# BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT
## SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

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CHAPTER C

Commitments and Foundations
**Legal Status:**

The district's legal status is that of a body corporate. The district is organized and governed by the laws of the State of Arkansas relating to school districts, by written policies adopted by the Bentonville School District Board of Directors pursuant to federal and state laws, and in accordance with the instructions of the Arkansas State Board of Education.

**Corporate Name:**

The corporate name of this school district shall be the “Bentonville School District No. 6 of Benton County, Arkansas,” (also to be known as “The Bentonville Public Schools” and it shall have the same prerogatives, powers, duties, and privileges as all other school districts in this state and as provided by Arkansas law.)

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**The Citizens of the Bentonville School District and Their Schools**

The Bentonville School District is a legal entity for conducting a system of public education for the residents within the geographical boundaries of the district. The system was created by, and is governed by, Arkansas state law. Members of the Board are, therefore, state officers chosen by citizens of the district to represent them in the management of their schools.

The Bentonville School District Board of Education has the dual responsibility for implementing requirements pertaining to public education and local citizens’ desires for educating the community’s youth. While the Board has an obligation to determine and assess citizens’ desires, it is understood that when citizens elect Board members to represent them in the conduct of public education, they at the same time entrust their representatives with the authority to exercise their best judgment in determining policies, making decisions, and approving procedures for carrying out their responsibility. While this dual responsibility is understood, the Bentonville Board of Education fully recognizes its primary mission of doing everything possible to benefit the students in our charge. Our very existence as a governing body is contingent on the presence of our students whom we seek to serve. Acting in the best interest of our students, we will:

- Maintain two-way communications with the citizens of the district. An informed public needs to make its desires known to the Board. The Bentonville Public Schools Board of Education is eager to listen and respond.

- All decisions made and all policies created by the Bentonville Public Schools Board of Education will be with the declared intent of benefiting our students and meeting the needs of our many constituencies.

- Act as a truly representative body for citizens of the district in matters involving public education. The Board recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas; however, the Board has been assigned specific authority through state law.
Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity

The Bentonville School District does not condone discriminatory treatment of students or personnel, and the faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the Board of Education are committed to providing equal educational and employment opportunity to all qualified and/or certified individuals.

The District is committed to the policy of providing equal educational opportunities to all qualified students.

The Board of Education commitment to equal educational opportunity and equal employment opportunity is based in the law and the firm belief that non-discrimination aids in greater diversity and can help produce a richer quality education experience for all students in the district. Therefore, the Bentonville Public Schools Board of Education reaffirms its intent to adhere to all federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations which apply to non-discrimination as it pertains to operations in the Bentonville Public Schools.

Any concerns, grievances, or complaints should be directed to the Bentonville Public Schools Executive Director of Human Resources.

Educational Philosophy/Bentonville School District Mission

**District Vision Statement:**

To provide a learning environment which empowers and energizes students to make informed decisions and meet the opportunities and challenges of the future.

**District Mission Statement**

We are committed to preparing students of today for the challenges of tomorrow.

**Our District believes that**

1. educational success is a shared responsibility
2. learning can be its own reward
3. excellence must be pursued
4. the essence of communication is listening
5. words and deeds must match
6. community involvement in the decision making process is beneficial to all
7. loyalty, integrity, respect, diligence, and patience are valued character traits
8. our actions should demonstrate that we care equally about all people
9. a cooperative environment must foster trust, and
10. most importantly, all of our actions must be in support of these beliefs.
Drugs

The Bentonville School District is committed to providing drug free schools where students and staff can be proud of their environment and workplace. The use, sale, or distribution of controlled, non-controlled or look-a-like substances on our campuses threaten the health, welfare, and safety of all who work and attend in our buildings and walk our grounds. Our basic education mission can be adversely affected by the impact of controlled or non-controlled substances.

Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Bentonville Public Schools that the manufacture, sale, distribution, use, possession, under the influence or dispensation of any controlled substance (prescription drug) or non-controlled (non-prescription drug) analog* substance on or in any school premises is strictly prohibited. For purposes of this policy, controlled substances will include alcohol, illegal drugs, illegal use of prescription drugs, illegal use of over-the-counter drugs or controlled substance analog as defined by the Drug Enforcement Administration.

For those who choose to violate this policy, disciplinary sanctions will be progressive and stern. This may include suspension and expulsion.

* A non-controlled analog is a substance which has a stimulant, depressant, or hallucinogenic effect on the central nervous system that is similar to the stimulant, depressant, or hallucinogenic effect on the central nervous system of a controlled substance. This includes, but is not limited to, K2, spice, genie, and zohai.

Gun-Free Schools

The Bentonville Public School District is committed to creating a safe learning environment for all students by implementing the provisions of the federal “Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994.” It is the policy of the District that any employee* or student who is determined to have brought a weapon or look alike weapon to school, on the school grounds, or on a school bus shall be recommended for expulsion, except that the Superintendent of schools may modify the expulsion recommendation on a case-by-case basis.

* NOTE: excludes the School Resource Officer while on duty
Safe Schools

Building principals, teachers, staff, administrators, and other district personnel are primarily responsible, within the limits imposed by available resources, for initiating and maintaining the necessary precautions for the health and safety of district personnel and students in the Bentonville Schools and for compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal rules, regulations, and laws governing school health and safety. Additionally, the District will initiate and implement an “emergency procedures guide” to insure the safety of students and staff in times of an emergency or crisis.

School Calendar

The Superintendent and Personnel Policy Committee shall present to the Board, for its approval, the calendar for the succeeding year prior to the beginning of the fourth quarter of the school year. The Superintendent, in developing the calendar, shall accept and consider recommendations from any staff member or group wishing to make calendar proposals.

Board Recognition for Accomplishment

The Bentonville Board of Education appreciates the diligent effort made by its members, administrators, faculty, staff, student body, and citizen volunteers in achieving the district’s goals and objectives. The Board will, from time to time, recognize their exemplary service or achievements on behalf of the district. One form of recognition will be the adoption of a resolution citing such service accomplishment. Other recognition may include comments at Board meetings, letters of commendation, certificates, or plaques from the Board. The Board of Education may invite individuals or groups that have made important district-wide or school-related contributions or achievements to the Board meeting at which they will be formally recognized for their effort.
School Day

The Board of Education shall set the length of the school day at each school in consideration of local needs and in compliance with Arkansas School Law.

All teachers in the Bentonville Public School System are expected to report to their respective buildings a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes prior to the first bell which rings to begin the school day, and remain there a minimum of thirty (30) minutes following the dismissal bell for students at the end of the day. Exceptions to this time schedule will include professional responsibilities, such as staff meetings, staff development activities, alternate contracts, parent-teacher conferences, duty assignments, bus driving, when teachers will be expected to report earlier or stay later as determined by the building administrator. Individual principals may excuse teachers to leave early if a justifiable request has been made in advance and the situation on that particular day is manageable.
CHAPTER B

School Board Governance and Operations
Bentonville School District Board of Education Operational Goals

It is the objective of the Board of Education that every lay person in the community feels he or she is in partnership with the professional educators and the Board of Education who have the responsibility for continuous planning, analysis, and evaluation to see that the most effective and meaningful educational opportunities are made available to our youth consistent with the aspiration, cultural pattern, and financial ability of the community.

The Bentonville Board of Education further acknowledges that it is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a system of free public schools for all children residing in the district and shall make all necessary rules and regulations appropriate for the governance and conduct of school operations consistent with local, state, and federal law.

• **Authority and Right of Review** - The Board of Education has final legal authority within the provision of state and federal law for the operation of the schools. No policy or procedure adopted by the Board or its designee shall be construed to limit the statutory powers provided by state law to the Bentonville Board of Education to exercise its own judgment and to make recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools. To accomplish this function the Board must have timely access upon request to any information, including documents, in the possession of school personnel unless such access is expressly prohibited by state or federal law.

• **Policy Adoption and Procedure Review** - It is the responsibility of the Board of Education to adopt policies for the effective and efficient management of the Bentonville School District. All policies legally adopted shall be put in written form, noted in the minutes of the meeting where such action was taken, and copies of any new, revised or deleted policies shall be promptly distributed for inclusion in official copies of the Bentonville School District Board Policy Book maintained on the school district web site, www.bentonvillek12.org. Adoption or revisions of generated administrative procedures which significantly alter the manner in which a Board policy is to be implemented shall be distributed to the Board for information.

• **Evaluation of Policies and Procedures** - The Board of Education is responsible for evaluating both the effectiveness of its policies and how well they have been implemented. The Superintendent of Schools recommends specific action to implement Board policy, and it is the responsibility of the Board to appraise the value and importance of each recommendation and to act on each proposal.

• **Operational Action** - The Board of Education is responsible for developing the processes necessary for conducting Board business such as adopting a procedural form for meetings, elections of Board officers, and providing for the enforcement of state and federal law.

• **Executive Action** - The Superintendent of Schools performs administrative duties for the Board by authority delegated to him or her. The Board of Education is responsible for holding the Superintendent of Schools accountable for the effective and efficient administration and leadership of the District’s schools.

• **Quasi-Judicial Action** - The Board of Education serves in a quasi-judicial function when it acts as a forum for hearings and appeals from parents, students, or personnel on decisions or recommendations made by the Superintendent of Schools or appointed designees.
The Bentonville School District Board of Directors shall exercise the following powers and perform the following duties:

1. Select and evaluate the Superintendent of Schools and support the Superintendent in the proper discharge of his or her duties.

2. Establish general policies for the school system in consultation with the school administrative staff and teacher representatives and in keeping with the wishes of the community and the requirements of the law.

3. Employ teachers and other employees necessary for the proper conduct of the public schools of the district upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools.

4. Make written employment contracts with teachers and all other employees of the district in the form prescribed by the Arkansas State Board of Education.

5. Approve salary schedules for all school personnel.

6. Propose and approve a millage rate that adequately funds the operation of all District schools and programs.

7. The Board of Education may, as necessary, revise the annual operational budget as recommended by the Superintendent.

8. Require and evaluate the reports of the Superintendent concerning the progress of the financial status of the district and its schools.

9. Provide for the care and custody of school facilities, grounds and other District property and ensure that they are maintained in a state of good repair.

10. Seek at all times the cooperation of the citizens of the Bentonville School District and county and city officials.

11. Ensure that the courses of study prescribed by the Arkansas State Board of Education or by law for all grades of schools in the district are taught.

12. Exert authority as board members, only when acting as a board legally in session, exercising no individual administrative responsibility with respect to the schools, and refraining as an individual, from commanding the services of any district employee.

13. Do all other things necessary and lawful for the conduct of efficient and effective free public schools in the district.

**Board Member Authority and Responsibility**

The Bentonville School District Board of Directors has power to take official action only when it meets in open session as a board and as a committee of the whole. The Board shall not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of any individual board member or district employee, except when such statement or action is in pursuance of specific instructions by the Board.


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**Board Membership - Elections and Appointments**

**School Board Elections**

**Number:**

The Bentonville Board of Education shall consist of seven (7) members elected at large by the qualified voters of the Bentonville School District No. 6 of Benton County, Arkansas.

Legal References:


**Term of Office:**

The term of office for each member of the Board of Education shall be four (4) years, with positions expiring on a rotation basis. The rotation of positions shall be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position No.</th>
<th>Expiration of Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position 1</td>
<td>2011 and every 4 years thereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position 2</td>
<td>2011 and every 4 years thereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position 3</td>
<td>2008 and every 4 years thereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position 4</td>
<td>2009 and every 4 years thereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position 5</td>
<td>2010 and every 4 years thereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position 6</td>
<td>2010 and every 4 years thereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position 7</td>
<td>2009 and every 4 years thereafter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Election Date:**

Members of the Bentonville Board of Education shall be elected by non-partisan vote at the annual school board election held each year on the third Tuesday of September in accordance with the general election laws.
of Arkansas or as otherwise provided by state law. Election of members to fulfill a vacancy shall also be held at this same time.

Legal Reference: Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-14-102

**School Board Member Candidate Petition:**

Any person who is qualified (see Board of Education Policy B.4.1) may become a candidate for a place on the Board of Education by filing a petition in writing, signed by twenty (20) or more qualified electors, with the Benton County Board of Education at least forty-five (45) days before the annual school election, at which time the ballot shall be closed.

Legal Reference: Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-14-111

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**Board Member Qualifications**

1. Except as noted in paragraph 2 below, to be eligible to serve as a member of the Board of Education, a person must be a qualified elector of the Bentonville School District.

2. Any person whose residential property (defined as a parcel of land which contains the dwelling in which the person resides no fewer than nine [9] months out of each year) overlaps two school district boundaries (one of which is the Bentonville School District) shall be eligible to be a member of the District Board of Education, provided the individual is a qualified elector of Benton County, Arkansas.

3. No person who is elected to the Board of Education shall be eligible for employment in the Bentonville School District during their tenure on the Board.

Legal References:
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-13-616
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-14-108

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**Unexpired Term Fulfillment/Vacancies**

The Board of Directors by a majority vote shall within thirty (30) days fill any unexpired vacancy which occurs on the Board due to death, resignation, moving outside the District, failure to participate; however, any director so appointed shall serve only until the next annual school election, at which time the electors shall select in the usual manner a director to serve the unexpired term of the vacating director.

Legal References:
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-13-611
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-13-613
Members of the Bentonville Board of Education should strive to prepare for and attend all regular monthly meetings, special meetings, and committee meetings to which they are assigned by the Board of Education President, discuss items presented on the agenda, suggest other items for consideration when appropriate, and vote in good faith upon motions and resolutions presented.

Official decisions of the Board of Education can be made only at duly constituted Board meetings and in compliance with state law. Individual Board members or groups of Board members do not have authority to speak for the Board as a whole or for the District and should refrain from making out-of-meeting comments unless directed to do so on behalf of the Board.

Board members shall be nonpartisan in dealing with school district matters and they shall place the interest of the students ahead of partisan principle, group interest, or personal self-interest. Members of the Bentonville Board of Education should also meet the following qualifications:

1. They should have personal integrity, intelligence, and appreciation of the values of quality education.

2. They should be residents of the District willing and capable of assuming responsibility and a leadership role in the community.

3. They shall be required to meet minimum training requirements on an annual basis as required by state law.

4. They should have the ability to work with others, should have the courage of their convictions, should always vote their beliefs, and should be committed to and champion the role of public education in our society.

5. They should be prepared and willing to invest a sufficient amount of time to the study of the problems of education in the district, state, and nation.

6. They must be willing and able to make sacrifices of their time, knowledge, and personal interest for the good of the Bentonville School District.

Any member of the board who misses three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled board meetings may be removed from the board. If the Board removes a member from office, the remaining members shall then appoint another individual to serve until the next annual school election, when the qualified electors shall elect in the usual manner a director to serve the unexpired term of the removed member.

Legal Reference: Act 177 of 2005
Legal Reference: Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-13-619 (d)(1, 2)
Board Member Code of Ethics

Position of Public Trust:

Holding public office is a trust created by the confidence which the citizens place in the integrity of their duly elected public officers. To preserve this confidence, it is the desire of the Bentonville Board of Education to operate under the highest ethical standards possible.

Annual Filing of Code Ethics Disclosure Form:

Each Board member is required to file the annual Code of Ethics Disclosure Form with the Benton County Clerk as specified by Arkansas law.

Legal Reference:
  - Ark. Code Ann. Section 21-8-305
  - Ark. Code Ann. Section 21-8-306

Reference Note: Usually January for existing Board members and shortly after notice of election for new Board members.

Board Member Code of Ethics:

I. As a member of my local Board of Education, representing all the citizens of my school district, I recognize that:

   1. my fellow citizens have entrusted me with the educational development of the children and youth of this community.
   2. the public expects my first and greatest concern to be in the best interest of each and every one of these young people without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
   3. the future welfare of this community, this state, and the Nation depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education we provide in the public schools to fit the needs of every learner.
   4. my fellow board members and I must take the initiative in helping people of this community have all the facts about their schools.
   5. I must never neglect my personal obligation to the community and my legal obligation to the State, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization. I acknowledge my obligation to the Nation knowing that it can remain strong and free only so long as public schools in the United States of America are kept free and strong.

II. In view of the foregoing consideration, it shall be my constant endeavor to:

   1. devote time, thought, and study to the duties and responsibilities of a school board member so that I may render effective and creditable service.
   2. work with my fellow board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debate of points at issue.
3. base my personal decisions upon all available facts in each situation; to vote my honest conviction in every case, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.

4. remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board; and to conduct my relationships with the school staff, the local citizenry, and all media of communication on the basis of this fact.

5. resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a school board member to benefit either myself or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the school district.

6. recognize that it is as important for the Board to understand and evaluate the educational program of the schools as it is to plan for the business of school operations.

7. keep in mind under all circumstances that the primary function of the Board is to establish the polices by which the schools are to be administered, but that the conduct of school business shall be left to the employed Superintendent of schools and his certified and non-certified staff.

8. welcome and encourage active cooperation and participation by citizens, organizations, and the media.

9. support my State and National School Boards Associations.

10. strive step by step toward ideal conditions for most effective school board service to my community, in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to public education as the greatest instrument for the preservation and perpetuation of our representative democracy.

Source: Board of Directors, National School Boards Association

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**Board Member Conflict of Interest**

The Bentonville Board of Education desires its members not only to adhere to all laws regarding conflict of interest, but to be alert to situations which have the appearance of a conflict of interest and to avoid actions that might embarrass themselves or the Board. Two areas of Board operations must be guarded with particular care in order that there be no appearance of conflict of interest.

**Pecuniary Interest:**

A Board member shall not have any direct pecuniary interest in a contract with the school, nor shall the member furnish directly any labor, equipment, or supplies to the school except as permitted under Arkansas law.

In the event a Board member is employed by a corporation or business or has a secondary interest in a corporation or business which furnishes goods or services to the District, the Board member shall declare his or her potential conflict of interest, and shall refrain from debating and voting upon the contract in question as recommended by Arkansas law.

It is not the intent of this policy to prevent the District from contracting with corporations or businesses because a Board member is an employee of the firm. The policy is designed to prevent placing a Board member in a position where his or her duties and responsibilities to the District and the member’s interest in his or her place...
of employment (or other indirect interest) might conflict and to avoid appearances of impropriety even though none may exist.

All aspects of the foregoing policy shall be applicable to the Superintendent of Schools.

Legal References:
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-21-601
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-21-602
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-21-603

**Employment of Immediate Family Members:**

It shall be the policy of the Bentonville Board of Education that no member of the immediate family of a Board member be employed in the Bentonville Public Schools unless the family member was employed prior to the Board member’s election. No one may be appointed to fill an open Board position who has immediate family employed by the District. Immediate family, for this purpose, shall be defined to include: spouse, children, parents, spouse of children, brothers and sisters.

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<th>B.5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date Issued:</td>
<td>2-17-97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date Revised:</td>
<td>9-10-01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date Reviewed:</td>
<td>6-22-10</td>
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**Organization of the Bentonville Board of Education**

**Date of the Organizational Meeting:**

At its first regular meeting following the annual school election, the Board of Education shall hold its organizational meeting for the purpose of electing officers.


**Board of Education Officers:**

President, Vice President, Secretary and the Superintendent as Ex-Officio Financial Secretary. Officers may be re-elected in subsequent years.


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<tr>
<td>Date Issued:</td>
<td>8-16-77</td>
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<td>Date Revised:</td>
<td>10-23-07</td>
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<td>Date Reviewed:</td>
<td>6-22-10</td>
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</table>

**Method of Electing Board of Education Officers**

Board of Education officers shall be elected annually at the first regular monthly meeting after the school election. The vote shall be by show of hands, or verbal at the discretion of the Board.

Board Officer Duties

**Board President Duties**

**Parliamentarian:**

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Education. He or she shall decide questions of order in accordance with established parliamentary procedure.

The President shall have the same right as other Board of Education members to offer resolutions, to make motions or second motions, to discuss questions and to vote thereon.

**Appoint Committees:**

The President shall appoint all committees unless otherwise directed by the Board, shall sign official documents of the Board, shall call a special meeting of the Board whenever conditions set forth for special meetings have been met, and shall perform all other duties as may be prescribed by law or by action of the Board of Education.

**Board Vice-President Duties**

The Vice-President shall preside at Board of Education meetings in the absence of the Board President and shall perform other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board.

**Board Secretary Duties**

The Secretary of the Board of Education shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president and the vice-president and serve as District Signatory on appropriate documents.

When a quorum of the Board of Education has convened and neither the President, the Vice President, nor the Secretary is present, the members shall elect one of their number to serve as president for that meeting.


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Board Committees

Special or standing committees may be appointed by the president at the discretion of the Board or by a majority vote of the Board. Any AdHoc committee appointed by the president or the Board will be discharged when the committee’s work is completed or, earlier, if dissolved by a majority vote of the entire Board. All reports of standing or special committees shall be made directly to the Board as a whole.
Advisory Committees

The Bentonville Board of Education may establish advisory committees as a means of involving citizens and others in making suggestions for the operations of the District.

School District Attorney/Legal Services

The Bentonville Board of Education may retain an attorney as needed for legal counsel and service in the affairs of the District. The selection, retainer, and fees shall be determined by the Board prior to the beginning of each academic year.

The school District attorney is authorized to render services as are approved in advance by the Board or the Board’s designee, the Superintendent of Schools.

Except in unusual circumstances, all communications between the school attorney and District personnel and Board members shall be directed through the Superintendent or his or her designee or the president of the Board. If inquiries are addressed directly to the school attorney by other District personnel, responses--in writing--shall be channeled through the Superintendent or the president of the Board of Education.


Board of Education Consultants/Staff Assistants

The Bentonville Board of Education may enlist the services of consultants to provide specialized advice or assistance to the District concerning educational, legal, management or administrative matters where it is deemed appropriate.

When knowledge or technical skills are needed that cannot be provided by school personnel, outside consultant assistance may be considered.

Any proposed contracts with outside consultants shall be submitted to the Board for approval, and will be accompanied by figures showing the actual or estimated cost of the consulting project to the District. Where appropriate bids for consulting services will be sought, but the Board will have ultimate discretion with respect to selection.
Consultants who serve the Bentonville School District will exercise no authority over the work of District personnel, but will act only as advisors in the field in which they are qualified to provide assistance.

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**School Board Meetings**

The Board of Education shall meet in regular monthly session on a day and week designated for the year as established during the regular June Board meeting preceding the completion of each school year.

The Board of Education will meet in regular session at least once a month and will schedule other official Board meetings and committee meetings as are necessary. The Board, in June, will establish a 12-month calendar of Board of Education meetings. Once adopted, this calendar will be changed only by a majority vote of the Board, except in the case of an emergency when the Board president may be permitted to make a change.

All meetings of the Board of Education shall be open to the public. Any request, proposal, or agenda item submitted in writing to the Superintendent of Schools by 4:00 p.m. at least five (5) business/school days before the scheduled meeting may be placed on the agenda for Board consideration and or action. This requirement is necessary in order to get the item placed on the Board Meeting Agenda and obtain background information and/or data regarding the item to allow informed consideration of the issues.

