned detentions because of violations of the rules, problems in the classroom, attendance problems, or excessive tardiness. A student will be required to attend the detention on the day issued unless excused by the staff member assigning the detention or the principal. The student must then serve the next

detention day. Students will be allowed to do homework or read a book. Repeated failures to serve detentions will result in further disciplinary consequences.

**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 due process procedures is available upon request from the building principal.

1. **Short-term Suspensions** Such short-term suspension shall be made only after the administrator has made an investigation of 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. A short-term suspension shall mean the exclusion of a student from school attendance for a period not to exceed five school days. 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, as soon as is reasonably possible following the suspension, send a written statement to the student and the student's parents/guardians 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/guardians or guardian before or at the time the student returns to school.
2. **Emergency Exclusion:** A student may be excluded from school in 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 the safety of the school community; or
  - b. If the student's conduct presents a clear threat to the health or safety of himself, herself, or others, or is extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

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.

If the emergency exclusion will be for five 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 procedure 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.

### **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, 794, 196.

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

**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 or personal delivery 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/guardians 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 identify of the witnesses to appear at the hearing and the substance of their testimony;
  - f. A form on which the student, student's parents/guardians, 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/guardians, guardian or representative from discussing and settling the matter with appropriate school personnel prior to the hearing stage.

If a hearing is requested within five days of receipt of the written notice by the student or the student's parents/guardians 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.

### **Other Disciplinary Action**

Administrative and teaching personnel may take other disciplinary actions 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 are not limited to, counseling, parent 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.

### **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 following are the Bennington Public Schools Behavioral Awareness Point of Contacts:

- Anchor Pointe Elementary - Emmily Hawk
- Bennington Elementary – Terese Jose
- Heritage Elementary - Erin LaPatka
- Pine Creek Elementary - Regina Guinn
- Stratford Elementary - Austina Falcone
- Bennington Middle School - Amy Baumann
- Bennington South Middle School - Jackie Muller
- Bennington High School - Amanda Boesch

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

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) and television stations KETV, KMTV, WOWT and KPTM. Reports in the morning will be around 6:30 a.m. If we have to use more than the number of days we have scheduled, time will be made up at the end of the school year.

If the decision to delay the start time of school is made, all beginning of the day procedures will be adjusted to reflect two hours. **Staff supervision would begin at 9:50 a.m. and a student would be considered tardy at 10:05 a.m.** All transportation services will run two hours behind schedule.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

Please note that Nebraska health statutes no longer allow school officials to provide over the counter medication to students in need. All non-prescription medications must be brought from home in the original container with permission slips, dosages and times to be given. See list below on all specific mediation requirements.

### **Injuries at School**

Children sometimes fail to report unobserved injuries to the teacher. If your child has been injured at school during the day, please make certain it has been reported to the school nurse or health aide, as we wish to know about these incidents.

### **Illness at School**

Students who become ill during the school day are advised to report to the office. **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 need to remain at home for 24 hours. Most viruses are highly contagious for 24 hours after the **vomiting/diarrhea** has occurred.

### **Head Lice**

Students identified with nits attached less than ¼ 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.

### **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

Healthy students learn best. Thank you for assisting us in promoting a safe and healthy learning environment. The VNA School Health Program provides direct and consultative nursing services for Bennington Public School through a private contractual agreement. The nurse's office is located in the elementary office area.

### **Medication Guidelines**

A VNA School Health Program Medication Authorization needs to be completed in the event your child would need to take medication while at school. Forms are available at the office.

When a student must take medication during the hours the student is in school, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. 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 any controlled medication 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.

2. For prescription medications - 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. Non-prescription medications should be brought to school in the original container along with signed parental permission stating dosage instructions.
3. All medications will be stored in the office at all times. Students should not keep medication on them, in their desks, or in their backpacks.
4. Teachers will give students permission to go to the office to take the medication.
5. Medication will be used by the student in the presence of a trained staff member.
6. All medication will be stored in a locked cabinet or drawer and effective controls shall be maintained to provide safety or proper usage. A record of daily dispensation will be maintained.
7. In some instances, the school may request parental permission to consult with the prescribing doctor about the medication and its effects.

### **Student self-management of medications for Diabetes and Asthma/Anaphylaxis**

Parents may request that their child/children be allowed to administer medication for Diabetes, Asthma and Anaphylaxis. The parent will need to follow the following procedures:

1. The parent will be required to place their request for self-management of medications in writing.
2. The parent will need written verification from the child/children's physician indicating the condition and specific medication including name, 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 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;
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; and
6. The disciplinary procedures regarding the misuse or threatened misuse of medications and supplies as well as notification procedures if discipline action is necessary.

