

BENTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Visual & Performing Arts Magnet

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025



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The Board of Education of the NLMUSD is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education. District programs, activities, and practices shall be free from discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, or genetic information; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

BENTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Visual & Performing Arts Magnet

Student Handbook 2024-2025

School Theme

“Cultivating a Culture of Creativity”

School Mission

Benton Middle Magnet School inspires and empowers all students to achieve academic excellence in a creative visual and performing arts environment.

Wolverine P.R.I.D.E.

P ERSEVERANCE	Continue to work on something despite the difficulty
R ESPECT	Honor self and others and preserve property
I NTEGRITY	Be honest and sincere regardless of consequences
D ETERMINATION	Exhibit willingness to make and stick with a decision
E XCELLENCE	Demonstrate high levels of academic achievement and personal character

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BELL SCHEDULES

2024-2025

PERIOD	REGULAR SCHEDULE M/TU/TH/F	EARLY RELEASE WEDNESDAY	MINIMUM DAYS
PERIOD 1/5	8:35 – 9:59	8:35 – 9:39	8:35 – 9:33
PERIOD 2/6	10:01 – 11:24	9:41 – 10:45	9:35 – 10:31
NUTRITION	11:24 – 11:42	10:45 – 11:03	10:31 – 10:49
PERIOD 3/7	11:44 – 1:07	11:05 – 12:09	10:51 – 11:47
LUNCH	1:07 – 1:37	12:09 – 12:39	11:47 – 12:17
PERIOD 4/8	1:39 – 3:00	12:41 – 1:45	12:19 – 1:15



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AWARDS CRITERIA

Benton celebrates student success!

<p>Academic</p>	<p>Principal’s Honor Roll: 4.0 and higher GPA Honor Roll: 3.5 – 3.99 GPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificates are awarded each semester. • Awards for 1st semester are based on final 1st semester grades. Awards for 2nd semester are based on grades earned on the award deadline date, about one week before awards night. • Honor Cords are awarded to 8th grade students who have achieved straight “A’s” for the entire school year. Blue Cords for students in a combination of Honors and Non-Honors Classes; Gold Cords for ALL Honors Classes. • Blue & Gold Twist Honor Cord are awarded for achieving straight A’s all 3 years. <p>President’s Academic Achievement Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Must maintain a 3.5 – 4.0 GPA for the entire school year ❖ Must score at “Exceeded Standard” level in Math or Language Arts on state standardized test
<p>Students of the Month</p>	<p>Benton Staff recognizes <i>Student of the Month</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who exhibit good citizenship and are striving to achieve their personal best. • The Visual Arts team and the Performing Arts team each select a student who excels in the Arts.
<p>Movers & Shakers</p>	<p>Awarded each semester for superb effort and growth/progress over previous semester or previous year.</p>
<p>Wolverine P.R.I.D.E.</p>	<p>Awarded to students who best display character qualities that demonstrate Wolverine P.R.I.D.E. during the month by teacher.</p>

BENTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

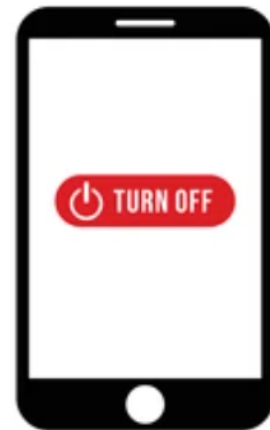
Visual & Performing Arts Magnet

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

CITIZENSHIP: Citizenship grades are assigned to students. To earn Outstanding Citizenship, Benton students will demonstrate Wolverine P.R.I.D.E. as well as being *Prepared for class and learning, Respectful, On Task, with a Positive attitude, and Supportive* of others.

IPADS: Students must bring iPads to school each day, fully charged.