**Notification to the General Public:**

All meetings, regular or special, of the Bentonville School District Board of Education are open to the public. It is the policy of the Board to announce well in advance whenever practical through the news media, the date, time, and place of all regular and special meetings and the major topics to be discussed (an agenda). All school personnel are also invited to attend Board meetings.

Legal References:
## Special School Board Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Education may be called by any officer, or any three (3) members of the Board, or when petitioned to do so in writing signed by at least fifty (50) electors in the district.

Except in cases of emergency, each member of the Board must be notified at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the special meeting as to the time, place, date and purpose of such meeting. Notice of any special meeting shall be given to the news media as soon as is feasible but, at a minimum, at least two (2) hours prior to the time for the meeting to convene.

No action shall be taken at any special meeting of the Board which does not come within the purpose or purposes set forth in the call for the meeting. Only business related to the call of the meeting will be considered, except by unanimous consent of the members present.

Legal References:

## Executive Sessions

Within any regular or special meeting of the Board of Education, an executive session may be held for the purpose of considering employment, appointment, promotion, disciplining or resignation of any school employee or board member. The only person who may attend executive sessions of the Board are the Superintendent of Schools, the employee’s immediate supervisor, the employee in question, and any person being interviewed for the position of Superintendent of Schools. Neither the District’s attorney nor the employee’s attorney may attend an executive session. No minutes shall be taken during an executive session of the Board.

Executive sessions must never be called for the purpose of defeating the purpose or spirit of Arkansas law concerning Open Public Meetings. No resolution, rule, contract, regulation, policy, or motion considered or arrived at in executive session will be legal unless, following the executive session, the Board of Education reconvenes in public session and presents and votes on the matter.

Legal Reference:
Parliamentarian

Meetings of the Bentonville School District Board of Education will be conducted in accordance with accepted parliamentary procedure and the Board president, or designee, shall function as the parliamentarian for resolving any questions related to the rules of order in any meeting. The Board of Education, however, will not be precluded from pursuing deliberations in an atmosphere of free exchange of information and debate and will not be bound to adhere to the rules of order whenever more informal deliberations may be determined warranted by the Board president or the Board.

Voting Method/Conflict of Interest at Board of Education Meetings

All Board members, including the President, shall vote on each motion, following a second, except motions coming from a committee that do not require a second, and discussion of that motion.

In order for a Board member to abstain from voting, that person must declare a conflict and remove himself from the meeting room during the vote.

Failure of any Board member to vote, while physically present in the meeting room, shall be counted as a "no" vote, i.e., a vote against the motion.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-13-619 (c) (1)(B) & (C)

Minutes of Board of Education Meetings

Minutes of regular and special meetings of the Board of Education shall be kept by the secretary to the Board. The minutes shall include a record of all actions taken by the Board and resolutions and motions in full and the names of members making and seconding them. Reports and documents relating to a normal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.

The minutes of the previous meeting(s) shall be considered and approved by the Board at the next regular meeting. Upon approval, they constitute legal binding action and policy procedure. The minutes shall become a permanent record of the Board, shall be signed by the Board’s secretary, and shall be kept in the Bentonville School District Central Office.

Board of Education Records

All Board of Education records, except those enumerated by Arkansas law, shall be open for inspection and copying by the public during the regular business hours of the District’s central administrative office. Citizens wishing to copy Board records will be charged a nominal fee necessary to cover the cost of copying. If Board records are in active use or storage and, therefore, not available at the time a citizen makes a request, a written verification of this fact shall be given to the requestee. The notice shall state a date and time within three (3) working days when the records will be made available.


Public Participation at School Board Meetings

The Board desires citizens of the District to attend Board of Education meetings so they may become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools, and so the Board may have an opportunity to hear the concerns and suggestions of the public. Citizens who wish to address a specific matter on the agenda must make a written request to the Superintendent of Schools by no later than 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. There are two methods in which citizens may address the Board of Education: 1) citizens who wish to address a specific item on the agenda; and 2) under the “Comments from the Public” section of the agenda. Citizens will be given an opportunity to address the Board under the “Comments from Patrons” portion of the agenda.

The president of the Board of Education will inform the audience of the procedures to be observed in addressing the Board (see Board Procedure B.20 for specific guidelines).

News Media

The Bentonville Board of Directors believes that one of the paramount responsibilities of the Board of Education is to keep the public informed of its actions. Consequently, the local news media is welcome to attend all regular and special meetings of the Board of Education with the exception of executive sessions.

1. A copy of the agenda will be sent in advance to members of the news media who request it. Additionally, all reports approved by the Board shall be considered matters of official record and shall be made available to the press. However, reports-in-progress on which the Board has taken no final action shall be released only upon the Board’s authority as “tentative reports,” except that unofficial minutes of Board meetings may be released by the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee as soon as practical.
2. In order that the Board may transact its business in an efficient manner, questions from the news media will not be entertained while meetings are in progress. However, a representative of the Board will be available after each meeting to answer reporters’ questions and to clarify points of discussion and action. The Board President shall be the official public spokesperson for the Board of Education except for circumstances when this responsibility is delegated to another Board member or school district official.

3. In the event that representatives of the news media are unable to attend a meeting, they shall be provided, upon request, a summary of Board actions.

**Broadcasting and Taping of Board Meetings**

Photographic and electronic audio and video broadcasting and recording devices may be used at regular and special Board of Education meetings legally open to the public.

The Bentonville Board of Education will make the necessary arrangements to have audio recordings of all regular and any special meeting that it deems appropriate. Following approval of the minutes, which will be the official record of the meeting, audio recordings will be held for seven (7) years. Minutes of each meeting, prepared from the audio recordings, will be filed for reference in the District central office.

**Board of Education Work Sessions and Retreats**

The Bentonville Board of Education will conduct work sessions and retreats from time to time in order to informally discuss in detail proposed policies, program changes or other items of concern requiring in-depth examination. Any scheduled work sessions or retreats will be open to the public.

Formal action by the Board may not be taken at such sessions or retreats.

**Board of Education Policy Development, Coding and Review**

The Bentonville Board of Education should adopt clearly defined written policies based on a thorough understanding of the impact any policy will have on the educational processes of the District. In formulating policies, the Board should consult those individuals or groups to be affected by the policies:
**Staff Involvement in Policy Development**

It shall be the stated policy of the Board of Education to encourage employee participation in the policy-making process of the District. The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to establish such committees as necessary to study and recommend policies for the efficient and effective operation of the District.

All personnel shall be encouraged to assist in the formulation of recommended educational policy for the District through their representatives on the Personnel Policy Committee (PPC) and as provided by Arkansas law.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-201  
Ref: Policy P.1.31 – Staff Involvement in Policy Development

**Citizen Involvement in Policy Development**

The Board of Education solicits the advice and counsel of citizens in formulating policies for the operation of the District. When developing or revising policies of particular concern to the public, the Board may establish a citizen’s committee to offer advice and suggestions. Such committees shall be established in accordance with the Board’s policy on advisory committees (see BDF).

Additionally, any citizen of the District may recommend policies to the Board. Such policies or policy revisions shall be referred in writing to the Superintendent of Schools for administrative study and review prior to Board consideration and action.

**Student Involvement in Policy Development**

Most students desire greater input in the decisions which affect them, and their efforts are welcomed by the Board of Education. The Board views student participation in school affairs as an extension of the educational process. As a result, the Board encourages students to participate through planned programs and procedures in the governance of the District and in curriculum evaluation.

As citizens of the District, students have the right to acquire an education appropriate to their needs and potential, and they have the responsibility to assist in developing regulations for student conduct which provide for a learning climate conducive to the accomplishment of the educational mission of the District. By participating more actively, students can be a resource to the improvement of their school and to desirable communication.

**Review**

The process of appraisal and review of existing written policies shall be continuous, and items may be included on the agenda at any time at the suggestion of individual Board members, the Superintendent of Schools (or his or her designee), or the District Committee on Personnel Policies (PPC). Any policy revision or amendment shall be treated as a new policy adoption.

The Bentonville Board of Education Policy Committee shall meet regularly as a committee to review and appraise existing Board policies. Any recommended policy changes must be reviewed by the Policy Committee.

The Superintendent of Schools shall prepare and disseminate any administrative guidelines necessary to implement Board of Education policy, and shall review such guidelines periodically to determine their effectiveness in carrying out official Board policy.

The Board of Education shall retain the prerogative to review any and all administrative guidelines and may suggest or direct that certain guidelines be added, modified, or deleted.

**Communication**
The Superintendent of Schools is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Board of Education and the administrative guidelines and regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend to all District personnel, to members of the Board, and insofar as is conveniently possible, to all persons in the District. The Superintendent of Schools is also responsible to ensure that all policies adopted by the Board are disseminated to District personnel, citizens, and the news media as required by Arkansas law.

Code: B.25
Date Issued: 2-17-97
Date Revised: 10-23-07
Date Reviewed: 6-22-10

**Board of Education Communications**

Significant communications from personnel, students, parents, citizens, and other individuals or organizations to individual Board of Education members or to the Board as a whole, are to be conveyed to the Superintendent of Schools for dissemination to the entire Board with materials for the next appropriate meeting. Board meeting agendas may list for consideration communications received by the Board from the public. The listing for consideration will not include anonymous letters addressed to the Board as those will be to the Board for information only.

Communications to individual Board members requesting action or a statement of view may be acknowledged. It is recommended that an answer which commits the Board member should be avoided until the full Board has reviewed the issue. Statements of a Board member’s opinion to any citizen will be clearly identified as an individual opinion which does not necessarily reflect the views of the entire Board.

Communications inviting all the members of the Board of Education to attend meetings and functions should be answered by the Secretary to the Board, to whom the individual Board members should convey their responses.

Code: B.26
Date Issued: 2-17-97
Date Revised: 
Date Reviewed: 6-22-10

**Board of Education Communications with District Personnel**

The Board of Education desires to maintain open channels of communication between itself and District personnel. The basic lines of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent of Schools.

**District Personnel Communication to the Board**

All communications or reports to the Board or any Board committee from administrators, teachers, or other staff members shall be submitted through the Superintendent. This necessary procedure will not be construed as denying the right of any employee to appeal to the Board from administrative decisions on important matters, provided the Superintendent shall have been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with Board policy or state law. District personnel are also reminded that Board meetings are public meetings and provide an excellent opportunity to observe first hand the Board’s deliberations on items of concern and to participate as provided by Board policy.
Board Communications to District Personnel

All official communications, policies, and directives of employee interest and concerns will be communicated to District personnel through the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent shall employ such means as are appropriate to keep District personnel informed of the Board’s actions and concerns.

Visits to Schools

Individual Board members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will make arrangements for visitations through the building principal. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as “inspections” or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Board members will be carried on only under Board authorization and with the full knowledge of District personnel, including the Superintendent and building administrators.

Social Interaction

District personnel and Board members share a keen interest in the schools and education generally, and it is expected that when they meet at social affairs and other functions, they will informally discuss such matters as educational trends, issues, and innovations and general District problems. However, District personnel are reminded that individual Board members have no special authority except when they are convened at a legal meeting of the Board of Education or vested with special authority by Board action.

New Board Member Orientation and Training

Orientation of New Board Members

Each new member of the Board of Education will be afforded every opportunity to become oriented to the functions and responsibilities entailed by election to the Board. It will be the duty of the Superintendent of Schools and the administrative staff to assist each new member-elect to understand the Board’s functions, policies, procedures, and operation of the Bentonville Public School District before he or she takes office. At a minimum, the following information will be given to new board members:

- The new electee will be given selected materials on the functions of the Board of Education and of the school District;
- The incoming member will be invited to meet the Superintendent and his or her administrative staff and to discuss the services they provide for the Board;
- The incoming member will be given a copy of the New Board Member Handbook; and
- A copy of the Board of Education’s policies will be provided each new member of the Board.

Required Training

Newly elected Board members will complete the legally mandated minimum of nine (9) hours during the first year, then six (6) hours of training and instruction in Arkansas school law and in the laws governing the powers, duties, and responsibilities of school boards.

Board Member Facilities and Services

For purposes of records storage, study, meeting preparation, and other related needs, space will be made available at the administrative central offices for the use of Board of Education members.

In addition to all official Board correspondence and reports being provided through the office of the Superintendent of Schools, clerical services will be made available to Board members upon request for school related matters. Administrative assistance also will be available to Board members. All such services and assistance will be coordinated by the Superintendent of Schools.

Board Member Compensation and Expenses

No member of the Bentonville Board of Education shall receive compensation for his or her services as a member or as an officer of the Board.

Board members may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred while conducting official business, if so authorized by the Board of Education as a whole. This reimbursement will be provided under the per diem guidelines set by the District.

Annual Board Self-Evaluation

Annually the Bentonville Board of Education will plan for and carry through an appraisal of its functioning as a Board. This appraisal may be based on a broad set of criteria. The appraisal plan will be developed by the Board President and an ad hoc committee appointed by the Board as an whole, working with the Superintendent of Schools. Such appraisal instruments may be used as the Board considers desirable. Upon Board approval, an outside consultant may develop and lead the appraisal session or sessions.
School Board Memberships

The Bentonville Board of Education will maintain memberships in the national and/or state school board associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups. It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations which the Superintendent of Schools and the Board find to be of benefit to Board members and District personnel.
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER A

General School Administration
General Administration Goals and Objectives

The administration of the Bentonville Public School System is responsible, within the guidelines established by Board of Education policy, for the direction and coordination of students and staff in their efforts to reach the educational goals and objectives adopted by the Board. Administration must be based upon positive human relationships in order to serve as the foundation for the effective operation of the entire educational system. Without such a base, the District will lack that uniting force which makes everybody in the organization feel important regardless of the tasks or duties which he or she is assigned.

The Bentonville Board of Education expects the administration to demonstrate expertise in:

• The processes of empowerment, teamwork, decision making, and communication.

• Planning, organizing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating educational programs.

• The effective coordination of resources within the school District and the community so as to enable people to do things together for education that they might never be able to do separately.

• The demonstration of leadership.

• The development and maintenance of close working relationships and channels of communication within the school District and community.

• The development of a climate of cooperation toward attaining the educational goals and objectives set by the Board.

Superintendent of Schools

It will be the policy of the Bentonville Board of Education that the Board delegates its executive powers to the Superintendent of Schools so that he or she has the necessary flexibility to effectively manage and lead the District according to the provisions of Board policy, federal, and state law. The Board of Education reserves to itself the ultimate decision on all matters concerning policy, expenditure of funds, and those matters specified as the responsibility of the Board as enumerated by federal or state law.
School Superintendent Qualifications

To be eligible for the position of Superintendent of Schools a person must possess those qualifications set forth by the Arkansas Department of Education. The Board considers these to be minimum standards and shall seek to employ a person who exceeds these requirements whenever possible.

Minimum Superintendent Licensure Requirements

The Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation Section X requires all AR districts to employ a full time Superintendent. The four digit job codes for non-student based positions requires the Superintendent of Schools to be a licensed educator who:

- holds a District Level Administrator’s license.
- hold a current Standard teaching license,
- have at least four (4) years teaching experience,
- hold a current Standard Building Level or Curriculum/Program Administrative License
- have or complete an advanced degree (with a program of study reflective of the standards for District Level Administrator Licensure), or complete an advanced program of study reflective of the standards for District Level Administrator Licensure (both inclusive of an internship and portfolio), from a regionally and/or NCATE accredited college or university, successfully complete the state-mandated licensure assessment (passing score of 156 minimum).

The Superintendent must live in the Bentonville School District or be willing to relocate to the Bentonville School District.

In addition to the minimum requirements as set forth by the state, the Superintendent shall possess the following qualifications:

- a minimum of four years of professional experience.
- have good character and unquestionable morals and integrity,
- have the ability to think clearly and independently and exercise good judgment,
- have the capability to accept responsibility and to make decisions,
- demonstrate effective and efficient educational and business leadership,
- have the ability to select and develop capable school personnel,
- have knowledge, skills, and understandings of the purposes and processes of public education,
- demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate with others,
- have a disposition that lends itself to cooperation with school personnel, community groups, and citizens of the District, and
- other credentials and qualifications as determined by the Board of Education.
Recruitment of Superintendent of Schools

To provide the most capable leadership available for the Bentonville Public School District, the Board of Education will engage in a search for applicants for the position of Superintendent of Schools. The services of consultants may be engaged to assist in screening candidates to be interviewed by the Board.

Superintendent Powers, Duties, and Responsibilities

The Superintendent of Schools shall serve at the discretion of the Board of Education as the Chief Executive Officer of the Bentonville Public Schools.

Administratively, the Superintendent shall head all departments and divisions providing the leadership necessary to provide quality educational programs and services. The Superintendent will be responsible to the Board of Education for all district operations and the attainment of mutually established goals and objectives.

Specifically:

1. Educational Leadership

   The Superintendent shall develop, administer and maintain the District’s educational program designed to meet the needs of the community.

2. Finance and Personnel

   The Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education all positions required for proper operation of District programs. This includes hiring, assigning, transferring, and dismissal of all District staff.

   a. The Superintendent will develop, supervise, and present the annual operating budget to the Board for approval.
   b. The Superintendent will implement and oversee the annual Board approved budget.
   c. The Superintendent shall monitor all District expenditures.
   d. The Superintendent shall report the annual audit results to the Board of Education.
   e. The Superintendent shall make appropriate recommendations to the Board concerning pupil transportation.

3. Policy

   All policy matters and considerations will be brought before the Policy Committee of the Board of Education. The Superintendent and other appropriate staff members will advise the Policy Committee members with regard to needed revisions, creation of new policy, or recommended deletion. All policy developed by the board Committee shall be presented to the entire Board for their consideration. Generally speaking, policy will be presented to the Board at one meeting with approval / non-approval to follow at the
next monthly meeting. All policy adopted by the Board of Education will be implemented by the
Superintendent.

When necessary, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to develop procedures to insure proper
implementation. The Board of Education Policy Committee will be responsible for policy review and / or
modification.

4. Curriculum

All curriculum matters and considerations will be brought before the Curriculum Committee of the Board of
Education. The Superintendent and executive directors of elementary and secondary education will advise
the Committee members with regard to revisions, new developments and staffing implications. All
discussions and decisions that come out of the Curriculum Committee will be shared with the entire Board
of Education.

Once approved by the Curriculum Committee, all courses of study, curriculum guides, and resources will be
presented to the entire Board of Education for their approval.

The District shall also use cadres, study groups, and District Councils to bring needed information to the
Curriculum Committee. The Superintendent will be charged with curriculum evaluation.

5. Communications and Public Relations

f. The Superintendent shall prepare and submit to the Board recommendations relative to all matters
   requiring Board action, placing before the Board such necessary and helpful facts, information, and
   reports as are needed to insure the making of informed decisions.

g. The Superintendent shall inform and advise the Board about the programs, practices, and problems of
   the schools and shall keep the Board informed of the activities operating under the Board’s authority.

h. The Superintendent shall attend, or delegate a representative to attend, all meetings of municipal
   agencies at which matters pertaining to the public schools appear on the agenda or are expected to be
   raised.

i. The Superintendent will keep the public informed about current District educational practices and
   policies.

j. The Superintendent shall meet periodically with community groups concerning school programs.

k. The Superintendent will belong to and participate in appropriate community groups and organizations.

l. The Superintendent shall attend (ex-officio) all meetings of the Board of Education and its various
   committees. The Board of Education, at its discretion, may excuse the Superintendent from attending
   any meeting, including executive sessions.

6. Maintenance and Facilities

a. The Superintendent shall provide suitable instructions and regulations to govern the use and care of all
   school properties and facilities.

b. The Superintendent shall oversee all appropriations for District sites, plans for improvement and
   alterations and changes in building equipment.

The Superintendent shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Education.

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Code: A.2.4
Date Issued: 3-10-97
Date Revised: 12-10-01
Date Reviewed: 08-24-10

Superintendent’s Contract
The appointment of the Superintendent of Schools will be secured through an explicitly written contractual agreement, which will state the terms of the contract, compensation and other benefits, and other conditions of employment. The contract will meet all state requirements and will protect the rights of both the Board of Education and the Superintendent.

The Bentonville Board of Education shall appoint the Superintendent of Schools for a term not to exceed three years. The contract shall be reviewed annually and may be extended. If at any time, in the opinion of the majority of the Board, the Superintendent’s services are deemed unsatisfactory, he or she shall be notified in writing and given an opportunity to correct the conditions. If the unsatisfactory conditions are not appropriately corrected, the Superintendent shall be given notice in writing at least three months before expiration of his or her contract that the Superintendent’s services will not be retained.

The Superintendent’s salary, compensation and benefits shall be established by the Board of Education at the time of contract issuance or renewal.

Legal Reference: Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-301

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**Superintendent’s Consulting Activities**

The Superintendent of Schools will devote his or her full-time skills, labor, and attention to the direction and supervision of the Bentonville Public School District, and will not, during the term of employment, be engaged in any other business. By agreement with a majority of the members of the Board, however, the Superintendent may undertake for remuneration consultative work, speaking engagements, writing, lecturing, membership and office in educational and civic organizations, or other professional duties and obligations outside the district.

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**Evaluation of the Superintendent**

In January and February of each year, the Board of Education shall conduct a mid-year review of the performance of the Superintendent. Through this review, the Board of Education shall strive to accomplish the following:

1. Evaluate the progress toward the accomplishment of school district goals
2. Clarify the role of the Superintendent as viewed by the Board
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Superintendent in light of the current job
4. Develop positive team working relationships between the Board members and the Superintendent
5. Improve and enhance performance as it relates to the administrative leadership of the District.

In order for the evaluation process to be most effective, mutually adopted school district goals shall be affirmed by the Board of Education and the Superintendent. It is these goals, in conjunction with the job description, that constitute the essence of the evaluation.
School Principals/Building Administrators

Within the limits of Arkansas law, Board of Education policy, and directives from the Superintendent, the Principal will be the administrative authority of his or her assigned school. The principal is responsible for a thorough knowledge of all laws, regulations, and instructions governing the position. The Principal will coordinate all administrative and supervisory activities which occur in the building. The Principal will be responsible for the coordination of the work of assistant principals, teachers, and all building staff. The Principal will be responsible for the administration of school procedures in his or her school and for making available to building staff a knowledge of such regulations as they are enacted by the Board of Education or formulated by the Bentonville Public School District Central Administration. The Principal is responsible for the detailed organization of the school, the assignment of duties of staff members within the school, and the administration of the instructional program.

- The Principal will handle all complaints from patrons or parents which affect the school, investigate, and refer to the central office administration all cases which cannot be resolved satisfactorily.

- The Principal is responsible for the efficiency and effectiveness of teachers and other staff members within the building and will evaluate them in accordance with established District procedures.

- The Principal will have the power to suspend students temporarily and make recommendations for reassignment, long-term suspension or expulsion. The Principal may assign this responsibility to the assistant principal(s). The Principal will work closely with central office administration to enforce the requirements of the Arkansas compulsory attendance laws.