### **The Parent/Guardian shall sign a statement that:**

1. 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;

2. 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; and
3. Any injury to others as a result of the student's self-medication shall be the parents'/guardians' responsibility.

### **Nebraska School Immunization Law**

Effective July 1, 1994, the Revised Statutes Supplement was amended as follows:

Each student in the state shall be protected against measles, mumps, rubella, polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B and varicella (chickenpox) by immunization prior to enrollment. Any student who does not comply shall not be permitted to continue in school until he or she shall comply.

The statute further provides that immunizations will not be required for a student's enrollment in any school in the state if he or she submits to the school either of the following:

1. A statement signed by a physician licensed under the Uniform Licensing Law stating that, in the physician's opinion, the immunizations required would be injurious to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's family or household.
2. An affidavit signed by the student, or if he or she is a minor, by a legally authorized representative of the student stating that the immunization conflicts with the tenets and practice of a recognized religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member or that immunization conflicts with the personal and sincerely followed religious beliefs of the student.
3. A student may be provisionally enrolled in a school in Nebraska if he or she has begun the immunizations required under Section 49-444.01 and continues to receive the immunizations as rapidly as is medically feasible.

***NOTE: Kindergarten and out-of-state students are required to have a physical exam and vision evaluation, per state law, prior to enrollment in school. Kindergarten physical exams are required to be performed within 6 months prior to the student starting school.***

### **Health Screenings**

Bennington Public Schools will conduct health screenings throughout the year with identified grade levels. Screenings may include, but are not limited to, dental, height, weight, vision, color-blindness, and hearing.

There is no waiver option for screening. A parent NOT wishing their child to be screened at school must provide documentation signed by a qualified medical provider verifying the child has been screened, or the child WILL be screened at school.

Screenings as required by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services are:

- Dental and Audio Screenings: K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and all new students.
- Vision, Height, Weight: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and all new students.

### **Concussions – Return to Learn Progression**

1. **At Home Rest:** Stay at home; limit mental exertion and interaction especially with computers, phones, texting, television, video games and homework.
2. **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.

3. **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.
4. **School – Part time:** Modified classroom testing, begin to decrease the additional time for the completion of homework. No standardized testing or physical activity.
5. **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.
6. **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.

## **ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING PROCEDURES (Revised 1991)**

### **Nebraska Child Abuse Reporting Law**

LB 505 passed by the Eighty-Sixth Legislature includes the following:

When any physician, medical institution, nurse, school employee, social worker, or any other person has reasonable cause to believe that a child or an incompetent or disabled person has been subjected to conditions or circumstances which reasonably would result in abuse or neglect, he or she shall report such incident or cause a report to be made to the proper law enforcement agency or to the department to the toll-free number established by subsection (2) of this section. Such report may be made orally by telephone, with caller giving his or her name and address, and shall be followed by a written report, and to the extent available shall contain the address of the person or persons having custody of the abused or neglected person, the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect, or the conditions and circumstances which would reasonably result in such abuse or neglect, and evidence of previous abuse or neglect including the nature and extent, and any other information which, in the opinion of the person, may be helpful in establishing the cause of such abuse or neglect and the identity of the perpetrators.

## **CAFETERIA INFORMATION**

### **Breakfast Period**

Breakfast is served from 7:45-8:05 am each morning.

### **Sack Lunches from Home**

A food service calendar is sent home monthly indicating student meal choice. Kindergarten through fifth grade will have two lunch options. Students will have the choice of the hot lunch item, a prepared salad tray or yogurt and cheese stick tray. The salad will include a fruit, vegetable, dairy, meat, and grain item.

Students in kindergarten through second grade will receive all five components of the daily lunch menu. This includes milk, unless a documented health reason is provided by a medical professional. Students in third through fifth grade will receive the option of "Offer vs. Serve". This allows the student to take only three components of the lunch offerings daily. They may continue to take all five, but must take at least three. One component must be a full serving of fruit or vegetables. During "Offer" service the student is allowed choice and may refuse the foods they do not intend to eat. The school cannot require a child to take a milk or food item. Both "Offer and Serve" food service methods are priced the same.

Students may bring sack lunches if desired. Pop is not allowed in the cafeteria. (Marked Lunchboxes are easy to identify when left in an unusual place.) Food and drinks must stay in the lunchroom area. **Please note that our**

**lunch program prohibits the bringing in of outside fast food during the lunch periods (McDonalds, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Taco Bell, etc.).**

### **Closed Campus**

Our K-12 school has a closed campus at noon, which means students are not permitted to leave the school during the day.

