

# **Benton Grade School**

## **K-4 Handbook**

### **2025-2026**

**LEARNERS TODAY, LEADERS TOMORROW, RANGERS FOREVER**

1000 E MCKENZIE STREET BENTON IL, 62812

[WWW.BENTON47.ORG](http://WWW.BENTON47.ORG)

(618) 438-7181



## **Benton Grade School K-4**

### **Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow, Rangers Forever**

This handbook is being provided to help students and their families become acquainted with how our school operates. It is not meant to create a contract with the student, but simply states the current status of the rules and policies. This handbook is only a summary of board policies governing the district. Complete board policies are available to the public at the district office. We consider each child and parent who enters our doors a special individual and we will make every effort to meet the needs of each child and his or her parents. It is our hope that by working together we can build a solid foundation for each child's educational future. We encourage your cooperation, support, questions, and concerns. Always feel free to contact your child's teacher with any questions that may arise. It is extremely important for students and parents to become familiar with the information contained in this handbook. If the need arises, items in this handbook may be amended during the year without notice. If you have questions or concerns during the school year, please call the school at 438-7181.

Mrs. Gibbs, K-8 Principal  
Mr. Pulliam, K-8 Associate Principal  
Special Education Director  
Mrs. Hatfield, K-4 Assistant Principal  
Mrs. Sloan, K-8 Dean of Students  
Athletic Director

#### **School Vision**

The Benton #47 schools working in partnership with all families and the community, is a learning organization of engaged, motivated and high achieving lifelong learners.

#### **School Mission**

The mission of Benton Grade School, District 47, is to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment while providing our students with engaging and relevant experiences to help them achieve their fullest potential of academic success and individual future endeavors.

#### **Website**

Please visit our website at [www.benton47.org](http://www.benton47.org) or download the Benton 47 app from your app store. You may access teacher email by clicking a teacher's name on the faculty list, check the school calendar for upcoming events, and read our online newsletter to stay current on student activities.

# Benton Grade School K-4 Faculty and Staff 2025-2026

|                                                                                                                                                 |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <u><b>K-8 Principal</b></u><br>Ellen Gibbs                                                                                                      |                             | <u><b>K-8 Associate Principal</b></u><br>John Pulliam                                                                                                                          |                                      |
| <u><b>K-4 Assistant Principal</b></u><br>Danielle Hatfield                                                                                      |                             | <u><b>K-8 Dean of Students/Athletic Director</b></u><br>Stacia Sloan                                                                                                           |                                      |
| <u><b>K-4 Secretary</b></u><br>Carrie Coffey                                                                                                    |                             | <u><b>Student Information Clerk</b></u><br>Amber Raby                                                                                                                          |                                      |
| <u><b>Kindergarten Teachers</b></u><br><br>Lori Davis<br>Jenna Janello<br>Dana Kalaher<br><br>Cassie Kirkpatrick<br>Susan Nolen<br>Brandi Quinn |                             | <u><b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teachers</b></u><br><br>Brooklyn Ewell<br>Allie Keele<br>Kristi Picklesimer<br><br>Melissa Severin<br>Michelle Snell<br>Sydney VanHoorebeke         |                                      |
| <u><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teachers</b></u><br><br>Amy Calcaterra<br>LaShay Clark<br>Kristen Farrell<br><br>Cindy Rone<br>Kaycey Webb           |                             | <u><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teachers</b></u><br><br>Lindsey Bumpus<br>Britney Chirch<br>Olivia Jones<br><br>Mallory McClerren<br>Ron McGee                                      |                                      |
| <u><b>4th Grade Teachers</b></u><br><br>Cathy Blake<br>Heather Fletcher<br>Lindsay Hernandez<br><br>Laci Norton<br>Kristin Odom                 |                             | <u><b>Special Education Teachers</b></u><br><br>Katie Cox<br>Brooke McCann<br>Nicci Miller<br>Whitney Montgomery<br><br>Victoria Towers<br>Valerie Price<br>Jacqueline Watkins |                                      |
| <u><b>Speech Therapists</b></u><br>Jennifer Irvin<br>Melissa Kramer                                                                             |                             | <u><b>Title 1 Teachers</b></u><br>Cindy Billington<br>Niki Jones                                                                                                               |                                      |
| <u><b>School Nurses</b></u><br>Angela Rock<br>Jill Lampley                                                                                      |                             | <u><b>Technology Staff</b></u><br>Wayne Williford<br>Chris Kerley                                                                                                              |                                      |
| <u><b>Art Teacher</b></u><br>Jennifer Fitzpatrick                                                                                               | <u><b>Social Worker</b></u> |                                                                                                                                                                                | <u><b>Head Cook</b></u><br>Tina Dean |
| <u><b>Aides</b></u>                                                                                                                             |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                      |
| Lori Buchanan                                                                                                                                   | Wan Nei Lin                 |                                                                                                                                                                                | Sandra Wills                         |
| Amy Dewitt                                                                                                                                      | Michelle Malone             |                                                                                                                                                                                | Shelby Wilson                        |
| Wendy Frailey                                                                                                                                   | Patty Price                 |                                                                                                                                                                                | Neva Zinzilieta                      |
| Mallory Gibbs                                                                                                                                   | Amber Rash                  |                                                                                                                                                                                | Courtney Reno                        |
| Veronica Gunter                                                                                                                                 | Kathy Smith                 |                                                                                                                                                                                | Desi Kinkade                         |
| Abbie Hart                                                                                                                                      | Kris Taft                   |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                      |
| Valerie Keller                                                                                                                                  |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                      |

### **School Attendance:**

Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between six (on or before September 1) and seventeen years of age shall assure that the child attends school in the district in which he or she resides, during the entire time school is in session. Illinois law also requires that whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in the school, regardless of the child's age, shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session.

In order to have perfect attendance, a student must be at school from 8:00 a.m. through 2:45p.m. Students who are tardy or leave school early will not have perfect attendance.

### **Arrival**

All students are expected to attend school daily except in case of illness or other excused absences. Students should arrive at school by 8:00 a.m. unless they are eating breakfast. Breakfast will be served from 7:30 a.m.—8:00 a.m. Please allow enough time for your child to finish breakfast by 8:00 a.m. Students arriving at school to eat breakfast must enter the K-2 gym doors or the 3-4 main doors. **No students should arrive at school before 7:30 a.m.** Adult supervision of students begins at 7:30 a.m. K-2 students should report to the K-2 gym prior to 8:00 a.m. Students in 3rd and 4th grade should report to the 3-4 gym prior to 8:00 a.m. No students are allowed in the classroom before 8:00 a.m. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must sign in at the office and will be considered tardy.

### **Traffic**

All K-2 students must be dropped off on the sidewalk at the north door of the K-2 gym. All 3-4 students must be dropped off at the sidewalk in front of the 3-4 building. No students may be dropped off along any other roads. Please do not park along the road in the mornings. Handicap parents or parents picking up a handicap child may park in the handicap parking spots in the teacher parking lot.

### **Cell Phones and School Zones**

Illinois law prohibits drivers from talking on cell phones. The law does provide 3 exceptions for talking on a cell phone, including:

- The driver is using a voice-operated and hands-free device.
- The driver has the cell phone on speaker phone and is not holding the device;
- The driver is calling 911 to report an emergency situation.

All Illinois drivers are prohibited from texting while driving. There are exceptions for driver's texting:

- For the sole purpose of reporting an emergency situation and continued communication with emergency personnel during the emergency situation.
- Using a device in hands-free or voice-activated mode; If the driver is parked on the shoulder of a roadway; or
- When the vehicle is stopped due to normal traffic being obstructed and the driver has the motor vehicle transmission in neutral or park.

Students may have cell phones in their possession. They must be turned off and not visible during the school day. If cell phones are visible or audible, they will be confiscated by administration. Violations of the cell phone policy are subject to discipline. Parents must reclaim these at the school office.

### **Checking In/Out of the Building**

If your child arrives late to school due to an appointment or other personal reason, parents must check them into the office and sign them in with the school secretary. If you plan to pick your child up during the day due to illness at school, for an appointment, etc., sign your child out at the office with the school secretary.

Children will not be allowed to leave on their own word or go with a different adult without a signed note or phone call from the child's parent or guardian.

### **Visitors**

Visitors are welcomed at Benton Grade School. During the school day all visitors to school will be admitted at the main office. For the safety of students and staff, all other entrances are locked during school hours. Visitors must sign in, identifying their name, the date and time of arrival, and the classroom or location they are visiting. **All visits to classrooms must be pre-arranged.**

Approved visitors must take a tag identifying themselves as a guest and place the tag to their outer clothing in a clearly visible location. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the main office and sign out before leaving the school. Teachers are not to admit unauthorized visitors to the classroom without a visitor's pass. Parents are encouraged to visit the classroom any time during the school year. If visiting the classroom please make arrangements with the classroom teacher or administration to avoid interrupting the instructional environment. Parent/teacher conferences must be arranged at a mutually agreeable time before or after school, so that classes will not be interrupted.

### **Dismissal**

All students will be dismissed at 2:45p.m. Kindergarten through 2nd grade car riders will be dismissed through the following doors: Kindergarten through the front Kindergarten doors, 1<sup>st</sup> grade through the northeast doors, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade through the K-2 gym doors. All 3rd & 4th grade students will be dismissed through the front doors of the 3-4 section. **Parents picking up their child after school may meet them as they exit the building.** For security reasons, parents will not be allowed to wait inside the building to pick up their child after school.

**If for some reason a student's normal transportation home is being altered for a day or short period of time, a written note from the parent/guardian must be given to the child's teacher. If this change in transportation involves riding the bus home, an administrator or school secretary must sign this note before the student may board the bus. If the school does not receive a written notice from the parent/guardian, the child will be sent home in the routine fashion.**

**If you need to call the school to change transportation home for a day, you must call school before 2:00 p.m. of the day of the change. Please do not call any later.**

### **Reporting Absences**

Please contact the school office (438-7181) before 9:00 a.m. to report any absence of your child or send a note explaining the absence upon returning to school. Students are marked unexcused unless we hear from the parents or guardians. If a call has not been made to the school within the first two hours on the day of a student's absence, a school official will call the home to inquire why the student is not at school. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence.