Administrative Personnel - Selection and Terms of Employment

Selection

Selection of administrative personnel shall be by nomination of the Superintendent of Schools. Administrative salaries and other benefits are based on a salary schedule adopted not later than May 1 of each year by the Board of Education.

Renewal

In conformity with Arkansas law, administrative personnel, except for the Superintendent and any assistant superintendents, are automatically re-employed unless they are notified by May 1, by the Superintendent that their contract will not be renewed. All offers to renew annual contracts shall expire if not accepted in writing and returned to the central office administration within ten days of issuance.

Administrative personnel are eligible for coverage under the state Workmen’s Compensation Plan.
Hiring

The executive directors, building principals and assistant principals, and coordinators are hired annually in March.

Terms of Employment

All terms of employment are determined at hiring or renewal pursuant to Arkansas law.

Legal References:
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-301
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-302
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-1401 et seq.
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-1502
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-1506

Administrative Personnel - Selection Criteria

Administrative personnel shall be hired by the Board of Education after consideration of the recommendation by the Superintendent. Selection shall be based on the following general criteria:

1. Appropriate certification.
2. Personal interview.
3. Quality of credentials.
4. Experience and past performance.
5. Knowledge of and insight into issues involving public education.
6. Health qualifications.
7. Potential contribution to the Bentonville Public School District.
8. Background checks.

Legal References:
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-401
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-402
- Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-410
**Administrative Personnel - Assignment and Transfer**

Assignment and transfer of administrative staff shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Legal Reference: Ark. Code Ann. Section 6-17-303

**Administrative Personnel - Evaluation**

In developing and/or revising the program of evaluation, the administrative staff should be consulted.

The purpose of evaluation is to identify strengths and weaknesses of individual administrators, to assist in providing a program of improvement, and to provide a basis for recommending their re-employment, probationary status, or termination.

The evaluation shall be conducted prior to contract renewal by the Superintendent and according to the provisions of Arkansas law.

All staff will be given the opportunity to critique administrative personnel using a narrative critique form which will be available in all buildings during the first week of April. The purpose of the critique is to address strengths, needs and suggestions for growth. The form should be completed in ten (10) working days. One copy will be forwarded to the administrator being critiqued. Administrative personnel will maintain a file of the narrative critiques which will be available to the Superintendent. The staff member doing the critique may keep a confidential copy.

Administrative personnel may request a post conference with any employee who completed a critique form. The Superintendent or Designee should also be present at a post critique conference.


**Administrative Personnel - Health Examination**

Prior to beginning employment each school year, every newly hired public school employee within this state shall present to the Executive Director of Human Resources a Certificate of Health dated not more than ninety (90) days prior to the date of its presentation stating that the employee is free from tuberculosis.
The Certificate of Health may be submitted anytime between three months prior to the official opening of the school year and the end of the first month’s employment. Persons employed after the opening of school will have 30 days to secure a Certificate of Health. “No Return” cards shall be good as long as the person is employed by the Bentonville School District.


| Code:       | A.4.5          |
| Date Issued:| 3-10-97        |
| Date Revised:| 11-30-10     |
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**Administrative Personnel - Master Schedules**

Each principal shall furnish the office of the Superintendent of Schools a copy of the schedule or assignment of each teacher in his or her school by the first day of the school term.

| Code:       | A.4.6          |
| Date Issued:| 3-10-97        |
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**Administrative Personnel - Expenses**

Administrative personnel may be reimbursed for expenses incurred for attendance at professional meetings as approved by the Superintendent. Funds for this purpose are to be provided from the individual school budgets.

| Code:       | A.5            |
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**Development of Procedures**

The Board of Education delegates to the Superintendent of Schools the function of specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the District will be operated in accordance with Board policy and state law. These detailed arrangements constitute the procedures governing the Bentonville Public School District.

In the development of procedures, the Superintendent will involve at the planning stage those who would be primarily affected by them; for example teachers, students, parents, etc.

The Board of Education will adopt procedures when Arkansas state law requires the Board to do so, or if recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.
Board of Education Review of Procedures

The Board of Education will review, when appropriate, procedures developed by the administration to implement Board policy, but it will revise or veto such procedures only when, in the Board’s judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Board.

Procedures need not be approved by the Board in advance of issuance except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for the procedure to have the Board’s advance approval.

Handbooks and Directives

In order that pertinent Board polices, regulations, school rules and procedures and relevant laws may be known by all personnel and students affected by them, District administrators and principals are granted authority to issue personnel and student handbooks as found necessary and as required by state law.

The Board of Education will review and approve the Districtwide personnel handbook and student handbooks in order that the contents may be accorded the legal status of Board approved policy and regulations. The Superintendent of Schools shall use his or her own judgment as to whether other specific handbooks need Board approval; however, all handbooks published are to be made available to the Board for informational purposes.
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER FM

Fiscal Management
Activity Funds Management

Activity funds are designed for the purpose of proper accounting of funds that are received from any and all dues, fees, admissions, contributions and all other such funds that would be classified school or district sponsored. For purposes of clarification, a school or district sponsored activity fund will be those events that fall under the jurisdiction of the principal, district supervisor or Superintendent.

All such activity funds received will be properly receipted and all such activity funds expended will be spent using district procedures. All such activity funds will be used for authorized purposes only. All such activity funds must adhere to all audit procedures and will be subject to audit both internal and external. All such activity funds will be properly accounted for on the district financial statements.

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Disposal of School Property

When any individual item such as equipment, books and materials, and other such items originally valued at less than $2,500 become worn out, obsolete, surplus or otherwise unusable to the district, the Superintendent may authorize their disposal in a manner to the district’s best interest.

The Board of Education will declare surplus all other individual items originally valued at $2,500 or greater that become worn out, obsolete, surplus or otherwise unusable to the district. After board action, the item of monetary value will be advertised for sale by sealed bid. It will be certified in these advertised bids that the bidder cannot be an officer, employee or an immediate family member of an officer or employee of the district. If items declared surplus fail to produce a monetary return to the district, the Superintendent is authorized to dispose of these items efficiently.

All item(s) purchased with federal funds will not be disposed of or sold until proper authorization is received from the participating federal agency.
Fundraising Activities

No school sponsored fundraising shall be permitted without prior application to and approval by the Superintendent or his/her designee. For purposes of this policy, school sponsored activities are those operating under the direct auspices and control of the District or building principal. Non-school sponsored groups including, but not limited to, Band Boosters, Athletic Boosters and the PTO are exempt from this policy.

An annual report will be submitted, by the Superintendent to the Board of Education, at the end of each school term which will permit Board appraisal of the stewardship of these activities.

Gifts and Bequests

The Board or Superintendent may accept and use any gift of money or property for a purpose deemed by the Board to be consistent with district goals. Any gift to the district with a value of $2,500 or greater should be accompanied by a letter from the donor for official action and recognition of the Board. To insure consistency and effectiveness, all gifts and bequests given to the District shall be administered by District personnel. All expenditures will be managed through the District Purchase Order Process. All other gifts presented of a lesser value will be accepted by the principal or designee, taking into consideration the criteria listed below. Notification of gifts shall be provided by the building principal or Superintendent to the Board of Education for official action or recognition.

To be accepted, a gift shall:

● have a purpose consistent with those of the school;
● be offered by a donor acceptable to the Board;
● not begin a program which the Board would be unwilling to continue when gift or grant funds are exhausted;
● not bring undesirable or hidden costs to the district;
● place no restrictions on the school program;
● not be in conflict with any provisions of policy, school code or public law.

All gifts and bequests will become school property to be used at the discretion of the school unless otherwise specified in the bequest. The school district is not authorized to give the donor a statement as to the value of the gift or bequest for tax purposes. The school district will, at the request of the donor, provide a letter acknowledging receipt of the gift or bequest.


Inventories

For control purposes, an asset inventory will be maintained on all individual asset items valued at $2,500 or more. This district wide inventory will be maintained by the District’s Business Office.

An inventory of maintenance and food service products stored in the district warehouse will also be maintained on an annual basis.

National School Lunch Act Funding Expenditures

Funding received from the state based on the number of students eligible for free and reduced-priced meals under the National Student Lunch Act shall be expended in accordance with guidelines outlined in the ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding.

The district shall at least annually evaluate programs supported by NSLA funds to determine the effectiveness of the programs and to ensure they are providing intervention/prevention services designed to increase student achievement.

Legal Reference:  
A.C.A. § 6-20-2305(b)(4)  
ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER SS

Support Services
Energy Management

Bentonville Public Schools believe it to be the responsibility of the District to ensure that every effort is made to conserve energy and natural resources while exercising sound financial management and safety. Although Energy Management will be made a part of the building administrator’s annual assessment, the implementation of this policy is the joint responsibility of the Board of Education members, Energy Education Manager, administrators, teachers, students and support personnel.

School Bus Safety

*The driver of any motor vehicle upon a state highway, upon meeting or overtaking a school bus from any direction which has stopped on the highway for the purpose of receiving or discharging school children, shall stop the vehicle immediately upon a signal from the driver (stop arm or flasher lights) and not start or attempt to pass in any direction until school vehicle shall finish receiving and/or discharging pupils.

No school bus driver shall be employed to act as chauffeur or operator of any bus to transport children to and from school, or school-sponsored activities, unless he has satisfactorily passed the test required herein and possesses a current valid certificate therefore. Such certificates shall be required by the local school board.

**In the event a qualified school bus operator as prescribed herein shall die, resign, be ill, disabled, or otherwise not available to operate a school bus, and the school board is not able to obtain a qualified operator with the certificate required herein, such school board may provide a substitute driver to operate such school bus on a temporary basis without a certificate until the next regular scheduled school bus operator's examination is held in the locality. Extra-curricular trips shall be made by certified operators only.

Bus Conduct

Students are under the supervision of the bus drivers and are responsible to the driver for their conduct.

Bus drivers are to report student disrespect or misbehaver to principals. Students thus reported by the bus driver will be subject to disciplinary action.

Rules for bus conduct will be explained to all students at the beginning of each school year and posted in a conspicuous place on all school buses.
### Scheduling and Routing

Buses shall be routed to provide the best service for the greatest number of students. Bus routes are planned to get within approximately 1/2 mile of the home location of each student if other factors permit. No school bus shall deviate from its established route except on instructions from the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

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### Maintenance Program

Safety and maintenance inspections are made twice a year and a monthly statement will be made indicating that all state requirements are being met.

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### Use of School Facilities

School District facilities are provided to meet the educational needs of students. School activities shall have first priority for all facility use. The Board of Education believes that when school district facilities are not in use for school programs, the facilities which are constructed and maintained through the expenditure of public funds within the school district should be used to the fullest extent possible by community groups and agencies on a first come first served basis.

In order to assure that this accommodation may be extended to all patrons in the Bentonville School District, it is necessary to have procedures for the use of the school district facilities adopted and made available to the general public. The administration of the school district shall prescribe an orderly process for utilization of school district facilities by community groups and agencies. Provisions for the control and protection of these public facilities will be established. The rules and regulations may require that out-of-pocket expenses including, but not limited to, extra utilities, administrative, custodial, maintenance and other costs be reimbursed to the school district or proper school personnel under the terms of a Facility Use Agreement.

The District reserves the right to approve or reject any request for use of school facilities, or make appropriate limitations on use, based upon the legality of the proposed use, any potential conflict with other uses of the property, liability concerns, and any concerns related to safety and security of students, school personnel, school property, or the other persons. Generally, requests to use facilities will be handled on a first come, first served basis. Any person or organization that has a facility use request rejected has the right to an appeal with the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) business days.
Child Nutrition

Menu Substitutions for Students with Disabilities Only

Bentonville Schools will only provide substitute meal components on menus to accommodate students with handicapping conditions meeting the definition of a disability as defined in USDA regulations. A parent/guardian must have a Certificate of Disability for Special Dietary Needs Form completed by a licensed physician to request such accommodations. A variety of meals and foods is prepared; however, the District does not prepare special menus based upon any family’s religious or personal health beliefs. If a school menu fails to offer choices consistent with a family’s religious or personal health beliefs, parents should assume the responsibility of preparing the child’s meals.
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER F

Facilities Development
Naming/Renaming of School Facilities

Naming and renaming of school district facilities or parts of facilities is the responsibility of the Board of Education. The Facilities Committee of the Board of Education shall recommend, in writing, the proposed name to the entire Board for consideration after receiving input from staff, students and the public. The rationale for the recommendation will accompany the proposed name of the facility.

The Facilities Committee may consider the following criteria in naming a facility or part of a facility:

a. The facility may be named after a geographic location or section of the community it serves.

b. If named after a person(s), that person(s) shall be of exemplary moral character; have made outstanding contributions to the community; or be historically significant either locally, nationally, or internationally. Permission to use a name will be sought from the person(s), business or donor, if possible.

c. The facility may also be named after major financial contributors to the school district.
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER P

Personnel
Compensation

Employees will be paid according to Board of Education approved salary schedules.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Classified employees who are contracted for twenty (20) hours or more per week and certified employees who are contracted for at least one-half (1/2) time may be eligible for district benefits of health insurance, life insurance and long-term disability.

The District contributes $150.00 per month toward the cost of health insurance for eligible employees.

Any employee on approved leave of absence may continue health/dental insurance, vision and other optional coverage offered by the District through COBRA coverage.

District will pay monthly premiums for thirty thousand dollars ($30,000) in life insurance and long-term disability for eligible employees. Payroll deduction will be available for dependent coverage on life insurance.

All benefits will commence on the first day of the month following thirty days of employment. The employee is responsible for the return of all forms, enrollment, etc., to enroll in District offered benefits.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Bentonville Board of Education shall conduct the school system on a nondiscriminatory and non-segregated basis. In the employment of personnel, the Board will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, gender, national origin, age, or disability.

Complaints and Grievances

The Bentonville Public Schools, recognizing the need for close cooperation between professional staff and immediate supervisors, encourage that grievances be resolved formally within each building at the lowest possible administrative level and in a clear and timely manner for both parties.

However, employees shall have the right to present grievances and in doing so shall be assured freedom from restraint, interference, discrimination, and reprisal in the preparation and processing of such formal written grievances.
The employee has the right to be represented by a person of his or her choosing, but not by a member of the party’s immediate family, at any level of the procedure.

Employees may follow procedures outlined in Code SAE – Complaint and Grievances Procedure.

If the employee’s immediate supervisor determines that the employee’s concern does not constitute a grievance, the employee may appeal that determination. The process used will be the same as for a grievance.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-208, 6-17-210

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**Directory Information**

With respect to District employees, directory information shall not be released for commercial use.

Directory information means employee's name, address, home telephone number, work location and position.

Directory information may, upon approval by the Superintendent, be released for noncommercial use unless the employee notifies the Superintendent in writing that his/her directory information is not to be released.

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**Right to Witness or Representative**

An employee shall be entitled to and shall be offered the opportunity to have a witness or representative of the employee’s choice present during any disciplinary or grievance matter with any administrator.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-210

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**Personnel Policies**

Bentonville Public Schools will provide a digital copy of the district’s personnel policies via the district website. A hard copy of all policies shall be available to review at each location within the district via internet. A hard copy shall be given to the individual employee upon request of the employee.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-026
Sexual Harassment

The Bentonville School District is committed to having an academic and work environment in which all students and employees are treated with respect and dignity. Student achievement and amicable working relationships are best attained in an atmosphere of equal educational and employment opportunity that is free of discrimination. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that undermines the integrity of the educational environment and will not be tolerated.

Believing that prevention is the best policy, the district will periodically inform students and employees about the nature of sexual harassment, the procedures for registering a complaint, and the possible redress that is available. The information will stress that the district does not tolerate sexual harassment and that students and employees can report inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature without fear of adverse consequences.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee to be subjected to or to subject another person to, sexual harassment as defined in this policy. Any employee found, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

Sexual harassment refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other personally offensive verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by someone under any of the following conditions:

1. Submission to the conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual’s education or employment;
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual; and/or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s academic or work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic or work environment.

The terms “intimidating,” “hostile,” and “offensive” include conduct of a sexual nature which has the effect of humiliation or embarrassment and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive so that it limits the student’s or employee’s ability to participate in, or benefit from, an educational program or activity or their employment environment.

Within the educational or work environment, sexual harassment is prohibited between students; employees and students; non-employees and students; employees; employees and non-employees.

Actionable sexual harassment is generally established when an individual is exposed to a pattern of objectionable behaviors or when a single, serious act is committed. What is, or is not, sexual harassment will depend upon all of the surrounding circumstances. Depending upon such circumstances, examples of sexual harassment include, but are not are not limited to: unwelcome touching; crude jokes or pictures; discussions of sexual experiences; pressure for sexual activity; intimidation by words, actions, insults, or name calling; teasing related to sexual characteristics; and spreading rumors related to a person’s alleged sexual activities.

Employees who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment are encouraged to file a complaint by contacting their immediate supervisor, administrator, or Title IX coordinator, who will assist them in the complaint process. Under no circumstances shall an employee be required to first report allegations of sexual harassment to a school contact person if that person is the individual who is accused of the harassment. To the extent possible, complaints will be treated in a confidential manner. Limited disclosure may be necessary in order to complete a thorough investigation.

Employees who file a complaint of sexual harassment will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form.
Employees who knowingly fabricate allegations of sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Individuals who withhold information, purposely provide inaccurate facts, or otherwise hinder an investigation of sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

DEFINITION: The definition of employee(s) includes staff, substitutes and volunteers.

Legal References: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC 1681, et seq.
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000-e, et seq.
ACA 6-15-1005 (b) (1)
ASBA Model 3.26

ADA Grievance

The Bentonville Public Schools provide this internal grievance procedure to facilitate a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the U. S. Department of Justice regulations implementing Title 11 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title 11 states, in part, that "no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits for, or be subjected to discrimination" in programs or activities sponsored by a public entity.

Complaints should be addressed to the Equity Coordinator. The Equity Coordinator has been designated to coordinate ADA compliance efforts.

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

Staff Conflict of Interest

No employee shall accept any outside employment that would interfere with professional responsibilities or create a conflict of interest.
Ability of School Employees to Hold Public Office

All employees of the Bentonville School District are free to exercise their rights as citizens and run for or accept appointments to public office if they so desire. However, employees should understand the following:

1. By law, a school board member may not work for the school district which he/she serves.

2. The school district may not grant any employee paid leave for the purpose of permitting the employee to engage in public service or related activities.

3. Employees may use their personal days and vacation days (if applicable) to engage in public service or related activities, with prior approval of their building principal or Superintendent.

4. In addition, upon request to the school board, a maximum of five (or a number of days selected by the district) additional days of unpaid leave may be granted to the employee for the purposes of engaging in public service or related activities. If the employee’s service can be replaced by the District, the employee will have salary deducted in the amount equal to any and all daily costs normally incurred by the district for a substitute.

5. Employees who attempt to use sick leave days fraudulently for any purpose, including engaging in public service or related activities, will face disciplinary action up to and including non-renewal or termination.

Review of Personnel Records

To ensure that an employee's personnel file of record does not contain material that might be adverse to the employee's continued employment, promotion, or advancement, or employment elsewhere, without the employee's knowledge of such material, the employee shall be given the opportunity to sign any such material that is not directed to or does not originate with the employee. The signature shall merely signify that the employee has read the material to be filed. Should the employee decline to sign such material, that fact shall be noted and filed with the material in the employee's personnel file.

Bentonville Public Schools shall maintain a personnel file for each employee, which shall be available to the employee for inspection. Requesting copies of personnel records should occur in advance during normal office hours.

The employee may submit, for inclusion in the file, written information to any of the material contained therein.

Personnel files or any of their contents will not be removed from the Administration Building without the approval of the Director of Human Resources or the Superintendent.

Other than the employee, no one may have access to an employee's file other than his/her Supervisor, Human Resources Personnel or those authorized by the Director of Human Resources or the Superintendent. Administrators and the Human Resources Department are the only district employees allowed to make copies of personnel records.
Criminal Background Checks

Bentonville Public Schools requires as a condition for initial employment and making application for employment authorize release to the Department of Education the results of statewide and nationwide criminal records checks by the Identification Bureau of the Department of Arkansas State Police, which conform to the applicable federal standards and include taking of the applicant’s fingerprints. All staff shall be responsible for the payment of any fee associated with the criminal records check. The checks shall conform to the applicable federal standards and shall include the taking of fingerprints. The person shall sign a release of information to the Department of Education.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-411, 6-17-414, AND 6-17-415

Assignment of Personnel

The Bentonville School District has the authority to assign and reassign or transfer any district employee upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. Members of the same family may be assigned to the same building with the approval of the building administrator. Also, while keeping in mind the needs of students and the need to have a balanced faculty (race, sex, experience, etc.), reasonable efforts shall be made to honor staff preference in assignment.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-303

Reduction in Work Force

The District acknowledges its authority to reduce the workforce (employees) whenever such a reduction is deemed as necessary or desirable. The RIF may also apply to the amount of hours worked by District employees.

Procedures for both reduction and recall will be developed by the Superintendent and administered by the Executive Director of Human Resources.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-2407

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.
**Employee - Transfer**

Employees are subject to transfer at the direction of the Superintendent of schools. Request for employee transfers may originate with any of the following persons: (1) employee, (2) principal, (3) Executive Director of Human Resources, or (4) Superintendent. Employees who are to be transferred shall be notified as soon as possible after the decision to transfer has been made. Notification of pending transfer shall be made personally and confirmed in writing. Except in cases of obvious emergency transfers, such notification shall be made no later than the date of all offers to renew contract. Employees who are the subject of administrative transfers shall be notified of vacancies existing in their fields at the time of notification of transfer. The Superintendent or his authorized representative shall see that employees being transferred are assigned to positions available at the time of notification of transfer for which they are best qualified by training and experience. Employees who receive administrative transfers shall be given a specific opportunity to present their position with regard to the pending transfer to the executive director of human resources within five working days after notification. In the event the employee is still dissatisfied with a given decision, s/he may request a conference with the Superintendent. Should the employee wish to appeal the decision of the Superintendent, they may appeal to the Board of Education. That appeal should be made in writing within five (5) days after the meeting with the Superintendent.

**Registered Offender – Prohibited on School Campus**

It is unlawful for a sex offender who is required to register under the Sex Offender Registration Act of 1997, § 12-12-901 et seq., and who has been assessed as a Level 3 or Level 4 offender to knowingly enter upon the campus of a public school.

It is not a violation of this section if the sex offender

1. Is a minor and is a student;
2. Enters upon the campus for the purpose of attending a school-sponsored event for which an admission fee is charged or tickets are sold or distributed, a graduation ceremony, or a baccalaureate ceremony;
3. Enters upon the campus on a day that is not designated a student contact day by the school district’s calendar or on a day in which no school-sponsored event is taking place upon the campus; or
4. Is the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in a public school district and enters upon the campus where the student is enrolled for the purpose of:
   a. Delivering to the student medicine, food, or personal items, provided that the items are delivered directly to the school office; or
   b. Attending a scheduled parent-teacher conference provided the sex offender is escorted to and from the conference by a designated school official or employee.