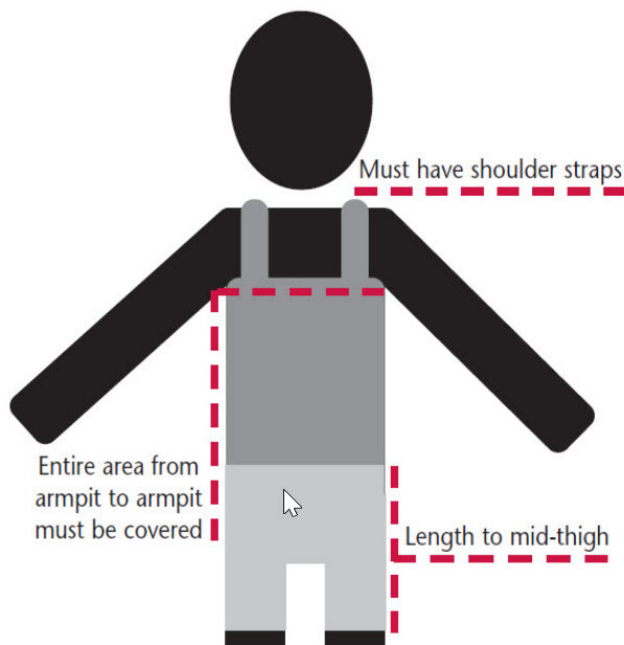
CELL PHONES: Benton is not responsible for personal electronic devices such as cell phones. Students may choose to bring a cell phone to school, but they must be turned OFF and kept in student's backpack while on campus. Students may use the phone in the office if necessary. Phones that are not in student backpacks must be turned into the front office for the student to pick up after school. Repeated violations may result in a required parent pick up and student may be placed on a Check In-Check Out system with an administrator.



LOCKER ROOMS/RESTROOMS: Under no circumstances may students have a **phone out in the locker rooms or restrooms.** Parents will be contacted for a parent pick up and a meeting will be held with an administrator.

DRESS CODE: What students wear should not detract from learning. Clothing should be **neat, clean, safe, and appropriate for school.**

- ❖ Appropriate undergarments should be worn and should **not** be visible.
- ❖ Students may wear sandals with a back strap, but not flip-flops.
- ❖ Clothing and jewelry should not promote racism, sexism, ethnic or religious bigotry, profanity, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, graffiti, or other illegal activities.
- ❖ Hats may be worn but should be removed inside the classroom.
- ❖ Sleepwear (pajama bottoms), dance shorts, costumes or face masks may not be worn.
- ❖ Length of shorts/skirts should be mid-thigh length.
- ❖ **For P.E.**, students must dress out in P.E. shirt, shorts/leggings, and athletic shoes. Students may wear dance shorts during Dance class.
- ❖ **Performance Attire** Students in music and chorus classes will need specific attire for performances; teachers will advise students of the required attire.



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ATHLETIC POLICY

ATHLETICS: Students who participate on school sports teams must maintain 2.0 GPA and Satisfactory* Citizenship grades.

**No U's, and no more than one N*



Intramural Athletics

Fall	Winter	Spring
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Football❖ Volleyball❖ Cheerleading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Basketball (Boys & Girls)❖ Soccer (Boys & Girls)❖ Cheerleading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Softball (Boys & Girls)❖ Annual Track Meet (Boys & Girls)❖ Cheerleading

All sports are co-ed unless otherwise noted



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DISCIPLINE POLICY

Benton implements a combination of Progressive Discipline with a Restorative Justice approach. The goal of Progressive Discipline is to improve student behavior and help students learn from their choices; Restorative Justice is focused on acknowledging and repairing the harm. Both practices help prevent inappropriate behavior from happening again.

Progressive discipline can include the following:

- Conversation or conference with the student
- Reflection Form
- Parent Contact (phone call, email, letter home)
- Review of expectations of appropriate behavior
- Referral to counselor or other resources
- Conference with student and parents
- Behavior contracts
- Community Service
- Restitution
- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- Suspension
- Removal to a different school

The Restorative Justice response to discipline seeks to create opportunities for learning so that the offender can understand the impact of their behavior on others. The student is expected to repair the harm and face up to the consequences of their actions.



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE GOALS:

- Foster understanding of the impact of the behavior
- Repair the harm that was done
- Attend to the needs of victims and others in the school
- Avoid imposing intentional pain, embarrassment, shame, and discomfort on students
- Collaborative approach actively involving others as much as possible

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Student success is directly affected by attendance. Good attendance increases the opportunity for students to achieve academically, participate in sports and activities, and improve self-esteem.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE:

California State Law requires all persons under 18 years of age attend school on a full-time basis. Parents' interest and cooperation will assure better student attendance and school success. A record of all correspondence will be maintained.