### **Meal Rates**

Both breakfast and lunch include a 1/2-pint of milk within the cost.

<b>Breakfast</b>		
<b>School</b>	<b>Daily Price</b>	<b>Weekly Price</b>
Elementary	\$1.75	\$8.75
Middle	\$1.80	\$9.00
High	\$1.90	\$9.50
Reduced	\$0.30	\$1.50
Adult	\$2.65	\$13.25
Milk	\$0.55	\$2.75

<b>Lunch</b>		
<b>School</b>	<b>Daily Price</b>	<b>Weekly Price</b>
Elementary	\$2.65	\$13.25
Middle	\$2.95	\$14.75
High	\$3.00	\$15.00
Reduced	\$0.40	\$2.00
Adult	\$4.30	\$21.50
Milk	\$0.55	\$2.75

### **Milk Rates**

Semester Milk (K-5)	\$48.40 per semester
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Yearly Milk	\$96.80 per year
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Milk can be purchased for snack by semester at \$48.40 per semester. Semester milk cost is not included in your family meal account. Snack milk money may only be purchased by semester or quarter. Daily snack milk money will not be accepted. Only exact semester or quarter amounts can be sent to the elementary office. Milk is also available to be purchased by the carton during the lunch period. Juice is also available for those with milk allergies.

Free and reduced-cost breakfasts and lunches are provided for those who qualify. Application forms are available online at [www.benningtonschools.org](http://www.benningtonschools.org). We encourage families to apply. Students qualifying for such programs help the school receive additional federal grants to support reading. Information about students qualifying for a free or reduced lunch is kept highly confidential in the office of the Superintendent.

### **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 are able to use 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. 156<sup>th</sup> 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. Smart Snack foods and beverages are offered at the High School and Middle School. Students must have a positive school meal account balance to purchase Smart Snacks foods and beverages or they may pay with cash.

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.



## **Free and Reduced Price Meals**

Households may apply for meal benefits at any time during the school year. A new application must be completed every school year. Applications are available on the district website. For questions on how to apply call 402-238-3044.

## **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.

## **ACTIVITY ADMISSION PRICES**

Activity passes for regular season home activities may be purchased in the secondary office of the Bennington Public Schools. Prices for admission/passes are as follows:

### **Varsity Admission**

<b>Student</b>	<b>\$5.00</b>
<b>Adult</b>	<b>\$7.00</b>

### **Non-Varsity Admission**

<b>Student</b>	<b>\$1.00</b>
<b>Adult</b>	<b>\$3.00</b>

### **Passes**

<b>Student Pass</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>
<b>Adult Pass</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
<b>Family Pass</b>	<b>\$160.00</b>

\*\* Freshman & JV games held in conjunction with Varsity contests will use the \$7/\$5 pricing.

\*\* BHS Invitationals (Track & Wrestling) are subject the EMC Tournament price of \$6 for students & \$8 for adults.

\*\* Activity passes are not honored for EMC and District tournament games.

Elementary students who attend secondary activities MUST attend with and be under the direct supervision of an adult throughout the activity. Students will not be admitted without a parent/adult supervisor attending the event. Good sports are persons who are fair with others and who are accepting when things go wrong or when they can't have their way. They take the bad, as well as the good with a smile.

## **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

Bennington Public Schools will provide 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 Bennington Public Schools from time to time for resident students who live more than four miles from the school house they attend. Transportation may also

be provided for school activities as determined by Bennington Public Schools from time to time.

Transportation may also be provided to resident students who live less than four miles from the schoolhouse they attend on a space available basis at a cost of \$175.00 per semester per student (\$350 maximum per semester per family). Payments may be made by the month, by the semester, or annually.

Transportation fees assessed by the 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 requests.

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, in writing, 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.

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

### **Bus/Van Rules and Student Responsibilities**

Students in the Bennington School District who ride buses and/or vans are subject to rules and regulations designed to provide safe transportation to and from school. Bus riders will be subjected to both video and audio recording. Any misbehavior which distracts the driver is a serious hazard to the safe operation of the vehicle, and as such, jeopardizes the safety of all passengers. Consequence of continued misbehavior could result in a child being denied the privilege of riding the bus. Parents/guardians and students need to review the following bus rules together to assist in making our transportation system safe and pleasant for all who ride:

1. Bus/van transportation is a privilege;
2. Students may be assigned seats on the bus/van;
3. Students need to be ready and in place when the bus/van arrives;
4. Students are to remain seated at all times when the bus/van is moving;
5. Students will not be allowed to extend any body part or throw any item out of the bus/van window;
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 other students;
8. Students are to cross only in front of the bus after looking both directions for on-coming traffic; and
9. Students and/or parents/guardians are legally responsible for any damage to school owned property.