A sex offender who is the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in a public school district and wishes to enter upon the campus in which the student is enrolled for any other purpose must give reasonable notice to the school principal or his or her designee.
The school principal or his or her designee may allow the parent sex offender to enter upon the campus as long as there is a designated school official or employee available to escort and supervise the sex offender while he or she remains on campus.

If a designated school official or employee is not available at the time the parent sex offender wishes to enter upon the campus, the parent sex offender shall not enter upon the campus until he or she is notified that a designated school official or employee is available.

Upon conviction, any sex offender who violates this section is guilty of a Class D felony.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated 5-14-132

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**Resignation**

Any employee who wishes to resign will submit a written resignation using the appropriate resignation form from the Department of Human Resources. Resignation statements stating the details should be addressed to the Bentonville Board of Education and given to the building principal or the Executive Director of Human Resources. Employees should schedule an exit interview with the Executive Director of Human Resources.

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

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**Contract Renewal**

Certified staff members are appointed by the Board of Education on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools. Appointments are made on an annual basis. The appointment of the teaching staff is evidenced by written contracts which are binding on both employer and employee. The names of the teaching staff shall be presented for consideration to the Board of Education at its regular meeting in April of each year. All offers to renew annual contracts shall expire if not accepted in writing and returned to the school administration office within thirty (30) calendar days after the date issued. The teacher shall have the right to unilaterally rescind any signed contract no later that ten (10) calendar days after the end of the school year.

Classified staff members are appointed by the Board of Education on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools. Appointments are made on an annual basis. The appointment of the classified staff is evidenced by written contracts which are binding on both employer and employee. The names of the classified staff shall be presented for consideration to the Board of Education at its regular meeting in May of each year. All offers to renew annual contracts shall expire if not accepted in writing at the Administration Office within ten (10) working days of the date issued.

Legal Ref. Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-1506
## Retirement

Employees of the Bentonville School District, upon retirement, shall be eligible for benefits of the Arkansas Teachers Retirement System and other benefits as prescribed by law.

1. All full time personnel with ten (10) years experience in the District who retire from the Bentonville School System and are eligible for immediate retirement benefits will be paid for all accumulated sick leave days up to ninety (90) days.

2. Payment for unused sick leave for certified employees will be at the same base rate per day that was paid to a long term certified substitute during the last year that the retiring employee worked.

3. Payment for unused sick leave for classified employees will be at the same base rate per day that was paid to substitutes, with less than a Bachelors degree, during the last year the retiring employee worked.

4. Payment will be made within ninety (90) days of the end of the school term, provided that documentation has been received by the Superintendent's office that the person is qualified for or is in fact drawing benefits from the Arkansas Teachers Retirement System.

## Emergency First Aid Personnel

Bentonville Public Schools will employ at least one (1) person who is certified by the American Red Cross or approved by the Department of Education as qualified to administer emergency first aid who shall be on the school grounds during normal school hours.

Legal Ref. Arkansas Code Annotated, 6-17-102

## Certificate of Health - Tuberculosis Examinations

Prior to beginning employment each school year, every newly hired public school employee within this state shall present to the Executive Director of Human Resources a Certificate of Health dated not more than ninety (90) days prior to the date of its presentation stating that the employee is free from tuberculosis.

The Certificate of Health may be submitted anytime between three (3) months prior to the official opening of the school year and the end of the first month's employment. Persons employed after the opening of school will have thirty (30) days to secure a Certificate of Health. Failure to comply with the terms of this section will result in termination.
A newly hired employee who has had the required screening performed in the United States within six (6) months prior to employment will not be required to have it repeated, provided that the employee presents documentation to the hiring school district in accordance with rules established by the State Board of Health.

Employees showing proof of two (2) negative tests may be issued a "No Return" card. No Return cards shall be good for as long as the person is employed by the Bentonville School District. The Executive Director of Human Resources may request additional testing if Tuberculosis is in question.

Positive reactors to the TB Skin Test must undergo sufficient additional tests prescribed by the regulation of the State Board of Health and shall be scheduled for a periodic reexamination according to the individual’s risk status. Bentonville Public School Registered Nurses may issue a Certificate of Health stating that the public school employee is free from tuberculosis infection, but interpretation of any X-Ray film must be made by a competent roentgenologist or physician experienced with tuberculosis. Employees who test positive or have a possible positive reading must report to the Benton County Health Department within 1 business day. If asymptomatic, the Health Department may issue a temporary card pending cultures or chest X-ray results.

All school cafeteria employees and other school employees handling food shall comply with the same health requirements imposed upon employees of restaurants and other food service establishments in the State of Arkansas.

Legal Ref. Arkansas Code Annotated, 6-17-101

Drug Testing – Motor Vehicle

Each person hired for a position which allows or requires that the employee operate any type of motor vehicle which is privately owned and operated for compensation, or which is owned, leased or otherwise operated by, or for the benefit of the District, and is operated for the transportation of children to or from school or school sponsored activity, shall undergo a physical examination, including a drug test.

Procedures related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

Bus Driver Requirements / New Hire Procedures

A. In order to be a bus driver for Bentonville Public Schools, the bus driver must have and maintain an Arkansas, Oklahoma, or Missouri CDL Class B driver’s license with a “P” and an “S” stamp. If a driver claims residency in another state, but drives for Bentonville Public Schools, then he/she may possess that out of state license as long as it is in accordance with the aforementioned stamps.

B. Every driver must pass any and all background checks required by the District, including State, Federal and Child Maltreatment Background Checks.
C. Every driver must pass an annual Department of Transportation (DOT) Physical 649-F (6045) from medical clinic(s) designated by Bentonville Public Schools. No other clinic or physician physical will be accepted.

D. Complete a Bentonville Public Schools job application.

E. Every driver must pass drug/alcohol tests, which will include both scheduled and randomly selected drug/alcohol tests.

F. Every driver will have negative TB test on file with the District.

G. Must be 21 years of age or older.

H. Clean driving record, which will be determined by Bentonville Public Schools.

I. Every new hire that enters Bentonville Public Schools Transportation Department with intentions of transporting students and who currently has a CDL Class B (P/S stamp) will:
   - Complete above requirements
   - Complete 3 hours of training with the Bentonville Public Schools Transportation Safety Officer
     - Training will consist of One Pre-Trip Inspection, Basic Skills and Road Test
     - Test-Run of the driver’s route if applicable
     - Training will be documented and filed in personnel folder

J. Every new hire that enters Bentonville Public Schools Transportation with intentions of transporting students who does not possess a CDL Class B (P/S stamp) will:
   - Complete above requirements (A-H)
   - Complete 24 hours of training with the Bentonville Public Schools Transportation Safety Officer
     - Training will be filed in personnel folder and CDL-1 form will be filed with the state
     - Training will consist of Pre-Trip Inspection, Basic Skills, and Road Test

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**Leave of Absence – Personal Injury from Assault or Violent Crime**

Whenever a district employee is absent from his or her duties as a result of personal injury caused by either an assault or a criminal act committed against the employee in the course of his or her employment, the employee shall be granted a leave of absence from school with full pay for up to one (1) year from the date of the injury.

Employees who suffer personal injury while intervening in student fights, restraining a student or protecting a student from harm shall be considered to be injured as a result of an assault or a criminal act.

The leave of absence for personal injury from an assault or a criminal act shall not be charged to the employee’s sick leave.

Legal Ref. Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-1209
Professional Leaves for Conferences and Visitations

Staff of the Bentonville Schools is encouraged to participate in in-service activities through attendance at conferences and visitations relating to their assignment. In case of such absences, the district will provide substitutes as necessary.

Staff wishing to be excused from school to attend a professional conference or convention must make such request to his/her principal/supervisor by completing an "Out-of-District Travel" form. This request should be made within a reasonable length of time prior to the activity.

The request, after being acted upon by the principal/supervisor, will be forwarded to the director(s) of staff development for action. One copy of the request form will be placed in the staff member’s file in the Superintendent’s office and a second copy will be returned to the principal/supervisor. Each copy will be clearly marked with the decision of the principal/supervisor and the director(s) of staff development.

Travel and other expenses may be borne by either the staff member, the individual school, or a combination of these as is agreed upon and reflected in the request form.

Any person attending a meeting should be prepared to make a presentation to an appropriate group if so requested.

The number of days granted to individuals will be based on the following considerations:

1. Upon the request of a principal, a staff member may be granted up to two days per year for visiting other staff members to observe methods and materials. The visitation may be made in the same building, another building in the district, or outside the district.

2. A staff member may be granted leave time for activities related to membership in a district-wide or state-wide professional organization.

3. A staff member who is an officer of a state or national organization may be given additional leave time to conduct the business of that organization.

4. The total number of days staff may be given per year for conferences, visitations, or meetings is at the discretion of the principal/supervisor with approval of the director(s) of staff development.

Legal Ref. Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-702
Sick Leave

Certified employees shall be allowed sick leave at full pay, at the rate of one (1) day per contract month or major portion thereof that the certified employee is contracted. Such leave shall be in force beginning with the first day of the first school term for which the employee is hired. A contract month is considered to be (20) working days.

Classified employees must earn sick leave at the rate of one (1) day per contract month or portion thereof. Part-time classified employees shall earn sick leave on a prorated basis. A contract month is considered to be twenty (20) working days.

If any employee leaves or resigns his/her position for any reason before the end of the school term, the district shall deduct from the last paycheck full compensation for any days of sick leave used in excess of the days earned. Unused sick leave shall accumulate without limit. For FMLA leave, all employees may only use sick and personal days they have earned up to the first day of FMLA leave.

Employees may use sick leave for maternity, paternity, adoption, bereavement, personal illness or illness in the immediate family (wherever they live) which shall include the employee's spouse, children, parents, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, uncle, aunt, and/or other members of the family living in the same household of the employee, or step-parents who have reared the children. Up to five (5) days of sick leave may be used for bereavement in case of death of any of the above mentioned immediate family members. Additional days may be requested in writing from the Executive Director of Human Resources with an appeal to the Superintendent. The individual must have sick days available to request bereavement leave.

A record of sick leave used and accumulated shall be established and maintained by the school district for each employee. Employees shall be advised at each pay period of the status of their sick leave.

Any employee of this district who has accumulated sick leave in any Arkansas district shall be granted credit by this district for such sick leave, but not to exceed a maximum of ninety (90) days. The accumulated sick leave credit shall be granted to the employee upon furnishing proof in writing from the former school district.

Legal Ref. Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-1204, 6-17-1205 and 6-17-1206

Leave of Absence

Employees may be granted a leave of absence for one or two semesters without pay. The leave may be granted for one semester or two semesters between July 1 and June 30 of any school year. A minimum of three years continuous satisfactory service must have been completed in the district and the employee recommended for employment for the following year. This service must have been under contract as a full-time person. Deadline for Leave of Absence request must be received by the Executive Director of Human Resources no later than May 1.

Applications must be in writing on the appropriate form and state clearly all the details under which the leave is to be granted. When the leave is for medical/health reasons, a doctor's statement is required for
documentation and must accompany the application. Applications for leave must be submitted to the principal. S/he will forward the application to the Executive Director of Human Resources, to be forwarded to the Superintendent and the Board for action.

Certified employees on leave of absence are responsible for their own sixty (60) hours of in-service training (staff development), which is required every year per the Arkansas Department of Education.

Limit one (1) approved leave of absence every five (5) years.

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

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**Sick Leave Bank**

By October 1 of each year, staff may voluntarily contribute one to five days of their sick leave allowance to a sick leave bank. New staff members coming in after the school year has begun shall have the opportunity to contribute to the bank at the time of employment.

Staff wishing to make contributions to the bank shall do so on a sick leave bank form submitted to the sick leave bank chairperson or committee member. A member need contribute only one time unless a sick leave bank withdrawal has been made.

Staff who earn sick days on two positions, (example, teacher and bus driver,) may request sick leave days from both positions simultaneously provided they have contributed a sick day to the Sick Leave Bank from both positions.

A committee shall oversee the administration of the sick leave bank with the assistance of the Executive Director of Human Resources. The committee shall be comprised of one classroom teacher from each school building, one representative from food service, one from maintenance, one from transportation, (all of which have contributed to the sick leave bank), one administrator and one school board member. The Sick Leave Bank Committee Members will be elected at the time that members are elected to the Personnel Policies Committees. The committee shall decide on requests based on the committee’s rules of operation.

The chairperson of the Sick Leave Bank Committee shall be elected from the committee. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall administer the bank according to the following rules:

1. Staff who has made contributions to the bank may make withdrawals from the bank. Days contributed may not be returned to the teacher.
2. The sick leave bank days may be used only upon exhaustion of a bank member’s accumulated sick leave, Personal Days and Non Contract Days, if applicable.
3. Sick leave bank days will be granted only in cases of catastrophic illness of a sick leave bank member, spouse, children, and immediate family living in the household.
4. Request for sick leave bank days will be made on a sick leave bank request form submitted to the chairperson or member of the sick leave bank committee. The committee recommends the request form must be accompanied by documentation from the doctor.
5. After a sick leave bank member withdraws days from the bank, s/he must contribute one to five days of their sick leave allowance at the beginning of the next school year to reestablish membership in the sick leave bank.

6. When the balance of sick leave bank days drops to 150 or less at the end of the school year, additional days will be requested at the beginning of the next school year.

REPORTS: The sick leave bank committee shall be responsible for the proper maintenance and development of records and report forms. The committee shall work closely with the administration in administering the sick leave bank days.

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

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**Leave of Absence for Employees With Less Than One Year Experience**

The District will provide unpaid leave for up to twelve (12) weeks for employees who have a medical emergency. The medical emergency must be for the employee, spouse, children or parent. Employees will be required to use earned sick and personal days as part of the leave. Once an employee has used all earned sick and personal days, their pay will be reduced at a daily rate for all days not worked. An employee failing to return to work at the end of the twelve (12) week period will not be guaranteed a position with the District.

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**Military Leave**

All school employees who desire to take a leave of absence for the purpose of participating in military training programs or other official duties made available by the Arkansas National Guard or any reserve branches of the armed forces and employees of the public schools who desire to take a leave of absence for the purpose of participating in the civil defense and public health training program made available by the US Public Health Service shall be entitled to such leave of absence for fifteen (15) days, plus necessary travel time, in any fiscal year. To the extent that this leave is not used in a fiscal year, it will accumulate for use in the succeeding fiscal year until it totals thirty (30) days at the beginning of a fiscal year.

Any school employee granted a leave of absence under the provisions of this section, shall be entitled to regular salary during the time of the leave of absence. The school employee will be responsible for paying the cost of any substitute employed in the employee's absence. Such leave of absence shall be in addition to the regular sick, personal or non-contract time allowed the employee.

Employees called to duty in emergency (cases of invasion, disaster, insurrection, riot, breech of peace, or imminent danger thereof, threats to the public health or security, or threats to the maintenance of law and order) situations by the Governor or the President shall be granted leave with pay not to exceed thirty (30) working days. Any days above (30) will be without pay. The employee must present proof of the military leave, such as his/her orders, to the Executive Director of Human Resources in order to confirm the reason for the requested military leave prior to the leave start date.
During the leave of absence, employees shall be entitled to preserve all seniority rights, efficiency or performance ratings, promotional status, retirement privileges, life and disability insurance benefits, and any other rights, privileges, and benefits to which they have become entitled.

The period of military service shall, for purposes of computations to determine whether such employee may be entitled to retirement under the laws of the State of Arkansas, be deemed continuous service, and the employee shall not be required to make contributions to any retirement fund.

The District shall continue to contribute its portion of any life and disability insurance premiums during the leave of absence, if requested, so that continuous coverage may be maintained.

* Civic Duty

Personnel who are called for jury duty or subpoenaed for other than personal business are paid at their regular rate and a substitute is provided by the district. Jury pay will not be deducted from the regular rate of pay.

The employee must present the original (not a copy) of the summons to Jury Duty to his supervisor in order to confirm the reason for the requested absence.

* Definition of Civic: Court, jury or governmental duties

Legal Reference:  A.C.A. 16-31-106

Return from Leave of Absence

Notification of an employee’s intention to resume work or resign after a leave of absence shall be filed in writing with the building principal and the Executive Director of Human Resources by March 1, if s/he intends to return in the fall, and by October 1, if the employee wishes to return in the spring. Failure to respond by the above dates will be taken to indicate resignation. When returning from a leave due to medical reasons the district may require a doctor's release prior to return to work.

An employee returning from a leave of absence will be assigned, within the District, to a position based on their certification, qualifications, experience and potential for future contribution.
Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides up to twelve weeks of unpaid, job protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons during a 12 month rolling period.

Unpaid leave must be granted for any of the following reasons:

- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care; or
- To care for the employee's spouse, children, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.
- The district will require the employee to substitute sick leave days for any part of the twelve weeks.
- An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered servicemember who is recovering from a serious illness or injury sustained in the line of duty on active duty is entitled to up to 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember.

Spouses employed by Bentonville Public Schools are jointly entitled to a combined total of 12 work-weeks of family leave for the birth and care of the newborn child, for placement of a child for adoption or foster care, and to care for a parent who has a serious health condition. Leave for the birth and care, or placement for adoption or foster care must conclude within 12 months of the birth or placement.

An employee requesting Family Medical Leave must submit a written application to the Executive Director of Human Resources requesting the leave. Applications are available in the Human Resources Office at Central Office. The Executive Director of Human Resources will respond in writing to the request within two working days.

The district may require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition, and may require second and third opinions (at district expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work.

For the duration of FMLA leave, the district must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan." Employee will continue to pay the premium.

Upon return from FMLA leave, employees must be restored to their original position or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefits that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

A rolling twelve-month period looking back from the date on which the FMLA leave is to begin will be used to figure the twelve month period. The district must give at least sixty days notice to all employees if the method of calculation is changed.

A detailed explanation of the Family and Medical Leave Act may be obtained on the U. S. Department of Labor website at www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/

Employees may only use the sick and personal days they have earned up to the first day of FMLA leave.

An employee planning to apply for FMLA leave should contact the Human Resources Office for more information.

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

Code: P.1.22.11
Date Issued: 3-8-99
Date Revised: 04-16-07
Date Reviewed: 06-03-08
**Personal Business Leave**

Employees are generally expected to be present on campus for their job duties, except for circumstances where sick or bereavement leave is appropriate. (see policy SBRI) However, the District recognizes that from time to time, employees may face situations where personal business needs to be attended to during the work day. Accordingly, the District allows an employee to use two (2) of their total allotment of sick leave days as personal business during any one school year. At the beginning of the fifth year, an employee may use one additional sick day in this manner. Use of these days is limited to the employee attending to personal business matters. Personal business days must be approved by the building principal.

Personal business days may not be used prior to or following a day where classes are not in session, unless approved by the Superintendent. Such approval should be sought in advance where possible. The personal business days allowed per year do not accumulate from year to year, but will revert to sick leave days at the end of each school year, if not used.

Employees may donate up to three (3) personal business days to another district employee. The receiving employee must have used all their sick and personal business days and any eligible days from the sick leave bank. Sick Leave Bank guidelines or bereavement leave will determine eligibility for donated days. Donated days may not exceed the number of days absent. The number of days donated may not exceed the number of days necessary to reach qualification for Long Term Disability (approximately 45 days).

**Absence Reporting**

Any employee who is unable to report for work for any reason should use the AESOP substitute calling system or online version to report their absence. This applies to all certified and classified staff members regardless of whether or not a substitute is required. Employees who fail to report absences or falsify absences may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The staff member who knows of any absence in advance should provide a complete substitute folder and those materials necessary to conduct the activities of the day.

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

**Purchase of Unused Sick Days**

At the end of each year, employees with more than ninety sick leave days may sell the excess days back to the district in increments of five (5) days, not to exceed ten (10) days in any given year. For certified personnel, these days will be purchased at the current substitute rate paid to a long term certified substitute. For classified personnel, days will be purchased at the current substitute rate paid to substitutes who have less than a Bachelor Degree.
Stipends

In order to formulate an equitable and meaningful stipend schedule, an annual review of each of the activities for which a stipend is being paid shall be conducted. This review will include the job description provided by the Executive Director of Human Resources and the building administrator. The building administrator shall do the performance evaluation of the sponsor prior to May 1.

Failure to perform the duties for which the stipend is intended may result in the reduction or removal of the stipend.

New stipends will be considered through the Request for Program Change Process used with any change in curricula or programs. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Personnel Policy Committee for consideration.

Dress and Appearance

The dress and appearance of District employees should be professional and appropriate for job performance.

Direct Deposit

Beginning July 1, 2010, payroll checks will be distributed by electronic deposit only. New employees will receive direct deposit information from Human Resources. If the person does not have an existing checking or savings account, other options are available through the school’s bank of record.

Available options:
- Checking account direct deposit
- Savings account direct deposit
- Bank Spending card

Employees working for the District prior to May 1, 2010, and are receiving cashable paychecks will be encouraged to select one of the above options.
Payment of Debts

Employees for the District are expected to handle financial obligations and meet debt requirements in a responsible manner. Continued failure to pay legal debts may be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination.

Garnishment against the district is one of the ways creditors use to collect debts from employees. In addition to adding to the cost of the indebtedness to the employee, this process is expensive to the District. Federal law prohibits an employer from discharging any employee because his earnings have been subject to garnishment for any one indebtedness, but such discharge is not prohibited for earnings being subject to garnishment for more than one indebtedness.

Solicitations

Commercial solicitation of employees or students during school hours by agents, solicitors, or salesmen is prohibited.

Non-Contracted Days

Non-contracted days are available for employees contracted for 230 days or more. The number of non-contracted days available is determined each year according to the School District fiscal calendar. Newly hired employees who begin work after the tenth (10th) business day of the School District fiscal calendar will not be eligible for non-contracted days. The contract pay will be based on actual days worked. Those employees will, however, be eligible for non-contract days the second fiscal year of employment.

Employees are encouraged to use non-contract days during the fiscal year in which they are available. If there are unused non-contract days during one fiscal year, a maximum of fourteen (14) days may be rolled into the next fiscal year. Employees working 235 or more day contracts may roll a maximum of eighteen (18) non-contracted days.

If an employee fails to fulfill his or her contractual obligation through June 30th, no non-contract days will be available. Final payoff will be calculated on the actual days worked plus accrued days rolled from a prior year.

Permission to use non-contract days may be obtained by submitting a request through the District’s absence reporting system. Approval will be given at the discretion of the employee’s immediate supervisor.
Employees should take into consideration the nature of their duty in planning the use of non-contract days.

Staff Involvement in Policy Development

According to Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-201, each school district in the state shall have a set of written personnel policies, including salary schedules. So as to provide an opportunity for employees of the district to have input into the policy development process, district-wide Personnel Policy Committees for Certified and Classified employees will be established.

The purpose of the Personnel Policy Committee is to serve as a communication link between the Board of Education and employees in the process of personnel policy review and development.