Repeated unexcused absences will be reported to the truant officer at the Regional Office of Education and other participating agencies.

Excused absences include illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, circumstances beyond the control of the student, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reasons approved by District administration or by the Board of Education. Students may be absent for mental or behavioral health for up to five days without providing a

medical note. Students absent for mental or behavioral health will be given an opportunity to make up any missed school work. After the second mental health day used, the student may be referred to the appropriate school support personnel.

A student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings. The Board of Education, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment. A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

The Illinois School Code defines chronic absenteeism as absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause. The school will provide three (3) written notifications (to include school and community resources available) before legal action may be taken. Special circumstances such as hospitalization, chronic illness etc. will be considered in this process.

Absences that do not follow the circumstances to be valid causes for a student's absence are considered unexcused absences. The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.

The school will utilize multiple procedures to identify the cause of a student's unexcused absenteeism, including interviews with the student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff members or other people who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.

### **Make-up Work Following Absences**

A good attendance record has a direct effect on grades. Generally, there is no substitute for actual classroom participation in the daily discussions and work. Students will be permitted to make up all excused absences and receive full credit for their work. However, it is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete the necessary assignments. Any work not made up will receive a zero grade. The amount of time a student is given to complete make up assignments will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Absence for family vacation is discouraged during the school year. Students who vacation with their parents during the school year should make arrangements in advance with their teachers for the completion of all graded work during their absence.

Students who are unexcused from school will not be allowed to make up missed work.

### **Truancy**

A "truant" is defined as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion thereof. The following events are examples of truancy:

- leaving school without teacher or parental permission
- staying home without parental permission
- being absent without medical excuse.

Students who miss more than 1% but less than 5% of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse) are truant. A student is counted as truant if there is an absence during any part of the school day without permission from a parent/guardian and the attendance office is not notified of an absence. Students considered truant are subject to school discipline. Students who miss 5% or more of the prior 180 regular school

days without valid cause are chronic truants. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue.

### **Truancy Procedures**

Three Unexcused Absences – letter from the school to parents

Six Unexcused Absences – second letter from the school and may result in a meeting with school personnel

Nine Unexcused Absences – referral to the ROE Truancy Officer which could lead to a Truancy Review Board meeting or a court appearance

After nine (9) days - Any absence following the 9th absence may require medical documentation of physical or emotional conditions causing such absence in order to be counted as an excused absence.

The following resources and supportive services are available to students with attendance problems and their parents or guardians: conferences with school personnel; problem solving by the building level team; referral to community agencies.

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Truancy is therefore a serious issue and will be dealt with in a serious manner by the school. Chronic truancy (a child who is absent without valid cause for 5% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days) will be reported to the Regional Superintendent of Schools for pursuit of legal remedy. A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law. A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant may be convicted of a Class C misdemeanor, which carries a maximum penalty of thirty days in jail and/or a fine of up to \$500.00.

A student who misses fifteen (15) consecutive days of school without valid cause and who cannot be located or, after exhausting all available support services, cannot be compelled to return to school is subject to expulsion for a period not to exceed two (2) years.

### **Tardiness**

A student is tardy when they arrive in the classroom after 8:00 a.m. or leaves before the completion of the school day. A student who is tardy must report to the office and sign in before going to class. Excessive tardiness may result in a truancy issue. Actions to follow include:

- o Call to parent
- o Letter to parent
- o Notification of truant officer
- o Notification of State's Attorney
- o Conference with parent and truant officer

Discipline for tardies will be determined on a case by case-by-case basis.

### **Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance**

A student will be released from school, as an excused absence, because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday or for religious instruction. The student's parent/guardian must give written notice to the building principal at least 5 calendar days before the student's anticipated absence(s).

Student's with excused absences or excused for religious reasons will be given an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirement within a reasonable time (usually 1 day for each day of absence).

**School Fees:**

Student fees are \$25.00 per year. Students will not be denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of their parent or guardian to pay fees or certain charges. Students whose parent or guardian is unable to afford student fees may receive a fee waiver. Applications for fee waivers may be submitted by a parent or guardian of a student who has been assessed a fee.

Students will be charged for loss of or damage to school books or other school-owned materials. A fee waiver does not exempt a student from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and/or equipment.

**Waiver of Fee Policy**

Students shall not be denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of parent(s)/guardian(s) to pay fees and certain charges. The Illinois School Code requires that each school district adopts a policy pursuant to the waiver of school fees. The Benton District No. 47 Board of Education has adopted the required policy for the 2025-2026 school year. Upon request, the school office will provide parents with applications for a waiver of school fees. A fee waiver must be applied for and approved for every school year. Fee waivers cannot be applied for outstanding fees from previous school years.

A student shall be eligible for a fee waiver if at least one of the following prerequisites is met: 1) The student currently lives in a household that meets the free lunch or breakfast eligibility guidelines established by the federal government pursuant to the National School Lunch Act; or 2) The student or the student's family is currently receiving aid under Article IV of the Illinois Public Aid Code (Aid to Families of Dependent Children); 3) The student's parent is a veteran or active-duty military personnel with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line; and 4) The student is homeless, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11434a) The Superintendent or designee will give additional consideration where one or more of the following factors are present: 1) Illness in the family; 2) Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.; 3) Unemployment; 4) Emergency situations; and 5) When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.

The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall submit written evidence of eligibility for waiver of student's fee. A separate application form shall be submitted for each fee assessed to each student. Questions regarding the fee waiver application process should be addressed to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will review the applications for qualification of a waiver.

Fines for loss or damage to school property are waived for students who meet certain eligibility guidelines.

**Failure to Pay Fees/Collection**

To maintain the quality of our educational programs, Benton School District will make every effort to secure payment of student fees from each parent/guardian who is able to pay.

Pursuant to the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act, the school is required to provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student who requests one, regardless of whether the student has the ability to pay for the meal or snack or owes money for earlier meals or snacks. Students may not be provided with an alternative meal or snack and the school is prohibited from publicly identifying or stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for or owes money for a meal or snack.

When a student's funds are low or there is a negative balance, reminders will be provided to the staff, students, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at regular intervals during the school year. State law allows the Building Principal to contact parents(s)/guardian(s) to attempt collection of the owed money when the amount owed is more than the amount of five lunches. If a parent/guardian regularly fails to provide meal money for the child(ren) that he/she is responsible for in the District and does not qualify for free meal benefits, the Building

Principal or designee will direct the next course of action. Continual failure to provide meal money may require the District to notify the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or take legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges, up to and including seeking an offset under the State Comptroller Act, if applicable

## **Cafeteria:**

### **Breakfast Program**

Breakfast is served every day from 7:30 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. Please allow enough time to finish breakfast by 8:00 a.m. K-2 students arriving at school to eat breakfast must enter the K-2 gym doors. 3-4 students arriving to eat breakfast must enter through the 3-4 main doors. Please do not arrive before 7:30 a.m. as no adult will be available to supervise. Students must eat in a respectful manner. Students are responsible for cleaning up their own mess and leaving the table and floor in a clean condition. If you finish eating breakfast before 8:00 a.m., students will move to the opposite side of the gym and have a seat on the floor. At 8:00 a.m students will be allowed to report to their classroom.

### **Lunch Program**

A hot lunch will be served each day with cold milk. Lunch times are as follows:

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Kindergarten          | 10:40 a.m. – 11:25 a.m. |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade | 11:10 a.m. - 11:55 a.m. |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade | 11:35 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. |
|                       | 12:00 p.m. – 12:45      |
| 3rd Grade             | p.m.                    |
| 4th Grade             | 12:25 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.  |

Students are expected to eat in a quiet and respectful manner. They are to eat appropriately and ask permission to leave the table. Food is not to be traded. Any uneaten food is to remain on the student's plate for disposal.

Students who wish to bring a lunch should pack the food in an individual cooler-type lunch box with his/her name clearly marked on the outside. Lunch boxes will be kept in the classroom. No coolers or refrigerators will be provided. Milk will be available at \$.30 per carton. **Once again, no food may be traded.**

Pursuant to the Hunter-Free Student's Bill of Rights Act, the school is required to provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student who requests one, regardless of whether the student has the ability to pay for the meal or snack or owes money for earlier meals or snacks. Students may not be provided with an alternative meal or snack and the school is prohibited from publicly identifying or stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for or owes money for a meal or snack.

When a student's funds are low or there is a negative balance, reminders will be provided to the staff, students, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at regular intervals during the school year. State law allows the Building Principal to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) to attempt collection of the owed money when the amount owed is more than the amount of five lunches. If a parent/guardian regularly fails to provide meal money for the child(ren) that he/she is responsible for in the District and does not qualify for free meal benefits, the Building Principal or Designee will direct the next course of action. Continual failure to provide meal money may require the District to notify the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or take legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges, up to and including seeking an offset under the State Comptroller Act, if applicable.

Please contact the office regarding any dietary concerns for the lunch or breakfast programs.

### **Nut-Free School**

**Benton Grade School K-4 is a “peanut and tree nut restricted” school. Due to numerous students with severe peanut and tree nut allergies, nut products are not served at school. This includes food items made with peanut oil and peanut butter.**

### **Student Entrance Age and Procedures**

Students entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before September 1 of any school year. Kindergarten students and all new students to Benton Grade School are required to submit a certified copy of the child’s birth certificate and a health record showing up-to-date immunizations. Three forms of proof of address will be expected for all new students entering the district.

Failure to submit proof of health exam and immunizations shall result in exclusion from school until proof is provided. Such proof of immunizations is necessary for all students in kindergarten and for new students prior to entering school. Transfer students will be given additional time of 15 days for transfer of records.

Under normal circumstances, any pupil who is not a resident of the school district must be charged tuition.