OFFICIAL SCHOOL DAY:

The official school day starts with classes beginning at 8:35 A.M. and ends at 3:00 p.m. School ends at 1:45 p.m. on Early Release Wednesdays. Office hours are from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Students are not allowed on campus prior to 8:05 A.M. unless they are attending a prearranged school activity. All students must also be picked up promptly after school by 3:15 P.M. unless they are involved in a prearranged school activity. Parent support is greatly needed in these crucial areas to ensure a safe environment for our students.

ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING SYSTEM:

When a student is absent from school, he/she must have their parent or guardian:

1. Contact the school office to verify their absence by calling the office or accessing the online **Absence Reporting** tab from the *Benton.nlmusd.org* website. The online

Absence Reporting is the preferred method for verification. This should be done on the first day of absence. Please provide the following information:

- Student's Name
- Reason for Absence
- Name of the Person Calling and Relationship to the Student
- Dates of Absences

OR

2. Write and sign a note (please include the information above) for the student to bring on the day he/she returns to school.

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

Excused absences are identified as *illness, immediate family death, or a doctor/dentist/court appointment*. Any other absence is considered an unexcused absence and is marked as a parent violation (this includes vacations). If a student is going to be out of school for more than 5 days, information on Short Term Independent Study (STIS) is available on the Absence Reporting tab on bentonms.org. *Please call the school office if you have any other questions regarding an absence.*

UNVERIFIED / UNEXCUSED ABSENCE / TRUANCY:

If an absence goes unverified for 10 days from the date of absence, it will be changed to a **truancy**, which constitutes a parent violation. This is in accordance with Board Policy and will be strictly enforced. Once an absence becomes a truancy, it will not be changed.

TARDY PROCEDURE:

Punctuality increases student success and decreases classroom disruptions.

1. Students will have a passing period between classes to go to and from class.

2. Students who are not seated in their classroom at the end of the passing period will be considered tardy.
3. Any staff member can issue a tardy if the student is out of class without signing out of the classroom.
4. When a student is tardy in the morning, he/she must report to the office, sign the tardy log, and get a pass to class.
5. If a student is tardy due to a doctor/dentist/court appointment, please bring a note from that office for the tardy to be marked excused.

TARDY CONSEQUENCES (PER SEMESTER):

- **1st Tardy** – Warning. Handled by individual teachers.
- **2nd Tardy** – Parent notified by teacher.
- **3rd Tardy** (and any additional tardies) –Possible Parent Conference and/or referral to Student Attendance Review Team (SART). Students may be required to attend a Tardiness workshop.

If a student continues to have excessive absences, tardies, or truancies, the student and parent will be required to have a conference with the School Counselor or Administrator to discuss solutions in order for the student's attendance to improve. If there is no improvement, the student will be referred to the School Attendance Review Team (SART) where an attendance contract will be established. If there is still no improvement, the student and parent will then be issued a subpoena to the District School Attendance Review Board (SARB), which is held at the Norwalk Court House. Continuing attendance problems will result in a referral to the District Attorney.

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SCHOOL PROCEDURES

SCHOOL HOURS:

8:35 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Mon./Tue./Thur./Fri.) and 8:35 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. (Wed.)

Students are not allowed on campus prior to 8:05 unless attending a school-related activity. Students are to leave the campus promptly at the end of the school day by 3:15pm, unless they are attending tutoring or a school-related activity.

To maintain the best possible learning environment, have the fewest classroom disruptions, and to make our school run more efficiently, please observe the following:

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, & SCOOTERS

Bicycles are to be kept in the school bicycle compound during the day. Students are to bring locks and secure their bicycles individually. Students and parents assume full responsibility for lost or stolen bicycles and helmets. In accordance with California State Law, all students riding bikes to and from school are required to wear a helmet. Violation of the helmet law can result in a citation from the local Sheriff. *Skateboards*, *scooters*, and *rollerblades* are **not permitted** on campus at any time and will be confiscated. Items are to be picked up by a parent.

BIRTHDAYS, FOOD DELIVERY AND SPECIAL DAYS

Please refrain from sending balloons or flowers to school, as they will remain in the office until the end of the day. Birthday parties or special lunch celebrations are not allowed.