A teacher, selected by the Chairperson of the Certified Personnel Policy Committee or his designee, will act as the election officer of each school. This person will be responsible for conducting the nominations and the elections by secret ballot (BDBB-RE). A committee comprised of election officers will tabulate election results and report results to the Administration Office and to each building.

A faculty meeting to elect Certified Personnel Policy Committee members will be held the first week of May. Teachers will nominate at least one candidate for the position of their school representative. The name(s) of the candidate(s) from each school will be listed on a secret ballot form and will be elected the second week of May. Representatives elected will hold their positions for one fiscal school year.

The Certified Committee will consist of one teacher representative from each school in the district, including two representatives from the high school (one from each building), one elementary administrator, one middle school administrator, one secondary administrator, and one central office administrator, and one ex-officio school board member. For an elected representative to be eligible to serve on the Personnel Policy Committee, he/she must have a minimum of three years teaching experience in the district. Certified members are to be elected by secret ballot by a majority of the teachers (non-administrative) of the Bentonville Public Schools. Should a member of the committee resign, that person’s position shall be filled by a special election by secret ballot of the teachers in that building within one month.

Certified members are to be elected by secret ballot by a majority of the teachers (non-administrative) of the Bentonville Public Schools. Should a member of the committee resign, that person’s position shall be filled by a special election by secret ballot of the teachers in the district within one month.

The Classified Committee will consist of one employee from each of the following areas: Maintenance/Operations, Transportation, Building Bridges and Adventure Club, Secretarial/Clerical, Teaching Assistant and Paraprofessional. There shall be no more than three (3) classified administrators on the committee. One ex-officio school board member shall serve on the committee. For an elected representative to be eligible to serve on the Personnel Policy Committee, he/she must have a minimum of three years experience in the district.

Classified members are to be elected in mid October by secret ballot by a majority vote of the classified employees (non-administrative) of the Bentonville Public Schools. Should a member of the committee resign, that person’s position shall be filled by a special election by secret ballot of the classified employees in the district within one month.

Administrators will be appointed by the Superintendent, the member of the Board of Education shall be appointed by the President of the Board of Education.
Each school district's committee on personnel policies shall organize itself in October, elect a chairman and secretary, and develop a calendar of meetings throughout the year to review the district's personnel policies to determine if additional policies or amendments to existing policies are needed.

Either the committee or the Board of Education may propose new personnel policies or amendments to existing policies, if the proposals by the board have been presented to the committee at a regular or special meeting of the committee at least ten (10) working days prior to presentation to the board. The committee will hold a meeting within ten (10) working days of the board’s request to present a board proposal to the committee.

The Superintendent may recommend any changes in personnel policies to the Board of Education or the personnel policy committee. Such recommendations shall become proposals if adopted by either the board or the committee.

The committee will present its proposed policies or amendments to existing policies to the Board of Education no later than the March regular meeting.

After presentation to the board, final action may be taken at the next regular board meeting.

The Board of Education shall have the authority to adopt, reject or refer back to the personnel policy committee for further study and revision of any proposed policies or amendments to existing policies that are submitted to the board for consideration.

Other meetings may be called by the chairperson or at the request of the Board of Education, or upon request of any four members of the committee at anytime during the year. More than half of the members (7) must be present to constitute a quorum for purposes of having a committee meeting.

Minutes of the committee meetings shall be promptly reported and distributed to members of the Board of Education, and posted in the buildings of the school district, including the Administrative Offices.

Personnel policy proposals written by the Board must be submitted to the Personnel Policy Committee at least ten working days prior to presentation to the Board.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-201, 6-17-205

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**Policy Adoption**

The efficient operation of the Bentonville Public Schools requires the adoption of policies that apply to all phases of the school program. These policies and regulations set the pattern for the program of education in Bentonville.

As a part of the Bentonville Board of Education policy manual, upon adoption only those specific policies that have been voted upon by the Board of Education will be distributed to employees as the Bentonville Public School Personnel Policies Handbook.

The personnel policies shall be considered to be incorporated as terms of the employee’s contract and shall be binding upon the employee and the school district.

Any changes to existing personnel policies adopted by a majority vote of the Board shall become effective the following July 1. However, certain changes may become effective immediately by a majority vote of the Board and a majority vote of the certified personnel of the district, voting by secret ballot.
All policies and policy revisions not identified as personnel policies may be introduced and adopted at any given meeting without prior notification.

Temporary approval may be granted at any meeting of the Board in lieu of formal policy to meet emergency conditions or special events which will take place before formal action can be taken.

This notification shall constitute an opportunity for the appropriate committee of any affected organization to meet with the Administration and the Board for consultation with reference to the proposed change or changes (Cf. BDBB-R).

Policies recommended to the Board of Education shall not be adopted until the next regularly scheduled Board meeting subsequent to their initial introduction. The time lapse will permit further study by Board members and allow for patron input.

Any changes or additions to the personnel policies may take effect before the next fiscal year only if the changes or additions are approved by the Board and by a majority of the certified personnel employed by the District voting by secret ballot.

All employees shall be furnished a copy of any new policies or amendments to existing policies dealing with personnel within thirty (30) days after approval by the Board of Education as specified by Arkansas law. Policies will also be posted on the district website at www.bentonvillek12.org.

Legal Ref:: Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-204

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**Workers Compensation**

All Employees in the District are covered by Arkansas Worker’s Compensation Insurance. A care facility for worker’s compensation injuries will be designated by the Bentonville School District. All district employees going to this care facility for treatment of worker’s compensation injuries will be subject to a drug and alcohol test.

All injuries sustained on the job must be reported. The immediate supervisor must be notified immediately of any injury so that appropriate forms may be completed and filed. Even though no medical care or hospitalization may be required at the time of injury, it is important that forms be completed and on file in the Human Resource Department in the event medical attention is needed at a later date.

Compensation to the injured employee shall not be allowed for the first seven days of disability resulting from injury, excluding the day of injury. If a disability extends beyond that period, compensation shall commence with the ninth day of disability. If a disability extends for a period of two weeks, compensation shall be allowed beginning the first day of disability, excluding the day of injury.
School computers, networks, and internet access are provided to support the educational mission of the school. They are to be used primarily for school-related purposes. Incidental personal use of school computers must not interfere with the employee’s job performance, must not violate any of the rules contained in this policy or the Student Acceptable Use Policy and must not damage the school’s hardware, software or computer communications system.

The Systems Administrator will review files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that staff members are using the system responsibly. Employees should not expect a right to privacy with regard to data stored on district servers.

Employees using District issued laptops off site must comply with the laptop user agreement. Related procedures and forms may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

The following behaviors are not permitted on district networks:

1. Sharing confidential information on students or employees is permitted only in accordance with Federal guidelines.
2. Harassing, insulting or attacking others, sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures and using obscene language.
3. Assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of, or opposition to any ballot proposition.
4. Engaging in practices that threaten the network (e.g., loading files that may introduce a virus, loading non-district approved software; failure to safeguard your password, and leaving a logged on computer unattended).
5. Violating copyright laws.
6. Unauthorized use of others’ passwords.
7. Trespassing in others’ folders, documents, or files.
8. Intentionally wasting limited resources (e.g., district storage space, employee time, etc.).
9. Use of school computers for advertising or solicitation purposes.
10. Employing the network for personal gain.
11. Representing personal views as those of the school district. Employees are reminded that any e-mail sent from a school computer contains the address identification of the school district. This is analogous to an employee using school letterhead.
12. Accessing, uploading, downloading or distributing pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit materials is strictly forbidden.

The Director of Technology will report inappropriate behaviors to the Executive Director of Human Resources who will take appropriate disciplinary action. Violations may result in loss of access to network, progressive disciplinary action or possible recommendation for termination. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.
Terms and Conditions of Employment

Current salary schedules, stipend information and annual calendars/work days are available at www.bentonvillek12.org.

Professional Development / Certified Employee Training

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of in-service education as a factor which promotes progress toward established educational goals in this school system. All instructional personnel are encouraged to acquire additional college work for the purpose of keeping up with new developments in their subject matter field or for the purpose of working toward a higher degree. Staff development in the District shall focus on student outcomes. Other activities to contribute toward in-service education shall be class visitation, workshops, consultant services, conferences, and attendance at professional meetings.

The district shall develop and implement a plan for the professional development of its certified employees. The district’s plan shall, in part, align district resources to address the professional development activities identified in each school’s ACSIP. The plan shall describe how the district’s categorical funds will be used to address deficiencies in student performance and any identified academic achievement gaps between groups of students. At the end of each school year, the district shall evaluate the professional development activities’ effectiveness in improving student performance and closing achievement gaps. Each certified employee shall receive a minimum of sixty (60) hours of professional development annually to be fulfilled between June 1 and May 31. Professional development hours earned in excess of sixty (60) in the designated year cannot be carried over to the next year. Certified employees who are prevented from obtaining the required professional development hours due to their illness or the illness of an immediate family member as defined in A.C.A. § 6-17-1202 have until the end of the following school year to make up the deficient hours. This extension does not absolve the employee from also obtaining the following year’s required 60 hours of professional development.

The goal of all professional development activities shall be improved student achievement and academic performance that results in individual, school-wide, and system-wide improvement designed to ensure that all students demonstrate proficiency on the state criterion-referenced assessments. The district’s professional development plan shall demonstrate scientifically research-based best practice, and shall be based on student achievement data and in alignment with ACTAAP Rules and current Arkansas code.

Teachers and administrators shall be involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the plan for their own professional development. The results of the evaluation made by participants in each program shall be used to continuously improve the district’s professional development offerings and to revise the school improvement plan.

Flexible professional development hours (flex hours) are those hours which an employee is allowed to substitute professional development activities, different than those offered by the district, but which still meet criteria of either the employee's Individual Professional Development Plan or the school's ACSIP, or both. The district shall determine on an annual basis how many, if any, flex hours of professional development it will allow to be substituted for district scheduled professional development offerings. The district administration and the building principal have the authority to require attendance at specific professional development activities. Employees must receive advance approval for the activities they wish to have qualified for flex professional
development hours. To the fullest extent possible, professional development activities are to be scheduled and attended such that teachers do not miss their regular teaching assignments. Six (6) approved hours credited toward fulfilling the sixty (60) hour requirement shall equal one contract day. Hours of professional development earned by an employee in excess of sixty (60) or not pre-approved by the building principal shall not be credited toward fulfilling the required number of contract days for that employee. Hours earned that count toward the required sixty (60) also count toward the required number of contract days for that employee. Employees shall be paid their daily rate of pay for professional development hours earned at the request of the district that necessitate the employee work more than the number of days required by their contract.

All employees shall attend all local professional development training sessions as directed by a supervisor. Certified staff are required to attend professional development sessions on district in-service days in order to fulfill contractual obligations. Teachers and administrators who, for any reason, miss part or all of any scheduled professional development activity they are required to attend, must make up the required hours in comparable activities which are to be pre-approved by the building principal and the appropriate central office administrator.

To receive credit for his/her professional development activity each employee is responsible for following district procedures for obtaining credit for in-district and out-of-district professional development hours. Documentation for all out of district professional development credit should be kept by the employee in their personal staff development folder and be available upon request by building or district administrators.

Teachers and administrators are required to obtain sixty (60) hours of approved professional development annually over a five-year period as part of licensure renewal requirements.

As part of the sixty (60) hours required annually the following areas shall be included:

- At least six (6) hours annually of their sixty (60) required hours of professional development shall be in the area of educational technology.
- At least two (2) hours annually of their sixty (60) required hours of professional development shall be designed to enhance their understanding of effective parental involvement strategies.
- Teachers who provide instruction in Arkansas history shall receive at least two (2) hours of professional development in Arkansas history as part of the sixty (60) hours required annually.
- Guidance counselors in grades 7-12 shall participate in professional development on the availability of, eligibility requirements for, and the process of applying for state-supported student financial assistance through a three-hour course during the calendar year 2009, or within the first year of employment and complete a one-hour course annually thereafter.

Administrators are required to receive at least three hours annually of their sixty (60) required hours of professional development designed to enhance their understanding of effective parental involvement strategies and the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation. Each administrator’s professional development is required to also include training in data disaggregation, instructional leadership and fiscal management. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, principals and assistant principals in grades 7-12 shall participate in professional development on the availability of, eligibility requirements for, and the process of applying for state-supported student financial assistance through a three-hour course during the calendar year 2009, or within the first year of employment and complete a one-hour course annually thereafter.

Personnel who are likely to use automated external defibrillators shall receive the training required by Rule. Such training shall count toward the required annual hours of professional development.

Teachers required by the superintendent, building principal, or their designee to take approved training related to teaching an advance placement class for a subject covered by the College Board and Educational Testing Service, shall receive up to thirty (30) hours of credit toward the sixty (60) hours of professional development required annually.

Certified personnel may earn up to twelve (12) hours of professional development for time they are required to spend in their instructional classroom, office or media center prior to the first day of student/teacher interaction provided the time is spent in accordance with the state law and current ADE rules that deal with professional development. The hours may be earned through online professional development approved by the ADE.
provided the professional development relates to the district’s ASCIP and the teacher’s professional growth plan.

Teachers are eligible to receive fifteen (15) professional development hours for a college course that meets the criteria identified in law and the applicable ADE rules. The board shall determine if the hours earned apply toward the required sixty (60). A maximum of thirty (30) hours may be applied toward the sixty (60) hours of professional development required annually. Employees who do not receive or furnish documentation of the required annual professional development jeopardize the accreditation of the school and academic achievement of their students. Failure of an employee to receive sixty (60) hours of professional development in any given year shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees who fail to earn the sixty (60) required hours of approved professional development including two hours of Parental Involvement, six hours of technology and two hours of Arkansas History (if applicable), within the above time frame places the renewal of their Arkansas Teaching License in Jeopardy.

Approved professional development activities may include conferences, workshops, institutes, individual learning, mentoring, peer coaching, study groups, National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Certification, distance learning, internships, district/school programs, and approved college/university course work. Professional development activities should be consistent with the objectives developed by the National Staff Development Council Standards.

Professional development activities shall relate to the following areas: content (K-12); instructional strategies; assessment; advocacy/leadership; systemic change process; standards, frameworks, and curriculum alignment; cognitive research; building a collaborative learning community and student health and wellness.

Legal References:
- Arkansas State Board of Education: Standards of Accreditation 15.04
- ADE Rules Governing Professional Development
- A.C.A. § 6-10-122, 123
- ACTAAP Rules 5.0 – 5.07.1
- A.C.A * 6-17-703
- A.C.A * 6-17-704
- A.C.A. § 6-17-705
- A.C.A. § 6-17-1202
- A.C.A. § 6-15-1004(c)
- A.C.A * 6-15-1703
- A.C.A. * 6-20-2303(14)

Certified Personnel Compensation Guides and Contracts

Professional personnel shall be awarded contracts by the Board based upon the recommendations of the Superintendent and principals. Contracts are awarded annually.

Salary and other benefits shall be part of the written contract. Effective July 1, 2005, hours counting toward the 15 hours or 30 hours above any degree shown on the certified salary schedule must be earned after the date the degree was awarded and must be graduate credit hours advancing an employee toward a higher degree in education or toward a new certification in education. Degree requirements completed that will entitle a teacher to advance from one salary scale to a higher scale must be verified by an official college transcript. The annual compensation for a teacher will include or be adjusted to include the change during the fiscal year in which the
verification is received by the Department of Human Resources. The full amount of the adjustment will be included provided the degree requirements are completed prior to the first day of the school year and the verification is received prior to January 1 of the fiscal year. One-half of the amount of the adjustment will be included if degree requirements are completed during the first semester and verification is received in the Superintendent’s office by May 1. The gross amount, less deductions, of any change will be divided equally between the remaining installments due a teacher. Payment of the increase is not retroactive.

In conformity with Arkansas’ continuing contract law, Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-1506, teachers are automatically re-employed unless they are notified by May 1 by the Superintendent that their contract will not be renewed.

All offers to renew annual contracts shall expire if not accepted in writing, properly signed and returned to the Superintendent’s office within thirty (30) business days of the issuance. If the executed (properly signed) contract is not received within this time period, the teaching position for which the contract was issued will be deemed vacant and the Board of Education will proceed to employ an individual to fill the position.

Legal Ref: Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-204

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**Certified Personnel Qualifications and Duties**

All certified personnel employed by the Bentonville School District must possess those qualifications set forth by the State Department of Education. It is recognized by the Board of Education that these qualifications are set up to promote minimum standards, therefore, it is the policy of the school district to employ persons who exceed these minimum requirements whenever possible.

All instructional personnel must maintain on file, with the Executive Director of Human Resources, the following information if applicable:

1. Signed Contract
2. Arkansas Teacher Certificate or Reciprocity
3. Social Security Number
4. Government Photo ID
5. Certificate of Health – Tuberculosis (completed within 30 days of start date)
6. Statement of Number of Dependents
7. Official Transcript(s) of All College Work
8. Completion of, or written plan to complete, Arkansas History (if applicable)
9. Current Address and Telephone Number
10. Verification of Previous Teaching Experience
11. Copies of NTE or Praxis II scores or testing scores from other States as required
12. Documentation of “Highly Qualified Teacher”
13. ALP or NTL program documents
14. Other documents from the Office of Professional Licensure of the Arkansas Department of Education authorizing employment as a teacher under the conditions set forth by the Department of Education in the documentation.

All certified personnel in the district will have access to any file pertaining to his/her employment or performance, kept by any supervisor or administrator, for the purpose of inventorying or reviewing.

Legal Ref.: Arkansas Code Annotated §6-17-401
Bentonville Public Schools Board of Education will make every effort to employ the best qualified individual for positions requiring a certificate issued by the Arkansas Department of Education.

Appointments of instructional personnel shall be made by the Board of Education upon consideration of recommendations made by the Superintendent. The selection will be based on the following considerations:

The district prefers to employ instructional personnel who hold a degree from a college accredited by the North Central Association or some other accrediting agency of comparable rank. It is also highly desirable that the applicant have graduated from a college whose program is approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Instructional personnel should hold a valid Arkansas teaching certificate at either the elementary or secondary level with specific training in their teaching field as prescribed by the Arkansas State Department of Education. Instructional personnel must meet the Highly Qualified Standard as defined by the Arkansas Department of Education and the Federal No Child Left Behind statute. In rare cases, personnel may be employed before final certification is granted provided all the certification requirements have been met or outlined for completion on a specific timetable which will not adversely affect payroll or school accreditation.

The district prefers to employ instructional personnel who have had successful experience at the level for which they are being considered. In computing the beginning salary for an individual, all of the teaching experience will be considered from a public school, private school or a post-secondary institution which is accredited by the state of Arkansas, the North Central Association of schools and Colleges or other accrediting agencies of comparable rank. One year of post secondary experience will be 24 semester hours taught between July 1, and June 30. Partial credit can be accumulated at 6 hours per semester until 24 hours are earned. Years of experience will not exceed the last level on the current salary schedule.

Certified personnel new to the Bentonville School District, beginning teachers or teachers transferring from another school district in state or out of state, must have a Criminal Record Check. Prospective employees are responsible for paying the required fees for this Criminal Record Check. Necessary paperwork for completing the record check may be obtained from the Human Resource Department at Central Office. Steps to complete the Criminal Record Check should be taken within thirty (30) days of starting to work for the District.

Upon first renewal of an Arkansas Teaching certificate, a certified employee must have a Criminal Record Check. Employees will be responsible for paying the fee for fingerprints. The Department of Education will pay the fee for the State Record check and fee for the FBI record check. Necessary paperwork for completing record check may be obtained from the Personnel Department at Central Office. Steps to complete the Criminal Record Check should be taken starting in January of the year the employee’s certificate expires.

Instructional personnel must possess the stamina and vigor to meet the demands of working with students.

Each applicant will be evaluated concerning the potential (s)he possesses to contribute effectively to the education of each student with whom (s)he has contact and ultimately to the strength of the total educational program.

Instructional personnel must be able to communicate effectively and have the ability to relate well to other individuals. The personal interview is one facet of helping to evaluate an individual in this most critical area.
Hiring and Evaluation of Relatives of Administrators

The immediate family of the Superintendent will not be eligible for employment in the Bentonville School District. The immediate family of the executive directors, administrative assistants, principals, assistant principals, district-wide supervisors of certified personnel, and other administrative personnel, as the Board of Education may identify, will be eligible for employment in the Bentonville School District, but not in a position under the direct supervision of the above named administrators. Immediate family, for this purpose, shall be defined to include: spouse, children, parents, brothers, and sisters.

Exceptions to this policy shall require Board of Education approval.

Certified Evaluation

The primary purpose of the Bentonville Public School evaluation process is the improvement of instruction. The evaluation process will include the following systematic analysis of teacher performance, identification of specific competencies, diagnosis of specific needs for improvement, and outline of strategies for improvement efforts.

All teachers will be evaluated in writing annually by April 1. The administration shall direct that a committee for teacher evaluation assess the effectiveness of the teacher evaluation program annually and recommend changes to the Board as necessary to meet the purposes and improve the effectiveness of teacher evaluation.

The committee will be comprised of one elementary administrator, one secondary administrator, a central office administrator, one counselor, one media specialist, and one special services person, all of whom shall be appointed by the Superintendent. A teacher representative will be elected by his/her building to serve two year staggered terms with the implementation for staggering the terms left to the discretion of the Evaluation Committee.

Procedures for implementation of this policy will be printed and made available to each certified staff member.

The chair of the Personnel Policy Committee will appoint official(s) in each building to conduct the election of evaluation committee representatives by secret ballot. Elections will be held in the Fall as terms become available.

Requests for a meeting of the Evaluation Committee should be given to the building evaluation committee member to be presented to the central office administrator or a meeting can be called at the direction of the central office administrator.
A teacher may be terminated during the term of any contract period, by the Board of Education, for any cause which is not arbitrary, capricious or discriminatory with or without the recommendation of the Superintendent. When the Superintendent has reason to believe that cause exists for the termination of a teacher, the Superintendent may suspend the teacher without notice or a hearing. The Superintendent shall notify the teacher in writing within two (2) school days of the suspension. The written notice shall be delivered in person to the teacher or sent by registered or certified mail to the teacher at the teacher’s residence address as reflected in the teacher’s personnel file. The written notice from the Superintendent shall include a simple but complete statement of grounds for suspension and/or recommended termination setting forth the reasons in separately numbered paragraphs so that a reasonable teacher can prepare a defense and shall state that a hearing before the board is available to the teacher on request, provided such request is made in writing within thirty (30) days of the receipt of notice. The hearing request must be in writing and shall be sent by certified or registered mail to the president, vice-president or secretary of the Board of Education at their residence address, with a copy to the Superintendent, or may be delivered in person by the teacher to the president, vice-president or secretary of the Board of Education of the school district at their residence address, with a copy to the superintendent, within thirty (30) calendar days after the written notice of proposed termination or non-renewal is received by the teacher.