***Bennington school buses are monitored by video camera.***

### **Student Dress**

Students are requested to dress appropriately and in good taste. We believe parents/guardians should be responsible

for the children's attire and we enlist their cooperation in this endeavor. However, no student will be permitted to dress in a manner which sets him or her apart from the usual dress expected of students which possibly could cause the educational process to be interrupted or become a threat to the safety of the student or the student body.

1. It is inappropriate to wear any top that does not cover the back and abdomen, or any backless halter-top that ties at the neck and back. Tops with thin spaghetti straps or clothing that leaves underwear visible is prohibited. No see through or soiled clothing is allowed. Undergarments and private parts (front side and back side) should not be visible when wearing any top or bottom garment.
2. Appropriate short length will be fingertip length when the student extends his/her arms at his/her sides. Sagging pants are inappropriate for school attire. All students are to wear pants at the waistline.
3. Hats, bandanas and hoods of any kind are not to be worn in school. Your child should layer clothing if he/she gets chilled easily. Light coats and jackets are allowed if needed.
4. Printed wording or pictures on clothing that advertises or promotes alcohol, smoking, or drugs; uses profanity, is offensive, makes reference to sexuality, race or culture, has a double meaning; or is otherwise inappropriate is not allowed in school. Jewelry that can be used as a weapon will not be permitted.

Should any of these clothing infractions occur, the student may be required to change or a parent/guardian will be contacted to provide alternate attire.

## **SAFETY**

1. Roller skates, tennis shoe-skates, inline skates, scooters and skateboards are not permitted at school.
2. Water guns and water play are not permitted on school grounds.
3. Bicycles are to be parked in the bike rack as soon as the student arrives. Students who ride bicycles must walk bikes while on school property and while moving among groups of children walking to or from school.
4. Please do not bring your pet(s) to school during arrival or dismissal. Please also refrain from bringing pets to extracurricular activities. The appropriate officials will be called when stray pets come on school property. Children walking should make sure pets do not follow them.
5. Illegal substances are not safe. State law and Board of Education policy strictly prohibit students and all patrons from having tobacco products, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and other drugs at school. Weapons, firearms, knives, matches, and explosives are also prohibited. Violation of the policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action.
6. Walking to school can be dangerous unless basic guidelines are followed:
  - a. stay on the sidewalk;
  - b. follow the route designated by parents/guardians;
  - c. don't talk to or take anything from strangers;
  - d. report any contact strangers make with you; and
  - e. make sure problems are reported to an adult at school.
7. Parents/guardians are responsible for their child's conduct to and from school. Misconduct will result in notification to parents/guardians.

8. Any threats to another's safety and terroristic threats will be taken seriously, and may be referred to law enforcement.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORKS**

### **Internet Access:**

We are pleased to offer the staff and students of Bennington Public Schools access to the district computer network, the Internet. To gain access to the Internet, all students attending Bennington Public Schools must sign a "Student Agreement", and their parents/guardians must sign a "Parents/Guardians Agreement", which will be kept on file by the district. Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards with Internet users throughout the world. Students and parents/guardians 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 at will. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities, exceed any disadvantages. But ultimately, parents/guardians 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, Bennington Public Schools support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

### **E-mail and Internet Rules**

1. E-mail and Internet networks are provided to staff and students to conduct research. Access to network services is given to staff and students who have agreed to act in a responsible manner. Parental/guardian permission is required for student use. Access to the Internet and e-mail is a privilege, not a right.
2. 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.
3. Network storage areas shall be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.
4. Users should not expect, and the district does not warrant, that files stored on district servers will always be private.
5. 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.

### **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.

1. 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.

2. Users shall not let other persons use their name, log-on, password, or files for any reason (except for authorized staff members).
3. Users shall not use or try to discover another user's password.
4. 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).
5. Users shall not use the computer for unlawful purposes, such as illegal copying or installation of unauthorized software.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Users shall not tamper with computers, networks, printers, or other associated equipment except as directed by the teacher or network administrator.

### **Penalties for Use of the Internet**

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 administering the network 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 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.

Violations of the policies and procedures of 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.

### **Student and Parent Agreement**

The Student's Agreement and Parent's Agreement, in the form attached respectively, are incorporated by this reference.