Anyone who knowingly enrolls or attempts to enroll in the school district on a tuition-free basis a pupil who is known by that person to be a non-resident of the school district is guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

Anyone who knowingly or willfully presents false evidence to a school district regarding the residency of a pupil for the purpose of enabling that pupil to attend any school in the school district without payment of non-resident tuition is guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

### **Homeless Students**

The McKinney-Vento Act governs the rights of homeless students. Each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, as provided to other children and youths. A “homeless child” is defined as provided in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and State law. Generally, a homeless student is a student who does not have a regular, fixed place of residence. Homeless students have special rights regarding school choice, transportation, and proof of residency. If you have any questions, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at 618-439-3136 for more information.

### **Health Information/School Health Records**

Please notify the school secretary of any change of:

- Address
- Telephone number
- Emergency Contacts.
- Please report to the school nurse any known allergies or any special medical condition of your child. Please report all communicable diseases your child contracts throughout the school year (e.g. strep throat, chicken pox, etc.).

### **Birth Certificate**

A certified birth certificate is required to be supplied to school officials at the time of enrollment. If a birth certificate is not presented, the person enrolling the student will be notified that within 30 days he or she must provide a certified copy of the student’s birth certificate. If a certified copy of the student’s birth certificate is not provided, local law enforcement will be notified.

A student will be enrolled without a birth certificate.

### **Vision and Hearing Screenings**

Students are screened for vision and hearing according to state requirements by the school nurse throughout the school year. Parents are urged to request a vision or hearing test at the onset of a potential problem.

### **Immunizations**

All students shall provide proof of immunization from preventable, communicable diseases as required by state law before attending classes. In the case of a transfer student, a period of 30 calendar days, beginning with the first day of enrollment in the District, shall be given to meet the requirements. If a medical reason prevents a student from receiving a required immunization by October 15, the student must present, by October 15, an immunization schedule and a statement of the medical reasons causing the delay. The schedule and statement of medical reasons must be signed by an appropriate medical professional.

All students are required to present appropriate proof that the student received a health examination and required immunizations against preventable communicable diseases (including proof of one Tdap grade 6 thru 12) within one year prior to: 1) Entering Kindergarten, Pre-Kindergarten, or the first grade if not attending Kindergarten; 2) Entering the sixth and ninth grades; and 3) Enrolling in an Illinois school for the first time, regardless of the student's grade.

Students must present an up-to-date immunization record that meets all Illinois requirements or an immunization schedule from the physician. Lack of proper immunizations is subject to exclusion from school. Students who are not compliant with physical examination and immunization requirements and have not submitted a waiver to be exempt from immunizations will be excluded from school.

If a student submits a valid waiver to be exempt from immunization and is subsequently excluded from school due to a disease outbreak or due to his/her exposure to any of the diseases for which immunization is required, the excluded student will have the opportunity to make up all missed academic work for full credit.

A student will be exempted from the above requirements for:

1. Religious grounds if the student's parent/guardian presents to the building principal a completed Certificate of Religious Exemption.
2. Health examination or immunization requirements on medical grounds if a physician, advanced registered practice nurse, or physician assistant provides written verification.
3. Eye examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or lack of access to a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches who provides eye examinations or a licensed optometrist; or
4. Dental examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or a lack of access to a dentist.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may access informational materials regarding influenza, influenza vaccinations, meningococcal disease, and meningococcal vaccinations developed, provided, or approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health on the District website or at the District office.

### **Student Eye Exam Requirements**

All children entering kindergarten or enrolling for the first time must have a comprehensive eye exam performed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches or a licensed optometrist within one year prior to entry of kindergarten or first enrollment. These students must present proof of having been examined by an eye doctor by October 15 of the school year. Failure to do so may result in the child's report

card being held until such exam takes place. Waivers to the requirement are available for financial hardship. Please contact the school nurse for details.

### **Student Dental Requirements**

All students entering kindergarten, second and sixth grades must present proof by May 15 of the current school year of having been examined by a licensed dentist within the last 18 months. Failure to present proof allows the school to hold the child's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed dental examination, or (2) that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.

### **ANAPHYLAXIS**

While it is not possible for the School or District to completely eliminate the risk of an anaphylactic emergency, the District maintains a comprehensive policy on anaphylaxis prevention, response, and management in order to reduce the risks and provide accommodations and proper treatment for anaphylactic reactions.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students who desire more information or who want a copy of the District's policy may contact the Building Principal.

### **School Nurse**

The school nurse is available on a daily basis and can be reached quickly in case of emergency. The nurse's office is located in the 3rd-4th grade section of the Benton Grade School complex within the office area. The school nurse may be reached by calling 438-7181.

### **Contagious Disease Policy**

#### **The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding communicable diseases.**

1. Parents are required to notify the school nurse if they suspect their child has a communicable disease.
2. In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent or guardian. The decision to allow attendance will be made by the school nurse.
3. The school will provide written instructions to the parent or guardian regarding appropriate treatment for communicable diseases.
4. A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings to the school a letter from the student's doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.
5. A Susceptibility List will be kept in each building indicating the students who are at risk due to lack of immunizations, medical exemptions, or religious exemptions. Parents of susceptible students will be notified in the event of a communicable disease outbreak.

**Our policy regarding contagious diseases children may come in contact with during the school year is as follows:**

**Chickenpox:** Children must stay home from school the minimum of five days after the last eruption with all pox having scabbed over or fallen off and no new lesions have developed for at least 24 hours. The student should be checked by the nurse before returning to class.

**Pink Eye:** Students can return 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and as long as there is no discharge or matting of the eyes.

**Strep Throat:** The child may return to school after he/she has been on 24 hours of medication which is usually an antibiotic prescribed by your doctor and the child has been without fever for 24 hours.

**Rashes:** The child will be sent home until we have a diagnosis from the doctor as to what the child has and if it is contagious to the other children. Please call the school office to inform us of the diagnosis.

**Head Lice:** The Illinois Dept. of Public Health, Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Illinois State Board of Education all support children remaining in school. The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding head lice. Following identification by the school nurse, the parents will be notified and the child will be sent home. The student may return to school the morning after the first treatment with medicated shampoo for the head lice and medicated shampoo for scabies. Students' absences after being sent home due to head lice will be excused for two days, any day following will be counted as an unexcused absence. We prefer you notify your doctor and use the product he/she recommends. In an effort to control the spread of head lice, it is extremely important that parents follow our procedure.

**Fever:** Children should be free of fever without the use of medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

### **Medication Policy**

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "Student Medication Authorization Form." The following is required:

1. Student Medical Authorization Form signed by a physician and parent.
2. Medication appropriately labeled in containers with the student's name, physician's name and pharmacy phone numbers listed.
3. Medication must be brought to the school office by an adult.

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

A student may possess and self-administer an epinephrine injector (EpiPen®) and/or an asthma medication prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form. The Superintendent or designee will ensure an Emergency Action Plan is developed for each self-administering student. A student may self-administer medication required under a qualifying plan, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form. A qualifying plan means: (1) an asthma action plan, (2) an Individual Health Care Action Plan, (3) an Ill. Food Allergy Emergency Action Plan and Treatment Authorization Form, (4) a plan pursuant to

Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or (5) a plan pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The school and district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication or epinephrine injectors, or medication required under a qualifying plan. A student's parent/guardian must agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine injector, asthma medication, and/or a medication required under a qualifying plan.

### **Administration of Medical Cannabis**

The Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act allows a medical cannabis infused product to be administered to a student by one or more of the following individuals:

1. A parent/guardian of a student who is a minor who registers with the Ill. Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) as a designated caregiver to administer medical cannabis to their child. A designated caregiver may also be another individual other than the student's parent/guardian. Any designated caregiver must be at least 21 years old and is allowed to administer a medical cannabis infused product to a child who is a student on the premises of his or her school or on his or her school bus if:
  - a. Both the student and the designated caregiver possess valid registry identification cards issued by IDPH;
  - b. Copies of the registry identification cards are provided to the District;
  - c. That student's parent/guardian completed, signed, and submitted a School Medication Authorization Form - Medical Cannabis; and
  - d. After administering the product to the student, the designated caregiver immediately removes it from school premises or the school bus.
2. A properly trained school nurse or administrator, who shall be allowed to administer the medical cannabis infused product to the student on the premises of the child's school, at a school-sponsored activity, or before/after normal school activities, including while the student is in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property or while being transported on a school bus.
3. The student him or herself when the self-administration takes place under the direct supervision of a school nurse or administrator.

Medical cannabis infused product (product) includes oils, ointments, foods, and other products that contain usable cannabis but are not smoked or vaped. Smoking and/or vaping medical cannabis is prohibited.

The District retains the right to use its discretion to regulate the administration of the product, which may not be administered in a manner that, in the opinion of the District or school, would create a disruption to the educational environment or cause exposure of the product to other students. A school employee shall not be required to administer the product.

Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver, or by a school nurse or administrator, or who self-administers a product under the direct supervision of a school nurse or administrator pursuant to this policy is prohibited. The District may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

The District reserves the right to restrict or otherwise stop allowing the administration of medical cannabis to a child if the District or school would lose federal funding as a result.

Failure to abide by the above procedures will be considered a disciplinary incident and will be dealt with on an individual basis and may include but is not limited to: notification of parents, after-school detention, and possible suspension.

### **Care of Students with Diabetes**

If your child has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan must be submitted to the school nurse. Students who are diabetic may also self-carry and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin. Students who are diabetic must also have a Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school.

Parents/guardians are responsible for and must:

- Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan on file with school for their child.
- Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
- Grant consent for and authorize designated School District representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.

For further information, please contact the school nurse.

### **Accident Insurance**

Student accident insurance shall be available to all interested students. The coverage shall be accessible to each student for the cost detailed in the student insurance plan brochure distributed prior to student's enrollment. This policy will cover medical bills only to the limit of the policy; that is, the insurance company will possibly not pay the full cost of the doctor or hospital bill. Benton District #47 does not provide medical insurance covering student injuries.

### **Mandated Reporters**

All school personnel, including teachers and administrators, are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

### **Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Education**

Students will not be required to take or participate in any class or course in recognizing and avoiding sexual abuse if his or her parent or guardian submits a written objection. The parent or guardian's decision will not be the reason for any student discipline, including suspension or expulsion. Nothing in this Section prohibits instruction in sanitation, hygiene or traditional courses in biology.