When a Superintendent has reason to believe that cause exists for the termination of a teacher and that immediate suspension of the teacher is necessary in the best interest of the district, the Superintendent may suspend the teacher without notice or a hearing. The Superintendent shall notify the teacher in writing within two (2) school days of the suspension. The written notice shall be delivered in person to the teacher or sent by registered or certified mail to the teacher at the teacher’s residence address as reflected in the teacher’s personnel file. The written notice shall include a statement of the reasons for such recommendation setting forth the reasons in separately numbered paragraphs so that a reasonable teacher can prepare a defense, and shall state that a hearing before the Board of Directors is available to the teacher upon request, providing the request is made in writing within thirty (30) days of the receipt of notice. The hearing request must be in writing and shall be sent to by certified or registered mail to the president, vice president, or secretary of the Board of Education at their residence address, with a copy to the superintendent, or may be delivered in person by the teacher to the president, vice-president, or secretary of the Board of Education of the school district at their residence address, with a copy to the superintendent, within thirty (30) calendar days after the written notice of proposed termination or non-renewal is received by the teacher.

Decision not to renew contract: When the Superintendent has reason to believe that a recommendation will be made that a teacher's contract not be renewed for another academic year or when the Board of Education decides not to renew the contract of a teacher for another academic year. A notice of non-renewal shall be delivered in person to the teacher or mailed by registered or certified mail to the teacher at the teacher’s residence address as reflected in the teacher’s personnel file. The notice of recommended non-renewal shall include a statement of the reasons for such recommendation setting forth the reasons in separately numbered paragraphs so that a reasonable teacher can prepare a defense. Such notification not to renew the contract shall be made on or before May 1st of the existing school year.

Any teacher who receives a notice of recommended non-renewal in the manner prescribed in this policy may file a written request with the Board for a hearing. Such written request will be sent by certified or registered mail to the president of the school board, vice-president or secretary of the board of directors of the school district, with a copy to the Superintendent, or may be delivered in person by the teacher to the president, vice-president, or secretary of the board of directors of the school district, with a copy to the Superintendent, within thirty (30) days after the written notice of proposed suspension, termination and/or non-renewal is received by the teacher. On receipt of such request for a hearing, the Board shall grant a hearing in accordance with the
following provisions and the hearing before the Board of Education shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules, procedures and provisions.

Upon conclusion of the hearing, with respect to the suspension, termination and/or non-renewal of a teacher’s contract, the Board may, within ten (10) days after the holding of the hearing in regard to the suspension, termination and/or non-renewal of the contract, uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent may reject the Superintendent's recommendation to terminate, or not renew the contract or may vote to continue the contract for said teacher under such restrictions, limitations or assurances as the school board may deem to be in the best interest of the school district. Said decision shall be reached by the school board within ten (10) days from the date of the hearing and a copy of said decision shall be furnished in writing by certified or registered mail to the teacher at the address last maintained in the teacher’s personnel file.

The Employment Policies of the Bentonville School District are designed to conform to state law. To the extent this policy conflicts with state law, either when set forth or because state law is amended in the future, the portion of this policy in conflict shall be void and state law shall apply. To the extent a portion of this policy is similar to state law, if that portion of state law is repealed or amended, such action shall also result in the repeal (and not amendment) of that portion of this policy.

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.

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**Teachers – Extra Duty**

Extra-curricular duties are considered a normal part of a teacher's work. The allocation and assignment of such duties in each school are responsibilities of the principal. No teacher shall be assigned to more than sixty (60) minutes of extra duty per week.

When special duties are assigned to a teacher and when such duties are not regular teaching duties or extra-curricular duties of a nature considered a normal part of a teacher's work, the teacher may be paid for such duties, subject to the discretion of the Superintendent and Board of Education. Those special duties which receive compensation will be published as part of the salary schedule.

Legal Ref. Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-204

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**Regulation of Controlled Substances**

In an effort to create a healthy environment for students and staff members and in compliance with the provisions of Public Law 101-226, the Bentonville Board of Education prohibits the possession, manufacturing, use or distribution of illegal drugs and alcohol by its employees on school district property or by any person who has supervisory responsibilities involving students.

The school district will attempt to assist any employee in need of alcohol or drug counseling or rehabilitation. Employees who have not been found in violation of this policy, but who think they may have a dependency on drugs or alcohol and who wish to seek treatment for this dependency, may avoid disciplinary action if they
report their condition to the principal or Superintendent and enroll in a qualified treatment program as soon as possible.

The employee will be suspended without pay until proof is provided of enrollment in a drug program. At that time, the employee will be granted the full use of the leave policies of the Bentonville School District. The provisions for voluntary commitment may be used one time only.

If an employee is accused of violating this policy, the employee has the right to request a blood test at the school's expense. The school has the right to require a blood test if a reasonable suspicion exists that this policy has been violated. The required blood test will be at the expense of the school district.

Employees who have been found in violation, but who will voluntarily seek appropriate counseling and/or rehabilitation services, will be suspended without pay until a hearing is held.

Any employee violating this policy is subject to disciplinary action. Searches of school property (desks, rooms, storage areas, etc.) may be conducted if there is "probable cause."

School officials will cooperate fully with law enforcement personnel in the investigation of any drug or alcohol related incidents involving school employees.

A person under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol presents a danger to themselves as well as those with whom they work. Recognizing these dangers, Bentonville School District strongly opposes the use of illegal drugs and alcohol by its employees.
Classified Longevity Credit Defined

Longevity is based on four or more continuous years of service with Bentonville Public Schools and will be restored if the employee returns to the District within 14 months.

Longevity for classified personnel who change jobs or have two jobs with the district will be based on the number of continuous years of service with the district.

Longevity stays with the employee regardless of the position.

EXAMPLE: Employee has 10 years continuous service as a cook. Employee takes a second job as an instructional aide, the employee get 10 years longevity as an instructional aide.

Longevity does not apply to bus drivers.

Classified Hiring – Selection Criteria/Experience

Bentonville Public Schools Board of Education will make every effort to employ the best qualified individual(s) for classified positions.

Classified personnel new to the Bentonville School District must complete a criminal record check. The District will pay the fee for the State record check and the fee for the FBI record check. The employee will be responsible for the fees charged by local law enforcement for completing the fingerprint card. Necessary paperwork for completing the record check may be obtained from the Human Resource Department at the Administration Office. Steps to complete the Criminal Record Check should be taken within thirty (30) days of starting work for the district.

Appointments of personnel shall be made by the Board of Education upon consideration of recommendation made by the Superintendent. This selection will be based on the following considerations:

The district prefers to employ personnel who have had successful experience at the level for which they are being considered.

Personnel must possess the stamina and vigor to meet the demands of the job.

Each applicant will be evaluated concerning the potential he/she possesses to contribute effectively to the strength of the school system.

Personnel must be able to communicate effectively and have the ability to relate well to other individuals. The personal interview is one facet of helping to evaluate an individual in this most critical area.

Full credit will be given for years of direct related experience in an accredited school district. A maximum of seven years will be accepted. Work experience does not apply to bus drivers.
Payroll Information

An employee is paid at the daily rate for the position until hired by the school board. After the employee is approved by the school board, the employee is placed on contract at the beginning of the next pay period.

All classified personnel are hired on a ninety day probationary period. No benefits are available during the probationary period – no sick, personal or vacation days can be used.

Personnel hired after the start of school will receive their first paycheck the second pay period after the date of employment (date they started to work). EXAMPLE: If an employee starts to work prior to the 15th of the month, the first paycheck will be at the end of the month. If an employee starts to work after the 15th of the month, the first check will be the 15th of the next month.

Classified Salary Computations: Employees Changing Jobs Within the District

In the case of promotions from one position level to a higher position level, an employee may be assigned a new salary anywhere from the minimum of the new position level up to the 90% (7+ years experience) on the approved Classified Salary Classification Schedule. For employees whose current salary exceeds the 90% (7+ years experience) on the approved Classified Salary Classification Schedule, a 5% increase may be given.

Due to organizational re-adjustments or demotions caused by personal matters or inadequate performance, employees may be transferred to a position level having a lesser salary range. This type of transfer may necessitate a decrease in salary due to lesser duties and accountabilities. Employees being transferred to a position with a lower grade than their current position may be assigned a salary between the minimum and the 90% (7+ years experience) on the approved Classified Salary Classification Schedule of the lesser position level.

Evaluation

The primary purpose of the Bentonville Public School evaluation process is the improvement of performance. The evaluation process will include: systematic analysis of performance, identification of specific competencies, diagnosis of specific needs of improvement, and outline of strategies for improvement efforts.

It shall be the policy of the Board to require annual evaluation of all personnel. Procedures for implementation of this policy will be printed and made available to each staff member.
**Classified Suspension, Termination/Non-Renewal**

The Superintendent may place an employee on immediate suspension provided written notice of such action is provided to the employee with two (2) school days of the suspension. The written notice shall include a statement of reasons for the suspension, whether the Superintendent is recommending termination, and that a hearing before the board is available upon request, provided that such request is made in writing to the Superintendent within twenty-five (25) calendar days from receipt of said notice.

The Superintendent may recommend termination of an employee during the term of any contract, or the non renewal of a full-time non probationary employee's contract, provided that notice is given in writing, personally delivered, or by letter posed by registered or certified mail to the employee's residence address and reflected in the employee's personnel file.

The recommendation of non renewal of a full-time non probationary employee's contract shall be made no later than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the beginning of the employee's next contract period.

The written notice shall contain a statement of the reasons for the proposed termination or non-renewal. The notice shall further state that an employee being recommended for termination, or a full-time non probationary employee being recommended for non renewal, is entitled to a hearing before the board upon request, provided such request is made in writing to the Superintendent with twenty-five (25) calendar days from receipt of said notice.

Upon receipt of a request for a hearing, the board shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the following procedures:

a. The hearing shall take place not less than five (5) or more than ten (10) days after the written request is received by the Superintendent, except that the employee and board may, in writing, agree to an earlier or later hearing date.

b. The hearing shall be public or private at the request of the employee.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Employee:** Any person employed by a school district under a written annual contract, who is not required to have a teaching certificate issued by the Department of Education as a condition of employment.

- **Probationary Employee:** Any employee who has not completed one (1) year of employment in the district in which s/he is employed. The Superintendent may recommend and the board may vote an additional one (1) year probationary period.

- **Full Time Employee:** Any employee who is contracted to work at least (20) hours per week.

**Legal ref:** 6-17-1702, 1703, 1704, 1705

Procedures and forms related to this policy may be found in the Procedures section of this manual.
Work Schedules

The standard work day for full time non-instructional personnel shall be eight hours. Actual work schedules which provide for the beginning and ending of the work day shall be approved by the Superintendent or designee.

Federal Wage and Hour Law requires classified personnel who receive an hourly wage, to sign in and out of the work place. Time clocks may be used for record keeping purposes.

Employees contracted for more than 220 days are to report for work on snow days. Employees not reporting for work must complete a staff absence form showing a personal or non-contract day for each day missed. Sick leave cannot be used to cover snow days.

Additional Non-Contract Days After Ten Years

Classified employees who are contracted for 240 days or more during a fiscal year and have accrued ten years of service with the Bentonville School District will qualify for five additional non-contracted days that must be taken during the contract year that begins July 1 and ends June 30. These additional days must be taken along with their regular non-contracted days which the employee has if they remain with the District for the full year.
CHAPTER I

Instruction
Curriculum Development and Review

Bentonville School District develops and implements a K-12 curriculum in all content areas that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned with the Arkansas Content Standards and Student Learning Expectations. The district initiates and facilitates discussions among schools to ensure that curriculum standards are clearly articulated within and across all levels (K-12) so that unnecessary overlaps and gaps are eliminated. A systematic process for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of curriculum implementation occurs annually. Curriculum documents for all content areas are collaboratively developed by teachers and are provided to all teachers. All teachers within a content area or grade level are expected to follow the district curriculum.

The district’s instructional program is designed to improve student academic performance. Teachers are expected to use effective, varied, and research-based instructional practices in order to actively engage all students. Teachers utilize multiple assessment strategies and the resulting data to continuously monitor student progress, to adjust instruction, and/or to develop appropriate interventions in order for students to meet proficient levels as defined by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). The effectiveness of the district’s curriculum and instructional program is measured by district assessments used periodically throughout the school year and by the performance of students on the required annual state and national assessments.

At the district level, coordination of the curriculum and instructional program is lead by the Executive Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education. At the campus level, the principal serves as the instructional leader for the building.

Alternative Learning Environments

The district shall have an alternative learning environment (ALE) which shall be part of an intervention program designed to provide guidance, counseling, and academic support to students who are experiencing emotional, social, or academic problems.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall appoint an Alternative Education Placement Team which shall have the responsibility of determining student placement in the ALE. The team should consist of at least a school counselor, the ALE director or principal, a parent or legal guardian, and a regular classroom teacher.

Students who are placed in the ALE shall exhibit at least two of the following characteristics:
- Disruptive behavior
- Drop out from school
- Personal or family problems or situations
- Recurring absenteeism
- Transition to or from residential programs

For the purposes of the ALE, personal or family problems or situations are conditions that negatively affect the student’s academic and social progress. These may include, but are not limited to:
- Abuse: physical, mental or sexual
- Frequent relocation of residency
- Homelessness
• Inadequate emotional support
• Mental/physical health problem
• Pregnancy
• Single parenting

The teachers and administrator of the ALE shall determine exit criteria for students assigned to the district’s ALE on which to base the student’s return to the regular school program of instruction.

The district’s ALE program shall follow class size, staffing, and expenditure requirements identified in the ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Special Needs Funding for School Year 2004-05 and Additional Teacher Pay.

The ALE program shall be evaluated at least annually to determine its overall effectiveness.

Legal References:
A.C.A. § 6-18-508, 509
A.C.A. § 6-20-2305(B)(2)
ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding for School Year 2004-05 and Additional Teacher Pay - 3.01, 3.05, 4.00, and 8.0

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**Early Childhood Education**

Bentonville Public Schools provide an opportunity for income eligible (and a limited number of full-paid tuition) three and four year-old children to participate in a full day early childhood education program at the Early Childhood Center. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate for the age span of the children within the classrooms, implemented with attention to different needs, interests, and developmental levels of individual children, and is approved by the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program. Classes are taught by certified teachers. Pupil/teacher ratios are based on ADE guidelines.

The goal of the early childhood program is to provide opportunities for preschool children to develop prerequisite skills which will increase the likelihood they will be successful in kindergarten.

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**Homebound Instruction**

Any student between 5 - 21 years old who, because of illness, injury, or the nature and/or extent of his/her disabling condition requires homebound instruction shall, upon approval by the Director of Student Services and/or the Director of Special Services and receipt of a physician’s statement with type of disabling condition, how it impacts the student and the anticipated length of homebound instruction, receive educational services through homebound instruction. Homebound instruction will continue at an agreed upon location during the academic year for as long as the disabling condition prevents the student from safely and adequately attending school.

Students shall receive a minimum of four hours of instruction each week. This instruction should occur on at least two different occasions. No less than sixteen hours of instruction per month are required for full
attendance. Days and times should be agreed upon by the instructor and student. Provision of homebound instructional services is subject to re-evaluation of eligibility. Services which extend more than three months will be re-evaluated in terms of continued eligibility and/or referral to more appropriate services.

**Gifted / Talented Education**

The Bentonville School District has procedures to identify gifted and talented students in accordance with Arkansas Department of Education guidelines. The district provides opportunities for gifted and talented students and evaluates the effectiveness of these opportunities.

Gifted and talented children and youth are those of high potential or ability whose learning characteristics and educational needs require qualitatively differentiated educational experiences and/or services. Possession of these talents and gifts, or the potential for their development, will be evidenced through an interaction of above average (1) intellectual ability, (2) task commitment and/or motivation, and (3) creative ability.

Kindergarten and first grade students are provided enrichment opportunities each month by certified G/T facilitators. Formal identification based on state criteria begins in second grade. Identified students in grades 2-5 are served in a full day pull-out program. Beginning in sixth grade and continuing throughout the secondary schools, highly academically able students are served through the Pre-AP, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate programs.

**Special Education**

The school district maintains a special education program in compliance with federal and state guidelines. A full continuum of service options and related services is available to meet the needs of identified students from 3-21 years of age. Any student suspected of having a disability may be referred by the parent/guardian or a staff member to the building principal or designee. If warranted, the student will receive appropriate assessments by a qualified examiner who will interpret the results to parents and staff. If a student is found to be eligible for special education or related services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed to insure the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Special education staff and classrooms shall be under the immediate supervision of the building principal. Special education students will participate in all activities with regular classmates unless determined otherwise by the IEP team.
Instructional Materials Selection and Adoption

To ensure that students and teachers have access to the best possible textbooks and other district-wide approved instructional materials, the district follows the state textbook adoption cycle. Adoption committees are formed for the particular content area(s); one committee is comprised of teachers in the particular content area for K – 6 and one committee is comprised of teachers in the particular content area for grades 7 – 12. The textbook adoption process is coordinated by the Executive Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education. Recommendations for textbook adoptions are brought forward to the Board of Education for their approval. Teachers are expected to use district adopted instructional materials.

Procedures for the selection and removal of library/media center materials are found in the Procedures Manual.

Home Study/Independent Study Skills

Home study is an extension of the regular school day. Whenever home study is given, it should supplement, compliment, reinforce, and relate to the mastery of a subject. Home study is a vital part of the learning process. Students must assume responsibility for their class work just as they will assume job responsibility in the future.

Students and their parents/guardians have a responsibility for the student’s mastery of the subject matter. The learning process is a joint effort. Home study and/or individual study units will be discussed fully in the classroom so that parents are not required to give instruction. Parents can do their part to improve homework by:

1. Cooperating with the school to make homework effective.
2. Providing their child with suitable study conditions (desk or table, light, books and supplies).
3. Reserving a time for homework and turning off the television.
4. Encouraging their child, but avoiding undue pressure.
5. Showing interest in what their child is doing, but not doing the work for them.
6. Understanding that the school expects homework to be completed and returned on time.

The student’s responsibility is to complete all home study assignments and to turn them in on the designated due date.

Parents shall be notified when a student repeatedly fails to complete home study assignments.

The teacher’s responsibility is to provide instruction to each student so that mastery of the subject matter can occur. The assignment of home study is an outgrowth of that classroom instruction. Understanding that the subject matter being taught lends itself to different “types” of home study, the following are examples of home study assignments given to students in the Bentonville Public Schools:

1. Independent practice of newly learned skills.
2. Independent practice to reinforce learned skills.
3. Expansion activities beyond the subject matter presented in class.
4. Introduction of new material (such as the reading of a chapter in the text with a stated purpose for the reading).
5. Independent student projects, approved by the teacher.

The following statements serve as guidelines for classroom teachers as they make decisions about home study:

1. Home study must be relevant to the instruction in the classroom.
2. Skills taught in the classroom should first be guided and practiced in the classroom under the teacher’s supervision.
3. Home study assignments of newly learned material should be as short as possible and still retain meaning.
4. Classroom assignments not completed by the student during the instruction day can be required home study.
5. Each teacher giving an assignment from the text in class where only classroom sets of books are available should make provision for books to be taken home.
6. Teachers should present copied materials that can be seen clearly and have instructions to be used in completing them.
7. Home study should be considered in the grading of students.
8. Home study should provide immediate feedback to the teacher on areas of weakness in the students’ understanding of concepts and/or acquisition of skills.
9. Teachers should not use unrelated home study as a disciplinary measure.

The following are recommended guidelines for giving home study assignments.

**Primary Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Home Study Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>Students may be assigned home study with an average of no more than 20 minutes a night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>Students may be assigned home study with an average of no more than 30 minutes a night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>Students may be assigned home study with an average of no more than 40 minutes a night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>Students may be assigned home study with an average of no more than 40 minutes a night.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intermediate Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Home Study Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade</td>
<td>Students may be assigned home study with an average of no more than 50 minutes a night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Grade</td>
<td>Students may be assigned home study with an average of no more than one hour a night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Grade</td>
<td>Students may be assigned home study with an average of no more than one hour and fifteen minutes a night.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Secondary Level**

Home study assignments should be given with an average of no more than one hour required for each of the subject areas in a block schedule situation or thirty (30) minutes on a traditional schedule. Students enrolled in Advanced Placement classes or the International Baccalaureate Programme should expect to expend considerably more home study time.
English Language Learners

The English Language Learner (ELL) program will enable non-English speaking and limited English speaking students to become proficient in listening, speaking, reading and writing the English language in order for them to be successful in both academic and social environments. Key components of our success will be: accurate and timely student identification and assessment, rigorous curriculum and instruction with high expectations, highly qualified teachers and specifically designed professional development, a parental involvement program, fiscal support and appropriate maintenance of records, and extensive, data-based program evaluation.

Student Performance

GRADING SYSTEM:

Grades assigned to students for performance in a course shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed academic objectives of the course. Educational objectives are those contained in the Arkansas Frameworks.

Kindergarten Progress will be monitored and reported to parents through an Essentials Skills Checklist.

Certified Staff in grades 1-12 shall use an electronic record keeping system to document grades.

The following grading scale shall be used by in grades 1-12 for all courses offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 - 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each letter grade shall be given a numeric value for the purpose of determining grade averages.

For all academic classes in grades 1-12 the following Arkansas Uniform Grading Scale and numeric values will be used for assigning grades and for computing grade point averages (GPAs).

A.C.A. 6-15-902

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Regular/</th>
<th>Honors/Pre-AP</th>
<th>*AP/IB Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 100</td>
<td>4 points</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 - 89</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>4 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 79</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 &amp; below</td>
<td>0 points</td>
<td>0 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order for students to be awarded the quality points for AP and IB courses, the student must complete the full year course and sit for the AP or IB exam. Additionally, the AP or IB teacher must be in compliance with the mandated training requirements as specified in ADE Rules Governing AP and IB Diploma Incentives Program.

*For students who transfer into BHS and who have credit for ADE Approved Honors Courses in their previous school as reflected on the incoming transcript, these students will receive the additional quality points (same as for AP and IB) for GPA purposes.

**Ratios of unassisted work to assisted work used in the determination of a 9 weeks grade are as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level/Course</th>
<th>Unassisted Work</th>
<th>Assisted Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed by the student</td>
<td>completed by the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 12 Standard Courses including honors and Pre-AP (except Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, and Geometry)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP/IB Courses</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra I and Geometry</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Algebra</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code:</th>
<th>I.11.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Issued:</td>
<td>10-18-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Revised:</td>
<td>02-24-09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Promotion / Retention - Elementary**

Students in kindergarten through third grade (K-3) not performing at grade level during the regular school year shall participate in a remediation program during the school year or a summer school remediation program, to be eligible for promotion to the next grade.

The parents or guardians of any student who is to be retained at any grade level shall promptly be given notice of the reasons for such retention in a personal conference that shall be held at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or non-participation in required conferences. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement, the final decision to promote or retain shall rest with the principal.

Promotion/retention or graduation of students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) may be based on their successful attainment of the goals set forth in their IEP.