Bennington Public School  
Bennington, Nebraska

### **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](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:

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](tel:2026907442); or  
Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto: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: Dan Bombeck, Director of student services, 11620 N 156<sup>th</sup> Street, Bennington, Ne 68007 402-238-3044 [dbombeck@bennps.org](mailto:dbombeck@bennps.org).

Employees and others: Dr. Matt Blomenkamp, Assistant Superintendent, 11620 N 156<sup>th</sup> Street, Bennington, NE. 68007 402-238-3044 [mblomenkamp@bennps.org](mailto: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](mailto:ocr.kansascity@ed.gov).

## **TITLE IX**

The Bennington Public 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 an=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.

### **Asbestos Notification**

The Institute for Environmental Assessment has been retained by 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.

### **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, provided on page 33, 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****Additional Specification of Required Materials and Fees**

<b>Program</b>	<b>General Description of Fee or Material</b>	<b>\$ Amount of Fee (Anticipated or Maximum) or Specific Material Required</b>
Physical Education classes	Appropriate clothing (non-specialized attire)	Tennis shoes and white socks, running shorts, T-shirt.
Art classes and special projects or events	Appropriate clothing (non-specialized attire)	Old shirt for painting; other clothing which may get paint on it or otherwise be damaged.
Music-Optional band Courses	Musical instruments	Musical instruments and accessories (reeds, valve oil, drum sticks, lyres, flip folders, slide grease, reed guards, cleaning swabs, mouthpiece brushes, pad savers, ligatures, and a "gig bag", etc.) Limited instruments available for use by any student.
Classroom supplies	General supplies, such as writing instruments (pens, pencils, crayons, markers), notebooks, etc.	None--necessary classroom supplies will be made available by the school. Students will be responsible for the replacement cost of damaged or lost supplies. Students are encouraged but not required to bring items from class supply lists.
Field Trips	Transportation and admission costs of field trips	None--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 \$10.00 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.
Summer school courses	Classes offered during the summer, or at night, if any	\$50 to \$200 per class.
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.
Textbook/Library Books	Loss or damage to district textbooks.	Books lost or damaged beyond repair will be charged full value for replacement. Broken binding/damage to cover will be \$10-15.

## **Bennington Elementary Schools Handbook Agreement**

The 2023-2024 Student-Parent Handbook of Bennington Public Schools is available on the internet at [www.benningtonschools.org](http://www.benningtonschools.org).

We are asking you to consider using the internet to access and review the 2022-2023 Student-Parent Handbook. Using the internet to access the handbook will allow the district to direct printing dollars to instructional needs and eliminate the need for you to search the handbook when you have questions throughout the school year. Thank you for considering this use of technology to improve school-home communication.

**Please return to the Elementary office by August 25, 2023.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Thank you for providing the 2023-2024 Student-Parent Handbook online. I will review it on the internet. My signed receipt below acknowledges receipt of the Handbook in a satisfactory manner via the internet.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I prefer a paper copy of the Handbook.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

**RECEIPT OF 2023-2024 STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**

The signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2023-2024 Student-Parent Handbook of Bennington Public Schools. It is understood that the handbook contains student conduct and discipline rules and information about a Safe and Drug-Free School. The undersigned, as student, agrees to follow such conduct and discipline rules. This receipt also serves to acknowledge that it is understood the District's policies of non-discrimination and equity, and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent or Legal Guardian's Signature**

### **Permission for Video or Photos**

I give my permission for my child/children to be included in school photographs and/or videos used in school publications, including the yearbook and newsletters, on the school website and in area newspapers:

**(Please check and initial the appropriate line). ( ) YES\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) NO\_\_\_\_\_**

### **ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORKS STUDENT/PARENT**

AGREEMENT In order to make sure that all members of the Bennington Public Schools' community understand and agree to the rules of conduct, Bennington Public Schools asks that you as a student and parent/guardian sign the following statement: I have received a copy of, and have read, the "Terms and Conditions for Internet Access" adopted by the Bennington Public School District, and I understand and will abide by those district guidelines and conditions for the use of the facilities of Bennington Public Schools and access to the Internet. I further understand that any violation of the district guidelines is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges will be revoked. School disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action will be taken. As a parent or guardian, I grant permission for my son or daughter to access the Internet. I understand that this free access is designed for educational purposes. I also understand that individuals may be held liable for violations of those Terms and Conditions. However, I also recognize that it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold Bennington Public Schools responsible for materials acquired or sent via the network. I agree not to hold the Bennington Public Schools or any of its employees or any of the institutions for networks providing access to Bennington Public Schools responsible for the performance of the system or the content of any material accessed through it.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_