Lunch is provided for all students with no cost. Students are encouraged eat a school

lunch or bring lunch from home. **Food items, meant for sharing in groups, are no longer allowed on campus (Board Policy 5030).**

Parents should refrain from using food delivery services (DoorDash, GrubHub, etc). The office staff is **not** responsible for the communication of deliveries from food delivery services.

If a parent is dropping off lunch for their child, the parent must come into the front office, complete a “For My Student” form and leave the lunch on the table in the front office for student pick up. The office staff is **not** responsible for the communication or delivery of lunch drop-offs.

BLACKTOP, FIELD AND TRACK

Safety is a top priority at Benton. When students are on the black top, athletic field or track it is important to follow all safety rules to avoid injuries. Students must promptly exit the blacktop, field and track areas when directed by school supervision or staff. Students who borrow sports equipment must return it to the designated area. Students who engage in disruptive, unsafe or defiant behavior will follow progressive discipline consequences, which could include not being allowed to use the area.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling is available to all students. The school counselor is available to help students with academic guidance, personal and social counseling, minor behavior and discipline concerns, attendance guidance, communication with parents and teachers, and to assist students in making a successful transition from elementary to middle school and middle to high school. Parents are invited to contact the school counselor when they have questions or concerns related to their child’s education and/or social

development. We provide parents with contact information of agencies for students who are in need of professional counseling.

FIELD TRIPS

Each teacher/grade level will plan various trips throughout the year. Students must return permission slips to field trip advisor(s) for admission to any approved excursion off campus. Students with poor attendance, poor grades, or inappropriate behavior may be excluded from any trips planned. Students who behave inappropriately for adult supervisors will receive consequences upon returning to school. Consequences could include: loss of participation in future field trips and any upcoming school activities; special end of the year activities; detention; suspension; community service; citation; or any combination of these deemed appropriate by administration. *This includes any multiple day academic travel excursions/camps.*

LEAVING DURING THE DAY

Make all arrangements regarding doctor/dentist appointments, rides home, lunches, etc. before school starts. Students must come to the office to be checked out if they leave during the school day.

LOST AND FOUND

Students assume full responsibility for loss or damage to any personal property left in a classroom or on campus. The school will endeavor to protect all personal property but is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. *Never leave backpacks or other personal items unattended.* Students should write their names on all books and put identification marks on all personal belongings. Found articles (books, clothing, etc.) should be taken to the office. Lost items not recovered by the last day of school will be donated to a local charity.

LUNCH AND SNACK AREAS

Students must remain in designated lunch and snack areas during breaks. Students must stay visible to supervision and staff at all times. Students who do not remain in designated areas will follow progressive discipline consequences.

MEDICATION

Students are not allowed to bring any medication (prescription or non-prescription) to school without a specific form filled out by the student's doctor. Forms may be obtained in the office. All medications with appropriate form will be kept in the office during the school day.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER USE

Students may check out books and other items using their school I.D. Students are responsible for any item issued to them and will be charged the price of that item if it is lost, stolen, or damaged. Activities (including Promotion), report cards, and/or yearbooks will be withheld/suspended until the fee is paid or the item returned.

PERFORMANCES

Safety is a top priority at Benton. On performance nights, students must arrive at a designated time and check-in to their "Green Room" to prepare for costume changes, group meetings, and instructions for the night's performance. At the end of each show, students report back to their "Green Room," clean and clear the space to prepare for instruction and are released to a parent/guardian immediately after the show.

PHONES & OTHER COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Students may possess electronic signaling devices including, but not limited to, cell phones, tablets, and MP3 players. Cell phones are not to be used at any time on campus between the hours of 8:05am and 3pm, or until 1:45pm on Wednesdays. The school is

NOT responsible for any lost or stolen phones or other electronic devices.

PROGRESS REPORTS

All Benton parents/guardians have access to the Parent Portal, which provides the most updated attendance and grading information for each student. The PowerSchool Website address is <https://powerschool.nlmusd.k12.ca.us/public>. In addition to this resource, Report Cards are distributed each semester and Progress Reports are issued every quarter, which is halfway through the semester.

PROMOTION CEREMONY/ END OF YEAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in the 8th grade Promotion Ceremony is a privilege earned. All 8th graders who met district promotion criteria and submitted a signed promotion contract are eligible to participate in the ceremony. Eligibility is determined by GPA, Course Failures, Suspensions, Attendance and Tardies. Parents and students are encouraged to communicate with the School Counselor any time eligibility is not met.