**Legal References:**

A.C.A. § 6-16-705
State Board of Accreditation Standards 12.04.3
ADE Rules Governing the ACTAAP and the Academic Distress Program 7.05.1, 7.05.2, 7.05.5

Code: I.11.2
Date Issued: 10-18-04
Date Revised: 02-24-09

**Promotion / Retention - Secondary**

103
Each school in the Bentonville School District shall notify, in writing, parents/guardians and students, within the first nine weeks of school of the criteria for promotion of students to the next grade. Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s). Notice of a student’s possible retention shall be included with the quarterly grades sent home to each parent/guardian, or the student if 18 or older. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be held as necessary in an effort to improve a student’s academic success.

A disservice is done to students through social promotion. Promotion or retention of students shall be primarily based on their ability to succeed in the next grade. If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student, before a final decision is made, a conference between the parents/guardians, teacher(s), other pertinent personnel, and principal shall be held. The conference shall be held at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or non-participation in required conferences. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student’s placement, the final decision to promote or retain shall rest with the principal.

Students who do not score proficient or above on End-of-Course tests or on the Grade 11 Literacy test shall successfully participate in a remediation program before they can receive credit for the course. The lack of credit could jeopardize their grade promotion or classification due to insufficient credits to qualify for the next grade.

Promotion/retention or graduation of students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) shall be based on their successful attainment of the goals set forth in their IEP.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-15-402
Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate from High School, a student must meet the graduation requirements established for his/her graduating class and have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 1.5000. Exceeding the state of Arkansas requirements for graduation, BHS graduation requirements for the classes of 2006 and beyond can be found on the following page. All students must have completed graduation requirements before the day of graduation in order to participate in graduation exercises. Any student who has not met graduation requirements before the graduation ceremony may continue to complete the requirements in place for his/her expected graduating class. Typically these requirements are established no later than the year of the incoming freshman class, notwithstanding any requirements that might be added by the state of Arkansas. The provisions of a student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) serve as his/her graduation plan.

AWARD OF CREDIT/CLASS STANDING

Credits are earned at the rate of ½ credit per class per semester. No credit is awarded for seminar classes. Students must earn the following number of credits in order to be classified as sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

- 3 core (English, math, science, social studies) credits to be classified as a sophomore
- 10 credits to be classified as a junior
- 17 credits to be classified as a senior

FULL TIME STUDENTS

To be considered a full-time student, the student shall be enrolled

- In 7 classes to be a freshman
- In 7 classes (5 academic classes) to be a sophomore, junior, or senior

PART TIME STUDENTS

High School does not accept part time students except in the following instances: 1) fifth year seniors returning to earn credits in order to meet graduation requirements, and 2) students in special education who may be completing the goals stated in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).
High School Graduation Requirements
Classes of 2009, 2010 and 2011

The following courses must be successfully completed during grades 9-12 for the graduating classes of 2010 and 2011.

- 4 credits **English I-IV** or equivalents
- 4 credits *Mathematics* (must include one unit in algebra and one unit in geometry)
- 3 credits **Science** (must include one unit in physical science and one unit in biology or its equivalent)
- 4 credits **Social Studies** (must include two credits in U.S. History, one credit in World History, 1/2 credit in Government, and 1/2 credit in economics)
- 1 credit **Practical Arts** (agriculture, business/marketing, family and consumer science, medical professions, and/or trade and industrial)
- 1/2 credit **Fine Arts** (art, music, drama)
- 1/2 credit **Oral Communications**
- 1/2 credit **Health**
- 1/2 credit **Physical Education**
- 6 credits **Electives**
  - 2.5 ~ may be academic and/or **nonacademic electives**
  - 3.5 ~ must be academic electives

Total of 24 credits

* If a course of study sequences algebra over a two-year period and geometry over a two-year period, students must complete all four years. All other math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.

** Nonacademic electives are courses in athletics, physical education (beyond one credit), service credit, and the onsite portion of a work program. Academic electives are all other courses.

*** For the graduating classes of 2010 and beyond, Smart Core requirements must be completed within the 24 credits required to graduate from BHS. See your child’s counselor for more information.

**** For the graduating classes of 2012 and beyond, see inside back cover.
High School Graduation Requirements
Classes of 2012 and Beyond

The following courses must be successfully completed during grades 9-12 for the graduating class of 2012 and beyond.

- 4 credits English I-IV or equivalents
- 4 credits *Mathematics (must include one unit in algebra and one unit in geometry)
- 3 credits Science (must include one unit in physical science and one unit in biology or its equivalent)
- 3 1/2 credits Social Studies (must include one credit in U.S. History, one credit in World History, 1/2 credit in Civics, 1/2 credit in Government and 1/2 credit in economics)
- 1 credit Practical Arts (agriculture, business/marketing, family and consumer science, medical professions, and/or trade and industrial)
- 1/2 credit Fine Arts (art, music, drama)
- 1/2 credit Oral Communications
- 1/2 credit Health
- 1/2 credit Physical Education
- 6.5 credits Electives
  - 2.5 – may be academic and/or **nonacademic electives
  - 4 – must be academic electives

Total of 24 credits

* If a course of study sequences algebra over a two-year period and geometry over a two-year period, students must complete all four years. All other math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.

** Nonacademic electives are courses in athletics, physical education (beyond one credit), service credit, and the onsite portion of a work program.

* Academic electives are all other courses.

*** For the graduating classes of 2010 and beyond, Smart Core requirements must be completed within the 24 credits required to graduate from BHS. See your child’s counselor for more information.

**** For the graduating classes of 2012 and beyond, see inside back cover.
State of Arkansas
SMART CORE Requirements: Sixteen (16) units
For Graduating Classes of 2011, 2012 and 2013

English: four (4) units (years) – one in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

Oral Communications: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)

Mathematics: four (4) units (years) (all students under Smart Core must take a mathematics course in grade 11 or 12)
1. Algebra I or Algebra I-A & I-B* which may be taken in grades 7-8 or 8-9
2. Geometry or Investigating Geometry or Geometry A & B*
*A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four-unit requirement for the purpose of meeting the graduation requirement, but only serve as one unit each toward fulfilling the Smart Core requirement.
3. Algebra II
(Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable)

Natural Science: three (3) units (years) with lab experience chosen from:
a. Physical Science
b. Biology or Applied Biology/Chemistry
c. Chemistry
d. Physics or Principles of Technology I & II or PIC Physics

Social Studies: three (3) units (years)
A. Civics or Civics/American Government
B. World History
C. American History

Physical Education: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)
Note: While one-half (1/2) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)

Fine Arts: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)

CAREER FOCUS: - six (6) units – at least two of the Career Focus units must be of the same foreign language.

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student's contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.
State of Arkansas
CORE Requirements: Sixteen (16) units
For Graduating Classes of 2011, 2012 and 2013

English: four (4) units (years) – one in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

Oral Communications: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)

Mathematics: four (4) units (years)
1. Algebra or its equivalent* - 1 unit
2. Geometry or its equivalent* - 1 unit
3. All math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.
4. (Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable)
   *A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four (4) unit requirement.

Science: three (3) units (years)
a. at least one (1) unit of biology
b. one (1) unit of a physical science

Social Studies: three (3) units (years)
A. Civics or government, one-half (1/2) unit
B. World history, one (1) unit
C. U.S. history, one (1) unit

Physical Education: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)

Note: While one-half (1/2) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)

Fine Arts: one-half (1/2) unit (1/2 year)

CAREER FOCUS: - six (6) units

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student’s contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

NOTE: Students entering seventh grade for school year 2004 – 2005 are required to fulfill the Smart Core requirements unless their parents have elected to opt them out under the provisions of policy 4.45.

Students entering ninth grade for school year 2004 – 2005 are required to fulfill the 4 units of math requirement although they are not bound to fulfill the Smart Core math course requirements.

Legal Reference: State Board of Education; Standards of Accreditation 14.01 - 14.04
SMART CORE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2014 AND AFTER

English 4 units
- English 9th grade
- English 10th grade
- English 11th grade
- English 12th grade

Mathematics 4 units
- Algebra I or Algebra A & B (Grades 7-8 or 8-9)
- Geometry or Investigating Geometry or Geometry A & B (Grades 8-9 or 9-10)
- Algebra II
- Fourth Math – Choice of: Transitions to College Math, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Trigonometry, Statistics, Computer Math, Algebra III or an Advanced Placement mathematics

Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable.

Natural Science 3 units with lab experience chosen from:
- Physical science
- Biology or Applied Biology/Chemistry
- Chemistry
- Physics or Principles of Technology I & II or PIC Physics

Social Studies 3 units
- Civics ½ unit
- World History 1 unit
- U. S. History 1 unit

Oral Communications ½ unit
Physical Education ½ unit
Health and Safety ½ unit
Economics ½ unit (may be counted toward Social Studies or Career Focus)
Fine Arts ½ unit
Career Focus 6 units
CORE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2014 AND AFTER

English 4 units
- English 9th grade
- English 10th grade
- English 11th grade
- English 12th grade

Mathematics 4 units
- Algebra I or its equivalent
- Geometry or its equivalent
- All math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills
- A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four (4) unit requirement.

Science 3 units
- At least one unit of Biology
- At least one unit of a physical science

Social Studies 3 units
- Civics ½ unit
- World History 1 unit
- U. S. History 1 unit

Oral Communications ½ unit
Physical Education ½ unit
Health and Safety ½ unit
Economics ½ unit (may be counted toward Social Studies or Career Focus)
Fine Arts ½ unit
Career Focus 6 units
EARLY GRADUATION
When a student has successfully completed courses required for graduation, he/she is eligible to graduate from High School. All required coursework must be completed before the beginning of the next school year in order for the student to be granted a diploma from the previous May’s graduating class.

MANDATORY GRADUATION
When a student has completed the required number of credits for graduation and has spent four years in grades 9 – 12, the student will be graduated and will not be eligible to return to BHS to take additional classes. If a student successfully meets the goals of his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP) in the case of special education students, the student will not be eligible to return to BHS to take additional courses.

TRANSFER OF NON-BHS CREDITS FOR STUDENTS NEW TO BHS

Transfers from Private Schools
When a student transfers from a private school (accredited or non-accredited), a committee of appropriate personnel to include a counselor, department chair, and administrator will review and determine the awarding of credits and grades. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the transferring student to provide school officials with a copy of the most recent official student transcript, a copy of the private school course description book, and graded samples of the student’s work for the review of the school committee.

Weighted credit will be given ONLY for the transfer of successfully completed Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. All other courses will receive no additional weight in determining the grade point average for a student who transfers from a private school.

Any student transferring from any private school (accredited or non-accredited) will be required to meet all BHS graduation requirements.

Placement of students transferring to Bentonville Public Schools from a private school will be determined by the counselor after reviewing the transcript of courses completed, courses in progress, grades received, and conducting an interview with the student and parent/guardian.

Transfer from Other Public Schools
When a student transfers from another accredited public high school, high school credits and grade point average earned will be accepted and treated in a manner similar to credits and grade point average earned at High School. High School will record courses from the previous school with the designated credits shown on the transcript.

Weighted credit will be given ONLY for the transfer of successfully completed Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. All other courses will receive no additional weight in determining the grade point average for a student who transfers from a public school.

If a student transfers from a non-accredited public high school, a committee of appropriate personnel to include a counselor, department chair, and administrator will review and determine the awarding of credits and grades. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the transferring student to provide school officials with a copy of the most recent official student transcript, a copy of the high school course description book, and graded samples of the student’s work for the review of the school committee.

PROCESS FOR AWARDING CREDITS TO HOME-SCHOoled STUDENTS
Arkansas law specifies that a high school is not responsible for providing credits, grades, transcripts or diplomas for students in home schooling instruction. However, the law states that home schooled students may earn a diploma by entering high school and completing a minimum of 9 months (180 school days) in classes of appropriate placement. In addition, the student shall meet the minimum graduation requirements for Bentonville High School.
Interview and Documentation

During an interview the parent/guardian and student will be responsible for providing to the school counselor the following documentation in order for the appropriate decision to be made regarding student placement in courses. This documentation will include but not be limited to:

- Documentation that an application for home schooling has been approved.
- A copy of the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) (required by Arkansas home school laws).
- Documentation from the Home School Academy/Company showing courses the student successfully completed, dates of study, and student successful completion of courses, and
- Curriculum guides/sample work completed by the student in each course where credit is being requested.

Awarding of Credit

When the appropriate documentation of work completed by the student is given to the school counselor, the work and documentation will be evaluated by a committee composed of a counselor, appropriate department faculty members, and the grade level assistant principal. The decision to award credit in a specific subject area will be determined by considering the following:

- The course work aligns with course offerings at BHS.
- There is evidence of mastery of the standards for the course being considered.

The committee may take any of the following actions on a course-by-course basis.

1. Grant credit (any credit granted will be placed on the student’s transcript as “pass” or “credit,” with no letter or numerical grade assigned); or
2. Grant credit contingent upon the student’s passing a subsequent course, making a satisfactory score on a norm referenced test) or providing additional information to substantiate the student has knowledge of a specific subject area; or
3. Deny credit.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES/ONLINE COURSES

No more than two credits from correspondence courses and online courses (earned external to BHS authorized coursework) will be accepted toward meeting graduation requirements. Correspondence courses and online courses must be pre-approved by the grade level counselor.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

For concurrent courses to fulfill a Bentonville High School graduation requirement, the concurrent credit course must be placed on the student’s BHS transcript and will count toward GPA and class ranking. Other concurrent credit courses not required for graduation will not be placed on the transcript.

HONOR GRADUATES

Students may graduate from High School with HONORS or HIGH HONORS if they meet the criteria specified in the student handbook. Any student transferring from a private school or who has been previously home schooled is eligible to be recognized as graduating with “HONORS” or “HIGH HONORS” if he/she meets the established criteria.
Valedictorian

Effective with the graduating class of 2003, the valedictorian is the senior student who meets all of the following criteria:

- Meets the criteria to graduate with “HIGH HONORS"
- Has the highest GPA (grade point average) among the students who have met the criteria to graduate with “HIGH HONORS"
- Has been in continuous enrollment at BHS for four consecutive semesters to include the final semester that leads to the student’s graduation.

In the event of a tie in GPA (grade point average), co-valedictorians will be named; in this event, no salutatorian will be named. Home-schooled students must enter BPS during the first semester of their freshman year in order to be eligible for valedictorian.

Salutatorian

Effective with the graduating class of 2003, the salutatorian is the senior student who meets all of the following criteria:

- Meets the criteria to graduate with “HIGH HONORS"
- Has the second highest GPA (grade point average) among the students who have met the criteria to graduate with “HIGH HONORS"
- Has been in continuous enrollment at BHS for four consecutive semesters to include the final semester that leads to the student’s graduation.
- In the event of a tie in GPA (grade point average), co-salutatorians will be named. Home-schooled students must enter BPS during the first semester of their freshman year in order to be eligible for salutatorian.

Concurrent Credit Guidelines

Act 60 of 1999 and Act 1097 of 1991--“An act to provide that high school students who are enrolled in college courses will receive both high school and college credit for the courses; and for other purposes."

1. This program will be available to freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

2. A parent conference will be held with every student who wishes to enroll in a college course for concurrent credit. The parent will sign a permission slip agreeing to be responsible for tuition and transportation. The parent will also assume the responsibility of the student when he/she is not on a Bentonville school campus.

3. A senior taking concurrent credit courses must be on the high school campus for three courses. A junior must be on campus for four courses. Freshmen and sophomores must be on campus seven courses.

4. Students must attend consecutive courses at High School. For example--A student may take concurrent credit courses in the morning and attend BHS in the afternoon or attend BHS in the morning and take concurrent credit in the afternoon.

5. Courses taken in the summer and at night may count as concurrent credit.
6. Students taking concurrent credit courses must furnish proof of enrollment at the college or university to BHS during the first two weeks of the semester.

7. A student taking concurrent credit courses may not elect to drop them and re-enroll at the high school after the first two weeks of a semester.

8. For concurrent courses to fulfill a High School graduation requirement, the concurrent credit course must be placed on the student's BHS transcript and will count toward GPA and class ranking. Other concurrent credit courses not required for graduation will not be placed on the transcript.

9. Students electing to take a concurrent credit course at the University of Arkansas must have a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Students electing to take a concurrent credit course at NWACC must have a 3.0 GPA.

10. Each three-hour course will count as 1/2 unit of credit if it meets graduation requirements.

11. Students must still meet all graduation requirements.

12. It will be the student's responsibility to inform the college to send the final grade and credit to the High School.

13. Students will not be awarded concurrent credit for duplicate courses. (example: English IV and Freshman English.)

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**School Improvement**

Each school in the district shall develop a comprehensive school improvement plan to address deficiencies in student performance based on analysis of students' grade-level Benchmark assessments and other relevant data. The purpose of each plan shall be to ensure that all students meet the state assessment standards established by the State Board of Education, as well as student achievement goals established by the District. A cumulative review of all academic improvement plans shall also be part of the data used to develop the comprehensive school improvement plan. Each plan shall be developed with administrator, teacher, other school staff, parent, community, and student (when appropriate) input and shall have as one of its components a plan for a parental involvement program. Professional development activities are to be designed to meet the needs identified in each school’s plan. Each plan is to be reviewed annually and revised to meet the changing needs reflected in student data.

Any school in the district identified by the Arkansas Department of Education as failing to meet the established levels of academic achievement on the state’s required tests shall revise its school improvement plan.

The district shall develop, with appropriate staff and community input, a comprehensive district improvement plan. The plan shall coordinate the actions of the various comprehensive school improvement plans within the district. The district plan shall align district resources to help ensure all of its students attain proficiency on the required state exams.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-15-404 (i)(1)
A.C.A. § 6-15-404 (i)(2)(B)
CHAPTER S

Students
District Accountability and Assessment

The Bentonville School District is accountable to the residents of the district. The board will maintain programs of academic accountability and assessment that will lead to incremental improvement.

School Attendance and Enrollment

Residence Requirements

Definitions:

“Reside” means to be physically present and to maintain a permanent place of abode for an average of no fewer than four (4) calendar days and nights per week for a primary purpose other than school attendance.

“Resident” means a student whose parents, legal guardians, persons having legal, lawful control of the student under order of a court, or persons standing in loco parentis reside in the school district.

“Residential address” means the physical location where the student’s parents, legal guardians, persons having legal, lawful control of the student under order of a court, or persons standing in loco parentis reside. A student may use the residential address of a parent, legal guardian, person having legal, lawful control of the student under order of a court, or person standing in loco parentis only if the student resides at the same residential address and if the guardianship or other legal authority is not granted solely for educational needs or school attendance purposes.

The schools of the District shall be open and free through the completion of the secondary program to all persons between the ages of five (5) and twenty one (21) years whose parents, legal guardians, persons having legal, lawful control of the student under order of a court, or persons standing in loco parentis, reside within the District and to all persons between those ages who have been legally transferred to the District for educational purposes.

Any person eighteen (18) years of age or older may establish a residence separate and apart from his or her parents or guardians for school attendance purposes.

In order for a person under the age of eighteen (18) years to establish a residence for the purpose of attending the District’s schools separate and apart from his or her parents, legal guardians, or other persons having legal, lawful control of him or her under an order of a court, the person must actually reside in the District for a primary purpose other than that of school attendance.¹

The children or wards of any person who is at least a half-time employee of this district but reside in another district are eligible to enroll in District schools.

Note: ¹ Act 1255 of 2005 gives the Department of Human Services the authority to require a school district to waive the residency requirement for foster children unless a court determines it is not in the child’s best interest.
for the child to remain in his/her current school. The Act further provides that districts are “encouraged to work out a plan for transportation for the child to remain in the child’s current school.”

Legal References:       A.C.A. § 6-18-202
                        A.C.A. § 6-18-203

B. Residency Procedure
The determination of residency shall be made in the first instance by the Director of Students Services. The Director may require such documentation as he might determine to be appropriate to establish residency. With regard to an “in loco parentis” relationship, the Director may require such documentation as he might determine to be appropriate to establish both the relationship and whether a student’s residence with someone asserting such standing is for purposes other than educational needs or school attendance purposes, including, but not limited to: powers of attorney, court records, medical records, and educational records. Failure to cooperate in providing documentation in support of “in loco parentis” status or with regard to whether a student’s residency is solely for educational or school attendance purposes shall be sufficient cause to deny attendance at District schools.

In the event the Director of Student Services denies attendance in the District for any reason, the decision may be appealed to the Superintendent. In the event the Superintendent upholds the decision of the Director of Student Services denying attendance in the District, the decision may be appealed to the Board of Education to be heard at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, unless the Board determines a special meeting to be appropriate.

Entrance Requirements
To enroll in a school in the District, the child must be a resident of the District as defined in District policy (4.1—RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS), meet the criteria outlined in policy 4.40—HOMELESS STUDENTS, be accepted as a transfer student under the provisions of policy 4.4, or participate under a school choice option and submit the required paperwork as required by the choice option.

For the 2009-2010 school year, students may enter kindergarten in the public schools of this state if they will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1, 2009.

For the 2010-2011 school year, students may enter kindergarten in the public schools of this state if they will attain the age of five (5) years on or before August 15, 2010.

For the 2011-2012 school year and afterwards, students may enter kindergarten in the public schools of this state if they will attain the age of five (5) years on or before August 1 of the year in which they are seeking initial enrollment.

Any Student who has been enrolled in a state-accredited or state-approved kindergarten program in another state for at least sixty (60) days, who will become five (5) years old during the year in which he or she is enrolled in kindergarten, and who meets the basic residency requirement for school attendance may be enrolled in kindergarten upon written request to the school district.

Any child may enter the first grade in the public schools of this state if the child will be six (6) years of age during the school year in which the child is seeking enrollment and the child has successfully completed a kindergarten program in a public school in this state.

Any child who will be six (6) years of age on or before October 1 of the school year of enrollment and who has not completed a state-accredited kindergarten program shall be evaluated by the district and may be placed in the first grade if the results of the evaluation justify placement in the first grade and the child’s parent or legal guardian agrees with placement in the first grade; otherwise the child shall be placed in kindergarten.

Any child who has been enrolled in the first grade in a state accredited or state-approved elementary school in another state for a period of at least sixty (60) days, who will become six (6) years of age during the school year in which the child is enrolled in grade one (1), and who meets the basic residency requirement for school attendance may be enrolled in the first grade.
Students who move into the District from an accredited school shall be assigned to the same grade as they were attending in their previous school (mid-year transfers) or as they would have been assigned in their previous school. Home-schooled students shall be evaluated by the District to determine their appropriate grade placement.

Prior to the child’s admission to a District school:

1. The parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall furnish the child’s social security number, or if they request, the district will assign the child a nine (9) digit number designated by the department of education.

2. The parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall provide the district with one (1) of the following documents indicating the child’s age:
   a. A birth certificate;
   b. A statement by the local registrar or a county recorder certifying the child’s date of birth;
   c. An attested baptismal certificate;
   d. A passport;
   e. An affidavit of the date and place of birth by the child’s parent or guardian;
   f. United States military identification; or
   g. Previous school records.