Parents or guardians may examine the instructional materials to be used in any district sexual abuse education instruction.

### **Employee Code of Professional Conduct**

All District employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others. In addition, the *Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators*, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, is incorporated into this Code of Conduct. Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), engages in *grooming* as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee-student conduct, engages in sexual misconduct as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

Standards related to school employee-student conduct shall, at a minimum:

1. Comply with the *Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators*, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education;
2. Prohibited grooming behaviors and sexual misconduct include, but are not limited to (i) any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, (ii) by an employee with direct contact with a student, (iii) that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - a. A sexual or romantic invitation
  - b. Dating or soliciting a date
  - c. Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
  - d. Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student
  - e. Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
  - f. A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student
3. Employees are expected to maintain professional relationships with students.
  - a. Employees are strictly prohibited from using any form of communication with students (e-mails, letters, notes, text messages, phone calls, conversations) that includes any subject matter that would be deemed unprofessional and inappropriate between an employee and student. This District has a “zero tolerance” for any conduct that crosses over that professional line.
  - a. Employees are not permitted to transport District students in the employee’s privately owned vehicle, unless the employee has obtained the prior permission of the Building Principal and/or Superintendent to do so.
  - b. Employees are not permitted to take or possess a photo or video of a student on their private devices. Student pictures for school sponsored activities used in furtherance of the District’s educational mission are permitted.
  - c. Employees are not permitted to meet with a student or contact a student outside the employee’s professional role. Employees are expected to avoid crossing a line that results in an actual or perceived inappropriate relationship
4. District employees are mandated reported and required to comply with all reporting requirements of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.), and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7926);
5. Employees, students, parents, and any third party can report prohibited behaviors and/or boundary violations pursuant to Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*; and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*, to a District Complaint Manager, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, or any other District administrator or staff member the person feels comfortable reporting to; and
6. Employees are required to complete training related to educator ethics, child abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations as required by law and policies 2:265, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*; 4:165, *Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; and 5:100, *Staff Development Program*.

Counseling services and resources are available for children who are affected by sexual abuse, including both emotional and educational support for students affected by sexual abuse. Please contact the building principal for additional information and availability of counseling and support services.

Parents/guardians may also report child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and/or boundary violations to the Edwardsville police department.

Child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations harm students, their parent/guardian, the District's environment, its school communities, and the community at large, while diminishing a student's ability to learn.

**Warning Signs of Child Sexual Abuse:** Warning signs of child sexual abuse include the following.

**Physical signs:** Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or other genital infections; Signs of trauma to the genital area, such as unexplained bleeding, bruising, or blood on the sheets, underwear, or other clothing; Unusual weight gain or loss

**Behavioral signs:** Excessive talk about or knowledge of sexual topics; Keeping secrets; Not talking as much as usual; Not wanting to be left alone with certain people or being afraid to be away from primary caregivers; Regressive behaviors or resuming behaviors that the child had grown out of, such as thumb sucking or bedwetting; Overly compliant behavior; Sexual behavior that is inappropriate for the child's age; Spending an unusual amount of time alone; Trying to avoid removing clothing to change or bathe

**Emotional signs:** Change in eating habits or unhealthy eating patterns, like loss of appetite or excessive eating; Signs of depression, such as persistent sadness, lack of energy, changes in sleep or appetite, withdrawing from normal activities, or feeling "down"; Change in mood or personality, such as increased aggression; Decrease in confidence or self-image; Anxiety, excessive worry, or fearfulness; Increase in unexplained health problems such as stomach aches and headaches; Loss or decrease in interest in school, activities, and friends; Nightmares or fear of being alone at night; Self-harming behaviors or expressing thoughts of suicide or suicidal behavior; Failing grades; Drug or alcohol use

**Warning Signs of Grooming Behaviors** School and District employees are expected to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students based upon students' ages, grade levels, and developmental levels.

Prohibited grooming is defined as (i) any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, (ii) by an employee with direct contact with a student, (iii) that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples of grooming behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors: Sexual or romantic invitations to a student; Dating or soliciting a date from a student; Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog with a student; Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student; Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; Sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with a student; Failing to respect boundaries or listening when a student says "no"; Engaging in touching that a student or student's parents/guardians have indicated is unwanted; Trying to be a student's friend rather than filling an adult role in the student's life; Failing to maintain age-appropriate relationships with students; Talking with students about personal problems or relationships; Spending time alone with a student outside of their role in the student's life or making up excuses to be alone with a student; Expressing unusual interest in a student's sexual development, such as commenting on sexual characteristics or sexualizing normal behaviors; Giving a student gifts without occasion or reason; Spending a lot of time with a student; Restricting a student's access to other adults

**Warning Signs of Boundary Violations:** School and District employees breach employee-student boundaries when they misuse their position of power over a student in a way that compromises the student's health, safety, or general welfare. Examples of boundary violations include: Favoring a certain student by inviting the student to "hang out" or by granting special privileges; Engaging in peer-like behavior with a student; Discussing personal issues with a student; Meeting with a student off-campus without parent/guardian knowledge and/or permission; Dating, requesting, or participating in a private meeting with a student (in person or virtually) outside of a professional role; Transporting a student in a school or private vehicle without administrative authorization; Giving gifts, money, or treats to an individual student; Sending a student on personal errands; Intervening in a serious student problem instead of referring the student to an appropriately trained professional; Sexual or romantic invitations toward or from a student; Taking and using photos/videos of students for non-educational purposes; Initiating or extending contact with a student beyond the school day in a one-on-one or non-group setting; Inviting a student to an employee's home; Adding a student on personal social networking sites as contacts when unrelated to a legitimate educational purpose; Privately messaging a student; Maintaining intense eye

contact with a student; Making comments about a student's physical attributes, including excessively flattering comments; Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; Making sexually suggestive comments directed toward or with a student; Disclosing confidential information; Self-disclosure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; Full frontal hugs; Invading personal space.

If you believe you are a victim of child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or boundary violations, or you believe that your child is a victim, you should immediately contact the Building Principal, a school counselor, or another trusted adult employee of the School. Parents/guardians may also report child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and/or boundary violations to the police department.

Counseling services and resources are available for children who are affected by sexual abuse, including both emotional and educational support for students affected by sexual abuse. Please contact the building principal for additional information and availability of counseling and support services.

**Additional Resources include:**

National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.HOPE (4673)

National Sexual Abuse Chatline at [online.rainn.org](http://online.rainn.org)

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Hotline at 1.800.25.ABUSE (2873)

**No Smoking Law**

Illinois law prohibits smoking by any person on public school property which includes school parking lot. The Benton Grade School District, as a result, has adopted a policy that prohibits the use of any type of tobacco products on school grounds.

**Animals on School Property**

In order to assure student health and safety, animals are not allowed on school property, except in the case of a service animal accompanying a student or other individual with a documented disability. This rule may be temporarily waived by the building principals in the case of an educational opportunity for students, provided that (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

**Pesticide**

In accordance with the state law, the Benton Community Consolidated School District No. 47 has adopted an Integrated Pest Management Policy. The district uses pesticides to keep its buildings and grounds free from insects, rodents, weeds, and other unwanted pests.

These pesticides are applied by licensed contractors or employees at times when students are not present. Please contact the building administrator if you desire more information or to be put on a notification list.

**Asbestos**

Benton Grade School is in compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). As required, our buildings were initially inspected for asbestos. Our initial inspection was conducted on September 28, 1988. The AHERA law required that a visual surveillance of asbestos containing areas be completed every six months, and a re-inspection conducted every three years. The Inspection/Management Plan is available for public review in the District Office, 1403 S. Main St., Benton, IL. Should you wish to review the plans, please call 618-439-3136 to make an appointment between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The findings of the inspection indicate that safe conditions exist in all buildings; however, operation and maintenance programs will maintain and monitor the district continually to sustain this safety standard.

**Bus Conduct and Transportation**

The district provides bus transportation to and from school for all students. Students are expected to follow all bus safety procedures and rules. A list of bus stops will be published at the beginning of the school year before student registration. Students are not permitted to ride a bus other than the bus to which they are assigned. Exceptions must be approved in advance by the building principal.

While students are on the bus, they are under the supervision of the bus driver. In most cases, bus discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver. In the case of a written disciplinary referral, student bus problems will be investigated and handled by the assistant principal.

Students are expected to follow all school rules while on the bus. Students may be suspended from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for violating school rules or for engaging in other gross disobedience or misconduct. The school may suspend the student from riding the school bus for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons. The district's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus.

In the interest of the student's safety and in compliance with State law, students are also expected to observe the following:

1. Dress properly for the weather. Make sure all drawstrings, ties, straps, etc. on all clothing, backpacks and other items, are shortened or removed to lessen the likelihood of them getting caught in bus doors, railings or aisles.
2. Arrive on time at the bus stop and stay away from the street while waiting for the bus.
3. Stay away from the bus until it stops completely, and the driver signals you to board. Enter in single file without pushing. Always use the handrail.
4. Take a seat right away and remain seated facing forward. Keep your hands, arms, and head inside the bus.
5. Talk quietly on the bus. No shouting or creating loud noises that may distract the driver. Tablets, iPods®, iPads®, smart phones, and other electronic devices must be silenced on the bus unless a student uses headphones.
6. Help keep the bus neat and clean. Keep belongings out of the aisle and away from emergency exits. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.
7. Always listen to the driver's instructions. Be courteous to the driver and other students. Sit with your hands to yourself and avoid making noises that would distract the driver or bother other passengers.
8. Wait until the bus pulls to a complete stop before standing up. Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
9. Stay out of the danger zone next to the bus where the driver may have difficulty seeing you. Take five giant steps away from the bus and out of the danger zone, until you can see the driver and the driver sees you. Never crawl under a bus.
10. If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal and then cross in front of the bus. Cross the street only after checking both ways for traffic.
11. Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.

Students who misbehave will be reported to the administration. A copy of this written report will be mailed home. The consequences of misbehavior on the bus will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Possible

consequences include warning, lunch detention, after school detention, temporary loss of bus riding privilege, exclusion from bus riding privilege, or any other discipline as determined by the administration. Parents will be notified of bus suspension and in other cases deemed necessary. Video and audio cameras may be active on busses to record student conduct and may be used for the purposes of investigation into misconduct or accidents on the bus.