8th graders must meet promotion eligibility criteria and have satisfactory citizenship (No Us and no more than 1 N) to participate in **all** end of year activities (such as, but not limited to: Disneyland, 8th grade Dance, Movie Night).

SPORTS/CLUBS/ACTIVITIES

Students must have earned a “C” average (2.0 GPA) or better in the previous trimester to participate. If a student becomes ineligible to participate, they may regain eligibility in the next grading period. Students with poor behavior in class (noted as “U’s” on report cards) or on campus may be excluded from attending school activities, games, field trips, or special events. Student athletes must abide by the BMS Athletic Policy in order to participate in sporting events.

TEXTBOOKS

Students may be issued one or more textbooks/reading books during the course of the school year. Students are responsible for each book issued to them and will be charged the price of the book if it is lost, stolen, or damaged. Students need to make sure that they are responsible for books they check out and know their whereabouts at any given time. Report cards, promotion certificates, activities, and yearbooks will be withheld in the event of a lost book until it is found or paid for in full.

TRANSPORTATION

Students receiving transportation on district-provided buses to and from school must carry a school ID with a school issued bus sticker to validate entry. Temporary bus passes will be issued from the office to students during nutrition or lunch only (**maximum 3 per year**). Lost IDs and/or bus stickers must be replaced for entry on district provided transportation. School-wide behavioral expectations and progressive discipline measures also apply to transportation.

TUTORING

Tutoring is offered after school until 4pm every day except Wednesdays. Please refer to the school's tutoring schedule for teacher information and classroom locations. School-wide behavior expectations are progressive discipline also apply to after school tutoring.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

All visitors, parents, guardians must report to the office and check in before going anywhere else on campus. Any deliveries (lunch, money, homework, P.E. clothes, etc.) are to be delivered to the office and not the classrooms.

YEARBOOKS

Yearbooks sell out quickly each year. To ensure that you get a yearbook, *buy it early!*

BENTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Visual & Performing Arts Magnet

RULES AND REGULATIONS

All Rules and Regulations pertain to the campus, both to and from school, and at all school activities. Progressive discipline will be enforced for the following violations:

AEROSOL CANS

Aerosol spray cans are NOT permitted on the BMS campus, this includes deodorant/antiperspirant.

ARSON

Any person who attempts or sets fires to any building, lockers, trash cans, towel rolls, etc. is guilty of a felony.

BULLYING/ABUSIVE CONDUCT

Any student who repeatedly threatens or intimidates another student, whether physically, verbally, or electronically, is guilty of bullying. This will not be tolerated. Students, parents, and community members are encouraged to notify school staff when they are being bullied or suspect that another is being victimized. To report bullying, notify any school staff member.

CHEATING/ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Cheating and/or copying another student's work is a very serious infraction of school rules. It is an unfair representation of scholastic achievement and

demonstrates academic dishonesty. Cheating and/or copying will result in an automatic “no credit” for the test or assignment and will follow progressive discipline.

CLASSROOM, CAMPUS, EXTRACURRICULAR DISOBEDIENCE

Any pupil who is disrespectful, insubordinate, disorderly, defiant, or creates disturbances is considered disobedient.

DRESS CODE

While on campus or at any school sponsored events, students shall not be dressed or groomed in a manner which adversely affects the instructional program or violates reasonably acceptable standards of cleanliness, safety, or decency as determined by the principal or designee. Shoes must be worn at all times. No attire may be worn that signifies membership in a gang, profanity, or any illegal activity. Students may be sent home to change or will be provided with a change of clothes for inappropriate attire. Students who repeatedly violate this policy will be given consequences for defiance.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES (BOARD POLICY 5412)

Students may possess or use electronic devices, including but not limited to MP3 players, iPods, and cell phones, provided such devices do not disrupt the educational program or school activity. NLMUSD **will not** be responsible for and **will not** investigate lost or stolen electronic devices (BP 5412). Electronic devices shall be turned off during class time and at any other time directed by a District employee. Misuse of electronic devices, including text messaging, is prohibited.

EXCESSIVE DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Excessive displays of affection are inappropriate for students at Benton Middle School. No hand holding, excessive hugging, or kissing, etc. is permitted on school campus or at any school sponsored events.