Students are subject to a suspension or expulsion from the bus for serious or repeated misconduct. The length of the bus suspension will be determined at the building level by the principal/assistant principal on a case-by-case basis.

A parent may request a suspension review meeting to review the appropriateness of the bus suspension. The suspension review meeting will be conducted by the Board or a hearing officer appointed by the Board. If a hearing officer is appointed, he shall prepare a written summary of the evidence presented and present it to the Board. The Board shall review the hearing officer's report and take such action as it finds appropriate. This request would need to be in written form and sent to the District office.

A student who is suspended from riding the school bus and who does not have alternate transportation to school shall be allowed the opportunity to make up all missed work for equivalent academic credit. The suspended student will have 1 day for each day of bus suspension to complete the makeup work. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/legal guardian to notify the District that the student does not have alternative transportation to school.

### **Video & Audio Monitoring Systems**

A video and/or audio monitoring system may be in use on school busses and a video monitoring system may be in use in public areas of the school building. These systems have been put in place to protect students, staff, visitors and school property. If a discipline problem is captured on audiotape or videotape, these recordings may be used as the basis for imposing student discipline. If criminal actions are recorded, a copy of the tape may be provided to law enforcement personnel. Any student caught defacing, damaging or destroying video surveillance cameras will have to make restitution, and may be suspended, expelled, and/or recommended to an Alternative School and/or may be charged with criminal damage to school property.

### **Curriculum:**

#### **Classes Offered**

Kindergarten through 4th grade offers a complete curriculum of language arts, math, social science, science, P.E./health, fine arts, computer training and character development. Although all subjects are extremely important, emphasis is placed on the reading/language arts/math area of the curriculum in the primary grades in order to build a solid foundation for future academics. Delivery of instruction is provided through differentiation, using best practices and driven on student interests.

#### **Response to Intervention (RtI)**

In accordance with a federally mandated law, BGS K-4 has incorporated Response to Intervention (RtI). RtI is a multi-tiered approach that provides early identification and support for struggling students academically and behaviorally. Each student's progress is closely monitored at each stage of intervention to determine their needs.

#### **Speech**

Benton Grade School offers speech therapy to all students who have speech difficulties as determined by a trained speech therapist. Students are taken from class to participate in speech.

## **Internet Use**

Internet access is available to students and teachers in the Benton District #47 schools. Our goal is to promote academic excellence by facilitating research, instructional innovation, and communication. Staff will provide guidance to students as they utilize electronic information resources to conduct research and other studies related to the district curriculum. Having access to the network is a privilege the district extends to its students. The failure of any user to follow these rules will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action. The loss of privilege is one consequence of violating the District Acceptable Use Agreement. Students must have a signed parent/guardian permission form on file to gain access and agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner in conformance with the guidelines outlined in the district internet acceptable use agreement.

Students are responsible for their actions while using the Internet/computer. Students can be punished if they purposely alter the computer from its set functions or browse internet sites (including chat rooms) for non-educational purposes. Students will be responsible for payment for repair of equipment as a result of vandalism and horseplay and for any charges brought about by violating the Acceptable Use Policy.

Students have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored, transmitted, or received via the District's electronic networks or District computers. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using electronic networks. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account but not erased, may be monitored or read by school officials.

The District is not responsible for any information that may be lost or damaged, or become unavailable when using the network, or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. Furthermore, the District will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

Students are prohibited from accessing and/or distributing at school any pictures, written material, or electronic material, including material from the Internet or from a blog, that:

1. Will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;
3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, or contains indecent and vulgar language;
4. Is primarily intended for the immediate solicitation of funds; or
5. Is primarily prepared by non-students, unless it is being used for school purposes. Nothing herein shall be interpreted to prevent the inclusion of material from outside sources or the citation to such sources as long as the material to be distributed or accessed is primarily prepared by students.

The distribution of non-school-sponsored written material must occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the material is endorsed by the school district.

## **Access to Student Social Networking Passwords & Websites**

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination. However, school

officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

### **Grading**

Grades are based on academic performance, participation, and presence in class. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> grade are assigned grades on the following basis: 59% and below = E, 60—69% = D, 70—79% = C, 80—89% = B, 90—100% = A. Students in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade are assessed using a skilled-based report card with a rating scale of a 1 = Does Not Meet Standards, 2 = Progress towards Standards, 3 = Meets Standards, 4 = Exceeds Standards: and NA = Not Assessed at This Time. A brief description of the 4 categories is below:

1. **Does Not Meet Standards:** not grasping key concepts, processes, and skills; area of concern that requires support.
2. **Progress towards Standards:** beginning to grasp and apply key concepts, processes, and skills; progressing towards stated benchmark.
3. **Meets Standards:** consistently grasps and applies key concepts, processes, and skills; successfully meets stated grade-level benchmarks.
4. **Exceeds Standards:** extends key concepts, processes, and skills; constantly works beyond benchmarks.

### **Grade Reports for K-4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Progress reports are sent home at the end of every 4 weeks. Report cards are sent home every 9 weeks. A copy of the student discipline record will be sent home with each progress report and report card. Parents are encouraged to keep in close contact with the teacher concerning student progress throughout the year. Please feel free to discuss grades with the teacher through an appointment at any time during the school year. Refer to the school website for progress report and report card dates.

### **Promotion and Retention Policy**

The Board of education adheres to the Illinois School Codes prohibition on promotion of a student to the next grade level based on social reasons, such as age. It is, therefore, the policy of this District that students shall be promoted to the next grade level based on the following criteria: successful completion of the curriculum for the assigned grade level (Student Progress Report); attendance/tardies; and state and local assessments. Individual Education Program goals completion will be used for special education students. Students shall not be promoted for purely social reasons.

If a student has not qualified for promotion to the next grade level using the above criteria the District shall provide the student with an individual remediation plan and accompanying services provided with RTI. These services may include special homework, tutorial sessions, increased or concentrated instructional time, modified instructional materials, and other modification in the instructional program. The final decision on promotion/retention will rest with the building principal.

### **The Illinois IAR Tests**

The State of Illinois will be administering new state testing to all children throughout the state. The IAR Test will be administered throughout the year. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students will be taking English/Language Arts Tests and Math Tests. The PARCC Tests are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. We ask that you please make sure your child is in attendance throughout these testing windows.

### **Summer School**

Students may have the opportunity to attend a special summer school program. However, summer school programs will be offered only at the discretion of the Board of Education, depending on available funds.

### **Transfer Students**

Records of transfer students will be examined and evaluated for compliance with the above policy.

### **Exemption from Physical Education Requirement**

In order to be excused from participation in physical education, a student must present an appropriate excuse from his or her parent/guardian or from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act. The excuse may be based on medical or religious prohibitions. An excuse because of medical reasons must include a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act that corroborates the medical reason for the request. An excuse based on religious reasons must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy that corroborates the religious reason for the request.

Students with an Individualized Education Program may also be excused from physical education courses for reasons documented in writing by the student's doctor and approved by the case manager. A student who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses in either of the following situations: 1) The student (a) is in grades 3-12, (b) the student's IEP requires that special education support and services be provided during physical education time, and (c) the parent/guardian agrees or the IEP team makes the determination; or 2) The student (a) has an IEP, (b) is participating in an adaptive athletic program outside of the school setting, and (c) the parent/guardian documents the student's participation as required by the Superintendent or designee. A student requiring adapted physical education will receive that service in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Program. Special activities in physical education will be provided for a student whose physical or emotional condition, as determined by a person licensed under the Medical Practices Act, prevents his or her participation in the physical education course.

Upon written notice from a student's parent/guardian, a student will be excused from engaging in the physical activity components of physical education during a period of religious fasting.

Special activities in physical education will be provided for a student whose physical or emotional condition, as determined by a person licensed under the Medical Practices Act, prevents his or her participation in the physical education course.

State law prohibits the School District from honoring parental excuses based upon a student's participation in athletic training, activities, or competitions conducted outside the auspices of the School District.

Students who have been excused from physical education shall return to the course as soon as practical. The following considerations will be used to determine when a student shall return to a physical education course:

1. The time of year when the student's participation ceases; and
2. The student's class schedule.

### **Discipline**

Benton Grade School is committed to excellence in its school program. It is our intention to make every effort to teach the children proper behavior before consequences are necessary. At this early stage of life, your child must be given time to become accustomed to authority other than that of the parent. Therefore, every effort will be made to teach students to make good choices about their behavior and to be respectful of themselves and others. In cases in which a student has repeatedly failed to follow the rules of respect, the child will be sent to the administrator.

Teachers have the responsibility of providing classroom management to ensure learning for all students. Students have to learn the responsibility of obeying school rules in order to maintain a setting conducive to learning. According to the Illinois School Code, a teacher may remove a student from the classroom for disruptive behavior. Any behavior that is unsafe to any student or teacher is prohibited. Please caution your child concerning this and other unacceptable behavior.

Discipline is determined on a case-by-case basis and is at the discretion of the administration and the Board of Education. The level of consequences imposed will be consistent with the *Illinois School Code*.

Students may be disciplined for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to all prohibited conduct as listed below. The administration reserves the right to determine appropriate disciplinary actions for offenses which are not contained in the below list. Any infraction, depending upon the surrounding circumstances, may warrant discipline up to and including expulsion.

Students may be disciplined for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

1. Inappropriate language
2. Physical aggression (pushing, shoving)
3. Lying
4. Harassment, teasing, taunting (physical and/or verbal)
5. Classroom disruption, excessive talking and/or noise
6. Not prepared for class
7. Refusing to do classwork
8. Not paying attention
9. Refusing to follow directions
10. Abusive language (threat of physical harm, offensive racial/sexual comments)
11. Fighting (defined as actions that require a visit to the nurse)
12. Arguing
13. Throwing materials
14. Forgery
15. Violation of district technology guidelines
16. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco or nicotine materials, including without limitation, electronic cigarettes.
17. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
18. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or offering for sale:
  - a. Any illegal drug or controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*).
  - b. Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
  - c. Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
  - d. Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician's or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*.

e. Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.

f. Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed, or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in tablet or powdered form.

g. *Look-alike* or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by these rules, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by these rules.

h. Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.

Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

19. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a *weapon* or violating the procedures listed below under the Weapons Prohibition section of this handbook procedure.
20. Using or possessing an electronic paging device. Using a cellular telephone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or other electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device, or cellular phone. Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the Building Principal, all electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during the regular school day unless: (a) the supervising teacher grants permission; (b) use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP); or (c) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.
21. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's direct supervision and in the context of instruction.
22. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials. Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a District staff member's request to stop, present school identification, or submit to a search.
23. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
24. Engaging in hazing or any kind of bullying or aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using a school computer or a school computer network, or other comparable conduct.

25. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning), and sexual assault. This does not include the non-disruptive expression of gender or sexual orientation or preference.
26. Teen dating violence.
27. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person's personal property.
28. Entering school property or a school facility without proper authorization.
29. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (such as calling 911); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus, or at any school activity.
30. Being absent without a recognized excuse.
31. Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, by: (a) being a member; (b) promising to join; (c) pledging to become a member; or (d) soliciting any other person to join, promise to join, or be pledged to become a member.
32. Being involved in gangs or gang-related activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
33. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism, and hazing.
34. Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.
35. Operating an unmanned aircraft system (UAS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the Superintendent or designee.
36. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

For purposes of these rules, the term *possession* includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student's person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student's clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school's student locker, desk, or other school property; (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or (e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and supports shall be made to deter students, while at school or a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else.

### **Behavior Consequences**

Consequences for misbehavior will be determined by administrators, faculty, and staff. Factors influencing the consequence include the severity of the incident, prior student behavior, and previous disciplinary interventions.

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;

3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

School officials shall limit the number and duration of expulsions and out-of-school suspensions to the greatest extent practicable, and, where practicable and reasonable, shall consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline before using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions. School personnel shall not advise or encourage students to drop out of school voluntarily due to behavioral or academic difficulties. Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following measures:

1. Loss of recess (grade level or lunch).
2. Detention.
3. Card turned (classroom teacher)
4. Notifying parents/guardians.
5. Disciplinary conference.
6. Withholding of privileges.
7. Temporary removal from the classroom.
8. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property.
9. In-school suspension.
10. After-school study or Saturday study provided the student's parent/guardian has been notified. (If transportation arrangements cannot be made in advance, an alternative disciplinary measure will be assigned to the student.)
11. Community service.
12. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that was used to violate school rules.
13. Suspension of bus riding privileges.
14. Suspension from school and all school activities for up to 10 days. A suspended student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
15. Expulsion from school and all school activities for a definite time period not to exceed 2 calendar years. An expelled student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
16. Transfer to an alternative program if the student is expelled or otherwise qualifies for transfer under State law.
17. Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs (controlled substances), "look-alikes," alcohol or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the District and local law enforcement agencies.

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension or expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and/or address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.

### **Student Restraint:**

Corporal punishment is banned. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property. Reasonable force or physical guidance may be used to physically restrain students in limited circumstances that include: a) for their safety, b) if they are a threat to others, c) to prevent damage to school property, or d) if a student behavior interferes with a classroom or other scheduled program.

### **Isolated Time Out/Physical Restraint**

Isolated time-outs, time-outs, and physical restraints are only authorized for use as permitted in 10 ILCS 5/10-20.33, State Board of Education Rules (23 Ill.admin.Code §§ 1.280, 1.285), and the District's procedure(s).. Isolated time-outs and physical restraints are to be used only when the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and other less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and proven ineffective in stopping the imminent danger of serious physical harm, there is no known medical contraindication to is us on the student; and the school staff member or members applying the use of time out, isolated time out or physical restraint on a student have been trained in its safe application. Staff may not use isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint as a form of punishment or a means of disciplining a student, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. A parent can request a copy of the district's policy by contacting the School Superintendent.

### **School Wide Expectations**

Benton Grade School takes a proactive approach to teaching and reinforcing behavioral expectations. Students are taught behavior expectations in all environments throughout the school. Appropriate behaviors are celebrated and reinforced.

### **School/Classroom Conduct**

Each teacher will have an established classroom management plan in place. Students will be expected to follow established classroom routines and procedures.

### **Suspensions and Expulsions**

Out-of-school suspensions and expulsions are only used for legitimate educational purposes. The district will make all reasonable efforts to resolve disruptions and minimize the length of exclusion to the greatest extent possible before disciplining a student with a suspension or expulsion. The District does not use zero-tolerance discipline except as required by federal law or the Illinois School Code.

In accordance with constitutional due process and statutory requirements, the Board of Education may suspend or expel students in cases of gross disobedience or misconduct that occurs on or off campus. This includes on school buses, at bus stops, while students are traveling to or from school, at school sponsored events, activities connected with the school program; any event having a nexus with the school; and at any other time such action is necessary for the safety and supervision of students.

Only the Board of Education may determine to expel a student from school. The Superintendent, Principal and Assistant Principals may suspend students from school or the school bus for up to ten (10) school days. Suspensions or expulsions of students shall occur in compliance with procedural regulations to be promulgated and implemented by the administrators of the district. Disciplinary measures other than suspension or expulsion shall be determined by the administration and established in general regulations governing student discipline.

**Suspension:** Suspension is the most severe form of discipline except for expulsion. It is the temporary removal of a student from school property for disciplinary reasons not to exceed ten school attendance days.

**Suspension Procedures:** Prior to suspension, a conference shall be held with the student to explain the charges. However, a pre-suspension conference is not required when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process. In such cases, the notice and conference shall follow as soon as practicable. The student's parents should be notified via an attempted phone call. A written notice of the suspension shall state the reasons for the suspension, including any school rule that was violated, and a right to a suspension review. A copy of a notice shall be given to the Board of Education. Upon the parent's request, the Board of Education or appointed Hearing Officer shall conduct a review of the suspension. At the review, the student's parent(s) may appear, and may be represented by counsel, and discuss the suspension with the Board or Hearing Officer. After presentation of the evidence or receipt of the Hearing Officer's report, the Board shall take such action, as it finds appropriate.

### **In School Suspension**

When a student is placed into ISS they should arrive prepared to work on any and all homework that will be sent to them by their respective teacher(s). If a student becomes ill or is taken out of school for any reason and fails to complete a full day of ISS, that day will not count and the student will have to repeat a day in ISS. When in ISS the students must comply with the rules of ISS. Any failure to comply will result in one day of suspension from school. There also will be no outside food or drink allowed in ISS. If a student has an unexcused absence in conjunction with serving an ISS, then make-up work will not be permitted.

### **Out of School Suspension**

A student's out of school suspension assignment is determined on a case-by-case basis and is at the discretion of school administrators and Board of Education. The level of consequences imposed will be consistent with the Illinois School Code. Students assigned to OSS will not be allowed on school district property at any time during their OSS. Out of School Suspensions are assigned only for days when school is in session. In the event that school is cancelled for any reason during the period of an out of school suspension, the student will serve the remaining day(s) of the out of school suspension period on the next day(s) that school resumes. During an out of school suspension assignment, the student will be permitted to make up all missed work, including homework and tests, for equivalent academic credit. Students who are suspended Out-of-School for longer than 4 school days may be provided appropriate and available support services during the period of their suspension as determined by school officials.

### **Expulsion**

Expellable acts include, but are not limited to, serious misbehavior and/or illegal acts that threaten to impair the educational efficiency of the school and/or that most seriously disrupt the orderly educational process in the classroom and/or school. Expulsion may occur if misbehavior occurs on school property or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property that may cause a serious threat to the safety of the school community. Expulsion means removal of a student from school for more than ten consecutive school days and possible placement in an alternative setting for one (1) to two (2) school years. Placement in an alternative setting may not be offered under certain circumstances in accordance with the Illinois School Code. The terms of expulsion also mean that a student who has received out-of-school suspension, is being considered for expulsion, and/or has been expelled is prohibited from being on school/district grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or present at any function affiliated with the school district for the time span of the suspension/expulsion.

### **Expulsion Procedures**

The following are expulsion procedures: 1) Before expulsion, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written notice of the time, place, and purpose of a hearing by registered or certified mail requesting the appearance of the parent(s)/guardian(s). If requested, the student shall have a hearing, at the time and place designated in the notice, conducted by the Board or hearing officer appointed by it. If a hearing officer is appointed by the Board, he or she shall report to the Board the evidence presented at the hearing and the Board shall take such final action as it finds appropriate; 2) During the expulsion hearing, the student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) may be represented by counsel, present witnesses, and other evidence and cross-examine the witnesses. At the expulsion hearing, the Board or hearing officer shall hear evidence of whether the student is guilty of the gross disobedience or misconduct as charged. After presentation of the evidence or receipt of the hearing officer's report, the Board shall decide the issue of guilt and take such action as it finds appropriate.

### **Make-up Work Following Suspensions**

School assignments missed during a disciplinary suspension from school require completion. The work will be graded, and credit provided. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate the make-up work. For suspensions of up to 3 days, the required work is to be completed within one week upon return to school. Longer suspensions will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### **Re-engagement of Returning Students**

The building principal or designee shall meet with a student returning to school from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion or alternative school setting. The goal of this meeting shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusion and shall include an opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make-up missed work for equivalent academic credit.

### **Support Services**

A student who has been suspended out-of-school for more than 4 days may be provided with support services during the time of the out-of-school suspension as deemed appropriate by school officials.

### **Weapons Prohibition**

The establishment and maintenance of a safe educational school environment that is conducive to learning is a high priority to Benton School District. For this reason, students who engage in such activities as the use of or possession of a weapon, physically attacking faculty, staff, or other students, threatening or verbally abusing faculty, staff, or other students, theft, arson or vandalism are subject to extremely serious penalties.

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year but not more than 2 calendar years:

- (1) A firearm, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961. The expulsion period may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.
- (2) A knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including "look alike" of any firearm as defined above.

The expulsion requirement may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis. Evidence obtained will be confiscated and turned over to the Superintendent of Schools and may be delivered to local authorities for possible prosecution, in all criminal cases. The student's parents will be notified.