FIGHTING

Fighting on campus is an unacceptable way of solving problems and may result in suspensions, citations, and possibly arrest.

FIRECRACKERS AND EXPLOSIVES

Possession of explosive materials, firecrackers, poppers, cherry bombs, etc. is against State Law. They are not permitted on school campus or at any school sponsored events.

FOOD

Students are not permitted to bring energy drinks of any type to school. If parents would like to bring food for students, they must bring it to the office and students will pick it up there. Full pizzas and other types of food to feed more than one child are **not allowed**. Food must be consumed before or after class, not during class. Gum is not allowed.

GAMBLING

Pitching coins, throwing dice, playing cards with betting, or engaging in any other kind of gambling are examples of unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated.

HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

No student may verbally abuse or harass another student, threaten another student with bodily injury, or engage in any gang type activity. This includes harassment or threatening behavior through the use of an electronic device or Internet use.

LEAVING CAMPUS WITHOUT PERMISSION

Once on campus, students must stay at school and are not allowed to leave, even before the official school day starts. If a student needs to leave during the school day, a parent/guardian must check them out at the office. Students are not permitted to be out of class during class time without signing out with a teacher.

LITTERING/THROWING OF FOOD

All students are expected to clean up after themselves and pick up their own trash. Students throwing items/food, leaving trash/food on campus will be given consequences for disobedience which may include Community Service.

LOITERING

Students are not permitted to loiter in front of the school or in restricted areas on campus. Students loitering could be cited for disobedience. Large groups may be separated for safety reasons.

OBSCENE ACTS AND PROFANITY

Obscene gestures, physical contact, and the use of vulgar and profane language will not be tolerated in any form. Using electronic devices for the purpose of “sexting” is also considered obscene and will not be tolerated. (Sexting is the

act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, primarily between cell phones.)

OPEN AND OVERT DEFIANCE

Any student who persistently defies school rules and school authority will be considered defiant. Belligerence and hostility directed to school authority or personnel is a defiant action.

REFUSAL TO DISPERSE

Any student failing to disperse, return to class, or leave the area after being told to do so by school personnel will be cited for open defiance of authority.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Engaging in sexual harassment acts (verbal, gestures, and/or physical contact) that are severe or pervasive as to have a negative impact on a student's academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment will not be tolerated.

SKATEBOARDS / ROLLERBLADES / SCOOTERS

They are not to be brought to school. Any skateboards, scooters, or rollerblades seen on campus will be confiscated and held until a parent comes to school to take possession of the item.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE: POSSESSION, USE, OR SALE (BOARD POLICY 5495)

While on school grounds or at any school-related activity, students shall refrain from use or possession of narcotics, intoxicating liquor, alcohol, "look-alike"

controlled substances, personal vaporizer, or any type of drugs or drug paraphernalia. Benton Middle Magnet School has a *Zero Tolerance* for using, possessing, or selling drugs or alcohol. Those students violating this policy will be removed from school, cited, and/or referred to Local Guidance.

THEFTS / EXTORTION

Any person who steals or extorts the property of another is guilty of theft.

THREAT

Any threat to school employees, direct or implied, is a serious violation of the law.

TOBACCO

Students are not allowed to be in possession of personal vaporizers (e-cigarettes, vape pens, vape chargers), tobacco, lighters, or use tobacco in any form on school premises or at school-sponsored events.

VANDALISM / GRAFFITI

Destruction of school, staff, or student property will initiate penalties according to degree of damage. Please note that PERMANENT MARKERS (e.g. Sharpies) are NOT allowed on campus and possession can result in a citation.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

Students are not permitted to have visitors on campus. Brothers, sisters, friends, or relatives may not accompany students during the school day. All visitors are required to check in the front office for permission to enter campus. Parents/Guardians wishing to conference with teachers or visit classrooms must

submit a request via email, phone call, or note to teachers to arrange a meeting and/or visitation. Visitors with arranged meetings before school and/or after school must also check in the front office prior to visiting classrooms.

WEAPONS

Students are not to have any weapons or objects that might cause bodily harm in their possession when traveling to or from school, at school, or at any school related activities. This includes look-alike toys or other types of pretend weapons. Students may not bring water guns or other types of toys to school.