### **Gang and Gang Activity Prohibited**

"Gang" is defined as any group, club or organization of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. No student on or about school property or at any school activity or whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to a school activity, shall: (1) wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia or other items which reasonably could be regarded as gang symbols; commit any act or omission, or use either verbal or non-verbal gestures, or handshakes showing membership or affiliation in a gang; or (2) use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting others for membership in any gangs; (3) request any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidate, harass or threaten any person; (4) commit any other illegal act or other violation of district policies, (5) or incite other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

### **Drug Free Zone**

Benton Grade School is a "Drug Free Zone." No drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, E-cigarettes (JUULs), or any other chemicals used to stimulate, or "look alike drugs" are allowed to be possessed, sold, or used on or near Benton Grade School.

### **Off Campus Conduct**

Students must follow school rules and policies at all school events which take place during, before, and after school hours or which have a reasonable relationship to school. The student will be held accountable for negative behavior in violation of the discipline code in these instances on or off campus.

### **Dress Code**

Student dress must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with the maintenance of a positive learning climate, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, modesty, and decency. This includes but is not limited to appearance and hygiene. The building principal is the final authority for judging the appropriateness of a student's appearance at school.

The District does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. Students who disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety must modify their appearance.

All students are expected to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment. Student dress will conform to the following guidelines:

- Tops: Tops should cover the entire back, chest, torso, and upper arms. For example, prohibited tops include: spaghetti straps, tank tops, crop tops, cutoff tops and shirts with the sleeves cut out. Store bought sleeveless tops are allowed **No** see-through (opaque) fabric or swimsuits are allowed. Clothing that is suggestive or sexually explicit, or that does not adhere to the rules of modesty is not allowed.
- Bottoms: Clothing must be modest length for standing, sitting, and bending. Jeans or shorts with holes must not expose undergarments or have holes showing skin in inappropriate places. Clothing is to be worn as intended, underwear and backsides should not be visible. No undergarments should be visible, no pajama pants should be worn. Pajama pants should be defined as any type of lounge wear with print

of any type including fleece and flannel. All pants must be worn at the waist. A belt will be required if pants do not remain at the waist.

- Footwear must be worn at all times.
- Clothing, jewelry, accessories, tattoos, body piercing or writing on clothing or skin that draws excessive attention and thereby disrupts the educational process is prohibited. Any jewelry or items worn on the body or clothing that may be used to inflict harm to others is prohibited.

Prohibited attire also includes but is not limited to the following: clothing with tobacco, drug or alcohol advertisements; offensive language, print, or graphics that are sexually explicit or suggestive or that display adult messages and/or humor; brand names/logos with drug, tobacco, or sexual implications along with representations that are inappropriate, offensive, or demeaning to any group are prohibited. Gang affiliation is forbidden. Heavy chains/ spikes should not be worn around neck or hang from clothing. Jackets and headgear, i.e. hats, bandanas, headbands, sunglasses, etc., will not be worn during the school day. Hats and sunglasses and other items must be kept in the lockers throughout the school day.

Coats, hats, gloves should be put in student's lockers when arriving at school and are not allowed in the classrooms.

**If there are any doubts concerning dress and appearance, the building administrators will make the final decision.**

If a teacher finds a student in violation of the dress code, teachers will notify the office.

Students found to be in violation of the dress code will be asked to change their clothes at school.

Repeated violations and disregard to the school policy could result in administrative issued consequences.

### **Items not Allowed at School**

The following items are not allowed at school:

- Any item that may endanger others or be used to cause or threaten bodily harm.
- Weapons or any object that looks like a weapon.
- Toys, dolls, collectibles, including trading cards.
- Electronic device such as video games, MP3 players, iPods, cameras, etc. must be kept in backpacks and lockers
- Cell phones, and other smart device are to be kept off, and in the students locker at all times during the extended school day and regular school day. Smart watches may be worn for the use of telling time only.
- Skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates.
- Footballs, hardballs, softballs, basketballs, and baseball bats.
- Any playground equipment brought from home.

If inappropriate items are at school, they will be confiscated and may be returned to the student to take home or may be kept for return to the student's parent or guardian.

### **Personal Property**

Student possessions such as jackets, lunch boxes, items for show and tell etc. should be clearly marked with student names. Lost or discarded items found at school will be placed in lost and found receptacles which are located in our K-2 gym and our 3-4 gym. These items will be disposed of to a charity, service club, school-based use, or trash following each 9-week grading period.

## **Care of the Building**

We ask everyone to take pride in our school building and school grounds. The school grounds have beautiful landscaping which is kept neat and trim. We are very proud of our facilities and need your help in keeping them clean and maintained. Students marking on or damaging school equipment or property in any way will be required to clean the article and pay for damages. The law specifically provides that parents and students are responsible for damages to school property or materials loaned to students.

## **Search and Seizure**

To maintain order and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects.

School property, including but not limited to, desks and lockers is owned and controlled by the district and may be searched by school authorities at any time. School authorities are authorized to conduct general administrative inspections of school property without notice or consent of the student and without a search warrant. "School authorities" includes school liaison police officers.

### **School Property and Equipment as well as Personal Effects Left there by Students**

As stated in the Illinois School Code 105 5/10-22.6, school searches may be done to maintain order and security in schools. School authorities may inspect and search places and areas such as lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned and controlled by the school, as well as personal effects left in those places and areas by students without notice or consent of the student, and without a search warrant. As a matter of public policy, the General Assembly finds that students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these areas or in the personal effects left in these areas.

School authorities may request the assistance of law enforcement officials for the purpose of conducting inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs. If a search conducted in accordance with this section of the law, local ordinance, or the school's policies/rules, produces evidence, such evidence may be seized by school authorities, and disciplinary action taken.

### **Students Searches**

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination. School officials may not request or require a student or the student's parents/guardians to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

### **Seizure of Property**

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

### Questioning of Students Suspected of Committing Criminal Activity:

Before a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the building principal or designee will: (a) Notify the student's parent/guardian and document the time and manner in writing; (b) Make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent/guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that a school employee (including, but not limited to, a social worker, psychologist, nurse, guidance counselor, or any other mental health professional) is present during the questioning; and (c) If practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure that a law enforcement officer trained in promoting safe interactions and communications with youth is present during the questioning.

### Field Trips

In an effort to provide alternative learning for students, teachers will arrange field trips periodically throughout the school year. All students will have the opportunity to be transported by bus. Only district employees and assigned college students may ride the bus. Field trips are a privilege for students. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and during field-trip activities, and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds. Failure to abide by school rules and/or location rules during a field trip may subject the student to discipline.

All students who wish to attend a field trip must receive written permission from a parent or guardian with authority to give permission. Students may be prohibited from attending field trips for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to receive appropriate permission from parent/guardian or teacher;
- Failure to complete appropriate coursework;
- Behavioral or safety concerns;
- Denial of permission from administration;
- Other reasons as determined by the school.

### Photos/Yearbook

Individual photos will be taken some time in September. Classroom group photos will be taken at that time. A yearbook will be available for purchase just prior to the end of the school year. Information will be sent home as it becomes available.

### Birthday Parties and Holiday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations will occur one time each month at the grade level's discretion. Notes will be sent home to parents to give them the opportunity to send items for one of the celebrations. Summer birthdays will be celebrated in August or May. **All treats and snacks must be store bought and prepackaged in individual servings.** (please remember we are a "tree nut and peanut restricted" school). No homemade treats or snacks are allowed at school. Treats and snacks may not require refrigeration and must have a clearly printed list of ingredients on the packaging. Holiday parties will be held at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

**(Individual party invitations for personal parties off school campus shall not be given at school unless every child (or every boy or every girl) in the class is to receive an invitation. The office is unable to release addresses and phone numbers of students.**

### Emergency School Closings

Along with using the School Messenger System, the Superintendent will notify television and radio stations as early as possible in the event that school should be closed due to inclement weather or emergency situations. In the event of an emergency early dismissal, every effort will be made to contact the parents. However, we encourage you to listen to radio and television for details. If you wish to pick your child up due to weather

conditions, please report to the school office and sign your child out of school. The following are stations you should listen to concerning school closings:

WSIL TV 3                      WQRL106.3 Benton

WPSD TV 6                    WDDD 107.3 Marion

WCIL 101.5                  WFRX

KFVS TV 12                  Z100 99.9

### **Emergency Procedures**

Every possible effort will be made to ensure your child's safety during natural disasters or emergency situations. Fire, tornado, lockdown, and earthquake procedures will be practiced periodically throughout the school year. Teachers will do everything necessary to keep each child safe and calm in the event of an emergency. Please rest assured that teachers and administrators will stay with the children until help arrives. No child will be left unattended at any time.

### **Safety Drill Procedures and Conduct**

Safety drills will occur at times established by the administration. Students are required to be silent and shall comply with the directions of school officials during emergency drills. There will be a minimum of three (3) evacuation drills, a minimum of one (1) severe weather (shelter-in-place) drill, a minimum of one (1) law enforcement drill, and a minimum of one (1) bus evacuation drill each school year. There may be other drills at the direction of the administration. Drills may not be preceded by a warning to the students. However, parents/guardians may opt out of student participation in the law enforcement lockdown drill.

### **Student Records**

A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction or by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except for certain records kept in a staff member's sole possession; records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school; video and other electronic recordings (including electronic recordings made on school busses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes; and electronic recordings made on school buses.

**Permanent:** permanent record information shall include such things as student and parents' names and address, date and place of birth, and gender. Also recorded will be an academic transcript including grades, class rank, graduation date, grade level achieved, attendance record, health record, and a record of release of permanent record information. It may also consist of honors and awards received, information concerning participation in activities, athletics, or school organizations.

**Temporary:** this record may include family background information, intelligence test scores, and reports of psychological evaluation, elementary and secondary achievement level test results, teacher anecdotal records, accident reports, and disciplinary information. Also included shall be special educational files and all records related to special education placement hearings and appeals. There may also be any verified reports of information from non-educational persons, agencies or organizations along with other verified information of clear relevance to the education of student and a record of release of temporary record information.

### **Parent/Guardian Student Rights**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois Student Records Act (ISSRA) afford parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to their education records. They are:

- a. **The right to inspect and copy the student's education records within 15 days of the day the District receives a request for access.** A parent should submit to the records custodian, principal, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent of the time and place where records can be inspected. Within 10 business days, the building principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. In certain circumstances, the District may request an additional 5 business days in which to grant access.
- b. **The right to request the amendment of a student's records that the parent or guardian, of eligible student believes are inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper.** Requests should be sent to the building principal and should clearly identify the record the parent/guardian or eligible student wants changed and the specific reason a change is being sought. If the District decides not to amend the record, the District will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- c. **The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and ISSRA authorized disclosure without consent.** Disclosure without consent is permitted to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or any parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. 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. Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by State or federal law. Before information is released to these individuals, the parents/guardians or eligible student will receive prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information, and an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records. Academic grades and references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions cannot be challenged at the time a student's records are being forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring. Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting or planning, provided that no student or parent/guardian can be identified; any person named in a court order; appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; and juvenile authorities when necessary for the discharge of their official duties who request information before adjudication of the student.
- d. **The right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.** The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington DC 20202-4605
- e. **The right to prohibit the release of directory information.** Directory information may be disclosed without prior notice or consent unless a parent notifies the Records Custodian or other official in writing, before October of the current school year that they do not want any or all directory information disclosed. Directory information contained in an educational record

that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed includes, but is not limited to, student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mailing address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honors, and awards received, and the most previous agency or institution attended.

- f. **The right to a copy of any school student records prior to their destruction.** Permanent records, which include the student's name, birth date, address, grades and grade level, parents' names and addresses, and attendance records, will be maintained for 60 years after the student has transferred, graduated, or otherwise permanently withdrawn from school. Temporary records, which include all information within the school student records not contained within the permanent record, such as family background information, intelligence tests scores, aptitude test scores, psychological and personality test results, teacher evaluations, and other information of clear relevance to the education of the student, will be maintained for 5 years after the student has transferred, graduated, or otherwise permanently withdrawn from school. Parents and students are put on notice that temporary records will be destroyed 5 years following the student's transfer, graduation, or permanent withdrawal from Benton School District.
- g. **The right contained in this statement: No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefits or make as a condition of employment, credit, or insurance the securing by any individual of any information from a student's temporary record which such individual may obtain through the exercise of any right secured under State law.**
- h. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA as well as more complete details of the above described rights are on file in the school office and available for inspection or copy.

### **Student Records upon Withdrawal or Transfer**

Students transferring or withdrawing from BGS will be provided with a form indicating whether or not the student is in "good standing" and if medical records are up-to-date and complete. "Good standing" means the student is not being disciplined by a suspension or expulsion and is entitled to attend classes. No challenge to certain disciplinary information in a student's file may be made at the time when a student's school records are transferred to another school. This information includes out of school suspensions or expulsions. Benton Grade School is not required to admit a new student who does not provide this form from his or her previous school district or if the form indicates the student was not in good standing when they withdrew from their previous school.

### **Student Biometric Information**

Before collecting biometric information from students, the school must seek the permission of the student's parent/guardian or the student, if over the age of 18. Biometric information means information that is collected from students based on their unique characters, such as a fingerprint, voice recognition or retinal scan.

### **Note to Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents**

Copies of all correspondence and reports (reports or records which reflect the student's academic progress reports of the student's emotional and physical health, notices of school-initiated parent-teacher conferences, notices of major school-sponsored events, such as open houses, and copies of the school-calendar regarding the child) may be provided to both parents of a child whose parents are divorced. Such copies will be provided by

mail when requested by either parent, unless there is a court order to the contrary. When responding to a court subpoena, District representatives will comply and speak only for the child, not for either parent.

### **Special Education Rights**

The District shall provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within District, required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) and implementing provisions of the School Code, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The term “children and disabilities”, as used in this policy, means children between 3 and 21 for whom it is determined, through definitions and procedures described in the IL Rules and Regulations to Govern the Organization and Administration of Special Education, that special education services as needed. For additional information on the referral process or parents’ rights refer to the School Code, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act or contact administration.

The District offers all eligible students between the ages of 3 and 21 a comprehensive program which includes systematic procedures to identify and evaluate those students eligible for special education and a continuum of placement options available to the specific needs of students. If necessary, students may be placed in private educational facilities. Children with disabilities who turn 22 years old during the school year are eligible for such services through the end of the school year.

Parents have the right to request a referral for an evaluation to assess their child (ren) for possible special education intervention. Parental consent in writing is required prior to the District conducting an evaluation. If parents suspect that their child has a disability that is adversely affecting their child’s education, parents should contact the building principal or school social worker. If parents would like a copy of the Procedural Safeguards and Responsibilities for Parents/Guardians of Children with Disabilities, parents should contact the building principal.

It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 even though they do not require services pursuant to the IDEA. Pursuant to Public Act 100-1112 students with disabilities who do not qualify for an individualized education program (IEP) may qualify for services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 if the child

- (i) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities,
- (ii) has a record of a physical or mental impairment, or
- (iii) is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District shall follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of services to children with disabilities provided in the Illinois State Board of Education’s Rules and Regulations to Govern the Administration of Special Education. For those students who are not eligible for services under IDEA, but, because of eligibility as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need or are believed to need special instruction or related services, the District shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards. The safeguards shall cover students’ identification, evaluation, and educational placement. This system shall include notice, an opportunity for the student’s parent(s)/guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s), and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

Parents of children who receive special education services or for whom such services have been requested have certain rights safeguarded by state and federal statutes. Those rights include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. The right to a written notice before the school district initiates or changes (or refuses to initiate or change) the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
- B. The right to consent or request an evaluation of your child by the school district and to revoke such consent.
- C. The right to obtain an independent evaluation of your child at personal expense (at school district expense if the school district's evaluation is found to be inappropriate) and have the results considered in decisions regarding your child's educational placement.
- D. The right to have your child educated with non-handicapped children to the maximum extent appropriate.
- E. The right to request a hearing before an independent hearing officer if impasse is reached between you and the school district regarding the district's decision to initiate or change (or refusal to initiate or change) the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
- F. The right to inspect and obtain copies of your child's school records at no cost.
- G. The right to challenge the content of your child's school records including the right to a hearing regarding inaccurate or misleading information contained in the record.

\*This specified list of rights is in abbreviated form. If you should desire additional information, contact your District Superintendent of Schools, your Regional Superintendent of Schools, or the Director of Special Education, Franklin and Jefferson Counties Special Education District. P.O. Box 1027, Benton, IL.

#### **Request to Access Classroom or Personnel for Special Education Evaluation or Observation**

The parent/guardian of a student receiving special education services, or being evaluated for eligibility, is afforded reasonable access to educational facilities, personnel, classrooms, and buildings. This same right of access is afforded to an independent educational evaluator or a qualified professional retained by or on behalf of a parent or child.

For further information, please contact the school principal.

#### **Discipline of Special Education Students**

The District shall comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Illinois State Board of Education's Special Education rules when disciplining special education students. No special education student shall be expelled if the student's particular act of gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disability as determined through a manifestation hearing. Any special education student whose gross disobedience or misconduct is not a manifestation of his or her disability may be expelled pursuant to the expulsion procedures.

#### **Behavioral Interventions**

Behavioral interventions shall be used with students with disabilities to promote and strengthen desirable behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors. The School Board will establish and maintain a committee to develop, implement, and monitor procedures on the use of behavioral interventions for children with disabilities.

### **Notice of Accommodations**

Benton Grade School will provide accommodations for parents or guardians with disabilities at parent/guardian conferences, school programs, or school board meetings. Parents or guardians who require accommodations or who have questions about access should contact the school at 618-439-3136.

### **Equal Educational Opportunities**

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities are available to all students without regard to race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, age, religious beliefs, physical or mental disability, immigration status, order of protection status, status as homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy.

### **English Learners**

The school offers opportunities for English Learners to develop high levels of academic attainment in English and to meet the same academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to attain.

Parents/guardians of English Learners will be: (1) given an opportunity to provide input to the program, and (2) provided notification regarding their child's placement in, and information about, the District's English Learners programs.

### **Sex Equity**

No student shall, on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities. Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using the Uniform Grievance Procedure. A student may appeal to the School Board's resolution of the complaint to the Regional Superintendent of schools and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent of Education (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.8 of The School Code).

Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX (sex equity), Section 504 (handicapped) or Title VI (minorities) should be directed to the District Office.

### **Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment**

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, immigration status, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.

3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school- related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

*Bullying* includes cyber-bullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication including cell phones) and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Restorative measures means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school, and (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Ill. Human Rights Act.

School personnel means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in a school district, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, school counselors, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers, and security guards.

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the district complaint manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the district complaint manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator:**

John Pulliam  
618-438-7181  
jpulliam@benton47.org

**Complaint Managers:**

John Pulliam  
618-438-7181  
jpulliam@benton47.org

Ellen Gibbs  
618-438-4011  
egibbs@benton47.org

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

The District will make diligent efforts to notify parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying, including all threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, within 24 hours after the administration is made aware of the students' involvement in the incident. The administration will discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures for students involved.

Thank you for reviewing the K-4 student handbook. The purpose of the student handbook is to give the Benton Grade School students an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our school. Please read it carefully and use it for future reference. A cooperative relationship between the school and home, in which the students, parents/guardians, and teachers meet their responsibilities, is necessary if every child is to be successful. Please do not hesitate to contact your teachers or principal when questions or concerns arise. The student handbook is located on the district website. You can access this website by logging onto [www.benton47.org](http://www.benton47.org). If you are not able to access the handbook electronically, please contact the building secretary to request a paper copy of the handbook. All students have reviewed the handbook in class. If you have any questions, please ask a teacher or principal for clarification.

Sincerely,

Ellen Gibbs, K-8 Principal

John Pulliam, K-8 Associate Principal

Danielle Hatfield, K-4 Assistant Principal

Stacia Sloan, K-8 Dean of Students