3. The parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall indicate on school registration forms whether the child has been expelled from school in any other school district or is a party to an expulsion proceeding.

4. The child shall be age appropriately immunized from poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, red (rubeola) measles, rubella, and other diseases as designated by the State Board of Health, or have an exemption issued by the Arkansas State Department of Health. Proof of immunization shall be by a certificate of a licensed physician or a public health department acknowledging the immunization.

Note: Act 1255 of 2005 requires schools to “immediately” enroll foster children whether or not they can produce “required clothing or required records” noted in #2 and #4. ASBA does not believe this means schools are required to admit students currently under expulsion from their previous school. See policies 4.4 and 4.5.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-201 (c)
A.C.A. § 6-18-207
A.C.A. § 6-18-208
A.C.A. § 6-18-702
A.C.A. § 6-15-504 (f)
A.C.A. § 9-27-103

Code: S.2.2
Date Issued: 8-16-77
Date Revised: 01-27-09
Review Date: 07-19-06

Compulsory Attendance

Every parent, guardian, or other person having custody or charge of any child age five (5) through seventeen (17) years on or before legal date required for enrollment of that year who resides, as defined by policy (RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS), within the District shall enroll and send the child to a District school with the following exceptions.
1. The child is enrolled in private or parochial school.

2. The child is being home-schooled and the conditions of policy (HOME SCHOOLING) have been met.

3. The child will not be age six (6) on or before September 15 of that particular school year and the parent, guardian, or other person having custody or charge of the child elects not to have him/her attend kindergarten. A kindergarten waiver form prescribed by regulation of the Department of Education must be signed and on file with the District administrative office.

4. The child has received a high school diploma or its equivalent as determined by the State Board of Education.

5. The child is age sixteen (16) or above and is enrolled in a post-secondary vocational-technical institution, a community college, or a two-year or four-year institution of higher education.

6. The child is age sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) and has met the requirements to enroll in an adult education program as defined by A.C.A. § 6-18-201 (b).

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-201

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### Absences

The State Board of Education pursuant to ACT 473 recognizes two types of absences of students in the school districts in Arkansas, excused and unexcused. An **excused** absence is defined as one in which the student was absent for one of the following reasons:

- Personal illness of student
- Official school-sponsored activities
- Court appearances
- Medical appointments
- Serious illness in the immediate family (parent, guardian, sibling, grandparent, child)
- Death in the immediate family (same as above)
- Any circumstances not covered above which the district determines are excused.

Any absence not described above will be defined as **unexcused** (ADE Director’s Memo # 89-41).

The Bentonville Police Department, in cooperation with the district, participates in the “operation stay in school” program. Any certified law enforcement officer may stop and detain any unsupervised school-age student found off school premises during school hours and request the production of documentation excusing her/his presence from school.

### Elementary and Middle Schools

The parent/guardian is responsible for contacting the school within three days of an absence. This can be by phone, email, personal note or a doctor’s note in order for the absence to be excused. When a parent/guardian fails to contact the school about an absence, the absence will be considered unexcused and they should be aware of the following procedures:

- On the 4th unexcused absence, a letter will be sent to the child’s parent/guardian.
On the 8th unexcused absence, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian and the Benton County Juvenile Probation Office and a conference will be requested with the parent/guardian in person or by phone.

On the 12th unexcused absence, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian and the child’s records may be forwarded to the Benton County Juvenile Probation Office requesting a FINS petition.

The student or a parent/guardian should make arrangements to make up any work missed during an absence on the student’s first day back in class. A zero will be given for any assignment not made up. Students will be given one day for each day absent to make up missed work.

Excessive tardies and/or early checkouts may also be referred to the Benton County Juvenile Probation Office requesting a FINS petition.

Excessive parent call-ins will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Junior Highs and High School

Five parent notes or phone calls for personal illness or family illness will be accepted per semester after which a doctor’s note will be required to excuse an absence due to illness.

Students must be in attendance for a full school day to participate in after school activities.

With the fourth unexcused absence, the student’s credits may be pulled at the end of the semester for excessive unexcused absences. A written report may be submitted to the juvenile probation office when truancy occurs.

Because of the obvious safety and responsibility risks, any student forging a parent’s name to a note or using a fake phone call to gain an excused absence will be considered truant.

**Junior Highs:** For an excused absence, the office shall be notified via a phone call or a written note shall be turned in to the office. The following are notification guidelines specific to absences:

- 4 unexcused absences: Parent notified by letter
- 8 unexcused absences: Parent conference requested
- 12 total absences: Parent conference requested

**High School:** Notes must be turned in to the attendance clerk within 24 hours of returning to school for the absence(s) to be considered an excused absence(s). This is for test exemption purposes.

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**Waiver From Mandatory Attendance Requirements for Grades 9-12**

The Superintendent shall have the authority to grant a waiver, on a case by case basis, to any student who would experience “proven financial hardship” if that student is required to attend the full school day. For the purpose of this policy, “proven financial hardship” is defined as harm or suffering caused by a student’s inability to obtain or provide basic life necessities of food, clothing, and shelter for the student or the student’s family.

Legal References: A.C.A. 6-18-210, 211
The Bentonville Public Schools will provide educational experiences for all of its students to achieve and progress through the K-12 curriculum over a period of thirteen (13) years. In a limited number of cases, it may be appropriate to consider grade level acceleration for students who demonstrate the need and ability to be successful with the acceleration. In these cases, accelerated students would be given the opportunity and support to complete the K-12 curriculum in less than thirteen (13) years. Because acceleration is a permanent educational decision, it will be considered thoughtfully, on an individual basis, with collaboration among parent(s), student and the school district.

BELIEFS

1. Bentonville Public Schools will follow Arkansas state law on age requirements for admittance into Kindergarten. There will be no early acceleration into Kindergarten.
2. Kindergarten to First Grade admittance decisions will be made in the first six (6) weeks of the student entering kindergarten in Bentonville Public Schools.
3. All K-8 grade level acceleration decisions will be made by the Grade Acceleration Team (GAT).
4. The K-8 GAT will be comprised of: the student, the student’s parent(s), the appropriate grade level teachers, the appropriate Counselors, the appropriate building Principal/Designee, the Gifted Coordinator and the appropriate Executive Director for Curriculum.
5. For a student to be accelerated a grade level, the GAT decision must be unanimous.

PROCEDURES

1. Parent(s)/Teacher who wish to accelerate a student a grade level should state their request in writing to the building Principal.
2. The Principal/Designee requests a copy of the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) from the Gifted Coordinator and completes the following sections
   a. Section I – General Information
   b. Section II – Critical Items
   c. Section III – School History
   d. Have student produce an original grade appropriate writing sample.
3. The Principal/Designee will be responsible for collecting additional student information from the student’s cumulative folder and scheduling the Grade Acceleration Team (GAT) meeting.
4. Members of the GAT will meet to complete/discuss the following sections of the Iowa Acceleration Scale:
   a. Section VII – School and Academic Factors
   b. Section VIII – Developmental Factors
   c. Section IX – Interpersonal Skills
   d. Section X – Attitude and Support
5. If GAT recommends for the child to proceed to the testing phase, parent/guardian must give written permission to test their child.
6. A member of the Gifted/Talented staff will administer/evaluate the following tests:
   a. Section IV – A cognitive ability test to evaluate a student’s general ability to succeed in a school setting. (Raven)
   b. Section V – An aptitude test to indicate a student’s potential to learn new material in a specific subject, the content of which typically has not been taught in school. (OLSAT – Above Level)
   c. Section VI – An achievement test to represent the degree to which a student has learned specific subject matter content. (ITBS or SAT10 – on grade level)
7. The Principal/Designee will reconvene the GAT committee to review all data and make a decision regarding grade level acceleration.
8. If the student is recommended for grade level acceleration, the building Principal/Designee will continue to monitor the progress of the accelerated student throughout the year.
9. If the student is not recommended for grade level acceleration, the parent(s) may appeal any decision by accessing the Bentonville Public Schools complaints and grievance policy.

Code: S.2.6
Date Issued: 01-19-04
Date Revised: 01-27-09

Admission of Non-Resident Students – School Choice

I. It shall be the policy of the Bentonville School District to comply in all regards with the Arkansas Public School Choice Act. Applications shall be accepted from non-resident students in compliance with and under the guidelines as set forth under the School Choice Act and accompanying rules and regulations as promulgated by the Arkansas Department of Education.

II. No "choice" application shall be approved if the anticipated enrollment for the grade in which the student is to be placed exceeds 80% of the projected enrollment calculated annually as of June 1. The District will maintain compliance with all appropriate Arkansas Department of Education Standards for Accreditation.

III. Applicants will be accepted contingent upon space availability on the tenth day of the school year for which application is being made. Therefore, the decision as to if it is possible to accept a student and/or where to place student who is conditionally accepted as a participant may not be made until the tenth day of school.

IV. The application shall be accepted or rejected pursuant to the following standards:
   a. No application shall be accepted unless postmarked on or before July 1 preceding the year in which the student will begin the Fall semester or by such earlier date as may be permitted by Arkansas law or regulation.
   b. Applications will be considered in the order that they are received in the Office of the Superintendent.
   c. In considering applications, the school district shall take into account the capacity of programs, classes, grade levels, and buildings and may only accept applications contingent upon available space on the tenth day of school.
   d. Priority will be given to students who have siblings or step-siblings already attending Bentonville Schools under the Arkansas Public School Choice Act.
   e. All applications shall be accepted or rejected in writing via certified mail within thirty (30) days of receipt and the reason for any rejection shall be stated. If the student is rejected, the specific reason for rejection shall be stated in the letter.
   f. Nothing in this policy shall require the Bentonville School District to add any personnel or classrooms or to exceed in any way the requirements and standards established by Arkansas law or regulation.
   g. No application shall be accepted if the transfer of the student would adversely affect the desegregation of either the Bentonville School District or the resident district of the applicant.
   h. In considering applications, the Bentonville School District shall not consider an applicant's academic achievement, athletic, or other extracurricular ability, disabling conditions, English proficiency level, or previous disciplinary proceedings.

V. Acceptance into Bentonville School District through the School Choice Act does not mean that the parent or student may choose which school they will attend. Students will be enrolled in the school building where space is available.

VI. If a student is accepted into the district, he/she must enroll and attend class no later than the third day of school (or three days after being informed of acceptance if after the first day of school) in order for the space to be held open. Failure to do so will result in the student being unable to participate in School Choice in Bentonville School District for that year.

VII. Transportation of a student from home to school and home again shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
VIII. Once the application for participation is approved, no application for participation in future years need be made.

IX. All applications shall be reviewed consistent with the requirements of the Arkansas Public School Choice Act as it is now written or may hereafter be amended and any rules and regulations issued by the Arkansas Department of Education.

Legal Reference: Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-18-206

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**Assignment of Schools**

The Bentonville School District is divided into attendance zones that have specific boundaries. BHS serves all students. Each legal resident in an attendance area may attend the local school that serves that attendance area. However, there may be times when the administration will be forced to place students out of their normal attendance area when circumstances demand. Additionally, at times, it may be necessary for the Board of Education to alter the attendance areas (zones) for just and reasonable causes. Students seeking to attend a school that is not in their designated attendance area must secure approval from the Director of Student Services. Any students who might transfer into the District from outside District boundaries will also be assigned to a school by the Director of Student Services.

Employees of the District may choose to have their own children attend any school in the District if space is available. Any questions about space availability will be determined by the Director of Student Services. All transportation responsibilities will be assumed by the employee.

Under no circumstances will out-of-state students be allowed to attend the Bentonville Schools (refer to Board of Education meeting minutes of July 15, 2002.)

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**Transfer and Withdrawals**

Bentonville Public Schools will not enroll students who are not legal residents* of the Bentonville School District.

Any person who knowingly gives a false residential address for the purpose of public school enrollment, will be notified immediately upon discovery and dropped from enrollment in the Bentonville School District.

The Board of Education, on a case-by-case basis involving unique and unusual circumstances, will handle any exceptions to the above stated policy.

* Definition: Legal resident means to be physically present and maintain a permanent domicile for an average of no less than four (4) calendar days and nights per week for a primary purpose other than school attendance.

Legal Ref.: Arkansas Statute 6-18-202
WITHDRAWALS: Pupils within the compulsory age, that is pupils who are five and not yet eighteen years of age shall not be withdrawn from the rolls of any school unless they have:

1. Moved from the Bentonville School District
2. Entered a private or parochial school
3. Been committed to an institution
4. Been excluded from school
5. Been recommended to be withdrawn by the Superintendent's Office
6. Filed a Kindergarten Waiver

TRANSFER: Students are not allowed to transfer during the academic year unless they move to a different school attendance zone. Appeals can be made to the Director of Student Services.

TRANSPORTATION: As a condition for approval of any request for voluntary transfer, the requesting party shall be required to sign a transportation waiver form provided by the School District on which it is acknowledged that any right to free transportation that a student may otherwise have by reason of Board Policy or state statute is waived.

OUT OF DISTRICT NON-RESIDENT: Students will be admitted whose parents, legal guardians, or lawful custodians are in the process of building or buying a home within the Bentonville Public School System.

"IN PROCESS" DEFINED-

1. Have a contract with a builder, and
2. Have acquired the lot or ground for the home, and
3. Have acquired approved financing and
4. Have completion date and scheduled to take possession

OR

1. Have contract to purchase home, with no contingencies existing which could cause cancellation, and
2. Have acquired approved financing and
3. Have settlement or closing date and scheduled to take possession.

Evidence must be presented regarding the process to the Director of Student Services.

Transfer Students

Any student transferring from a school accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education to another school accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education shall be placed in the same grade the student would have been in had the student remained at the former school as stated in the Omnibus Act 1467 of 2003.

Any student transferring from home school, private school, or a school that is not accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education to a school that is accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education shall be evaluated by the staff of Bentonville Schools to determine the student’s proper placement.
Student Legal Transfers

It shall be the policy of the Bentonville School District to serve all students who are legal residents of the District and those who have been legally transferred to the District.

A legal transfer requires the school district in which the student resides agrees to release the student to attend school in another school district which subsequently agrees to accept that student. It shall be the general policy of the Bentonville School District to deny the approval of legal transfer requests of residents to leave the District to attend school in another district. Additionally, it shall be the general policy of the District to deny transfer requests from out-of-District residents seeking to have their children enter the Bentonville School District. The District may make exceptions to the general policy in extraordinary circumstances and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Nothing in this policy shall require the District to add any personnel or facilities or to exceed in any way the requirements and standards established by Arkansas law or regulations.

Student Legal Transfer Procedures:

1. Persons requesting transfers must secure and complete a “Petition for Transfer of Students” form from the Central Office (500 Tiger Blvd., Bentonville, AR 71712.)
2. The completed forms must be submitted to the Director of Student Services not later than the 1st day of the month in which the transfer is expected to take place. The form may be submitted via FAX, email, or in hard copy.
3. The Director of Student Services will review the completed “Petition for Transfer of Students” form and meet with persons requesting transfer.
4. Within five (5) days of meeting with the Director of Students Services, the person(s) making the request will be notified of the decision.
5. If the request for transfer is denied by the Director of Student Services, the person(s) making the request has the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Education. The written appeal request must be received by the Superintendent at least five (5) days prior to the next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting.
6. If all the above conditions are met, the Board will hear the appeal.

Search, Seizure and Interrogations

The District respects the rights of its students against arbitrary intrusion of their person and property. At the same time, it is the responsibility of school officials to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students enrolled in the District in order to promote an environment conducive to student learning. The Superintendent, principals, and their designees have the right to inspect and search school property and equipment. They may also search students and their personal property in which the student has a reasonable expectation of privacy, when there is reasonable suspicion to believe such student or property contains illegal items or other items in violation of Board policy or dangerous to the school community. School authorities may seize evidence found in the search and disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence found which appears to be in violation of the law shall be reported to the appropriate authority.
School property shall include, but not be limited to, lockers, desks, and parking lots, as well as personal effects left there by students. When possible, prior notice will be given and the student will be allowed to be present along with an adult witness, however, searches may be done at any time with or without notice or the student’s consent. A personal search must not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

The Superintendent, principals, and their designees may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to help conduct searches. Such searches may include the use of specially trained dogs.

A school official of the same sex shall conduct personal searches with an adult witness of the same sex present.

Questioning of students by non-school personnel, other than the School Resource Officer, shall be granted only with a court order directing such questioning, with permission of the parents of a student (or the student if above eighteen [18] years of age), or in response to a subpoena or arrest warrant. If the District makes a report to any law enforcement agency concerning student misconduct or if access to a student is granted to a law enforcement agency due to a court order, the principal or the principal’s designee shall make a good faith effort to contact the student’s parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis on student enrollment forms.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-513

A search of students’ cars may be conducted by administration if there is reasonable belief that a controlled substance, gun, or other contraband is present. School authorities may make a personal or automobile search with reasonable cause and seize any illegal contraband to include tobacco, look-alike tobacco, drugs, look-alike drugs, alcohol, controlled substances, dangerous weapons, or stolen property. Metal detectors may be used to make random searches of persons, clothing, purses, duffel bags and book bags in an effort to keep our building safe. Students found to have in their possession or in their cars, any type of illegal product/item risk disciplinary action by the school as well as legal prosecution.

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**Student Involvement in Decision Making**

The Board of Education and the professional staff of the Bentonville School District welcome the expression of the ideas and ideals of students, and seek to provide opportunities for students to discuss issues and to express their opinion on school policies, program of studies, and areas of public concern.

Formal and proper channels for students and faculty to communicate to encourage change include:

1. regular classroom
2. homerooms
3. individual teacher conference
4. counselor conferences
5. parent-school conferences
6. student council
7. individual conferences with administration
8. specific assemblies arranged through regular school procedures.

Such discussions should be carried on in an atmosphere of mutual respect and in no way should one individual or group of individuals preempt the rights of others. It is expected that students will obey the rules and policies of the school even while working for change.
The Bentonville Board of Education has a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the District's students and employees. To help maintain a safe environment conducive to high student achievement, the Board establishes policies necessary to regulate student behavior to promote an orderly school environment that is respectful of the rights of others and ensures the uniform enforcement of student discipline. Students are responsible for their conduct that occurs: at any time on the school grounds; off school grounds at a school sponsored function, activity, or event; going to and from school or a school activity.

The District's administrators may also take disciplinary action against a student for off-campus conduct occurring at any time that would have a detrimental impact on school discipline, the educational environment, or the welfare of the students and/or staff. A student who has committed a criminal act while off campus and whose presence on campus could cause a substantial disruption to school or endanger the welfare of other students or staff is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Such acts could include, but are not limited to a felony or an act that would be considered a felony if committed by an adult, an assault or battery, drug law violations, or sexual misconduct of a serious nature. Any disciplinary action pursued by the District shall be in accordance with the student's appropriate due process rights.

The District's Directors of Secondary Education, Elementary Education and Student Services shall review the student discipline policies annually and may recommend changes in the policies to the Bentonville School Board. The Board shall approve any changes to student discipline policies.

The District's student discipline policies shall be distributed to each student during the first week of school each year and to new students upon their enrollment. Each student's parent or legal guardian shall sign and return to the school an acknowledgement form documenting that they have received the policies.

It is required by law that the principal or the person in charge report to the police any incidents where a person has committed or threatened to commit an act of violence or any crime involving a deadly weapon on school property or while under school supervision.

Legal Reference:
A.C.A. § 6-18-502
A.C.A. § 6-17-113

Prohibited Conduct

Students and staff require a safe and orderly learning environment that is conducive to high student achievement. Certain student behaviors are unacceptable in such an environment and are hereby prohibited by the Board. Prohibited behaviors include, but shall not be limited to the following.

1. Disrespect for school employees and failing to comply with their reasonable directions or otherwise demonstrating insubordination;

2. Disruptive behavior that interferes with orderly school operations;
3. Willfully and intentionally assaulting or threatening to assault or physically abusing any student or school employee;

4. Possession of any weapon that can reasonably be considered capable of causing bodily harm to another individual;

5. Possession or use of tobacco in any form on any property owned or leased by any public school;

6. Willfully or intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing school property;

7. Using an electronic communication device on the school campus during normal school hours unless specifically exempted by the administration for health or other compelling reasons;*

8. Possession, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, any illegal drug, or the inappropriate use or sharing of prescription or over the counter drugs, or other intoxicants, or anything represented to be a drug within 500 feet of school property;

9. Inappropriate public displays of affection;

10. Cheating, copying, or claiming another person's work to be his/her own;

11. Gambling;

12. Inappropriate student dress;

13. Use of vulgar, profane, or obscene language or gestures;

14. Truancy;

15. Excessive tardiness;

16. Engaging in behavior designed to taunt, degrade, or ridicule another person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or disability;

17. Hazing, or aiding in the hazing of another student;

18. Gangs or gang-related activities, including belonging to secret societies of any kind, are forbidden on school property. Gang insignias, clothing, “throwing signs” or other gestures associated with gangs are prohibited;

19. Sexual harassment; and

20. Bullying.

The Board directs each school in the District to develop implementation regulations for prohibited student conduct consistent with applicable Board policy, State and Federal laws, and judicial decisions.

* A.C.A. § 6-18-502 (b)(3)(D)(ii) provides that the policy may allow an exemption for possession of such a device after normal school hours for extracurricular activities. You may choose to add such a provision. The Attorney General has determined that cell phones are not electronic communication devices. As such students are allowed to possess and use cell phones to the extent they are not limited or prohibited by district policy.

Legal References:  
A.C.A. § 6-18-501  
A.C.A. § 6-18-502  
A.C.A. § 6-15-1005  
A.C.A. § 6-21-609  
A.C.A. § 6-18-506  
A.C.A. § 6-18-222
Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is a cornerstone of our educational mission. It is expected that all school work submitted for the purpose of meeting course or class requirements represents the original efforts of the individual student. Administration, faculty, students and their families are all important contributors to the upholding of this academic integrity in our school community. To this end, it is important that all involved understand their integral role in helping to promote this climate of academic honesty.

The administration will:

- promote and encourage the staff on an ongoing basis to educate students regarding the district’s policy of academic honesty.
- determine appropriate consequences for policy violations. Consequences may include
  - “no credit” on the assignment
  - removal from the course
  - parent notification

The staff will:

- educate students and offer continued guidance regarding acceptable and unacceptable behavior in areas that shall include but are not limited to test taking, research techniques, written work and use of library and computer resources.
- encourage the demonstration of knowledge, the honing of research skills, and self-expression in student work.
- promote circumstances in the classroom that will reinforce academic honor and promote original and focused responses from students.
- evaluate effectiveness of their own efforts.

The students will not:

- plagiarize in written, creative or oral work. (Plagiarism is using the ideas of another as one’s own without acknowledgement of the source.)
- submit work that is not original. Copying, “borrowing” from another source and giving it as one’s own work, and resubmitting work from another person or another class are all unacceptable practices.
- give or receive unauthorized assistance on exams.
- alter grades or other academic records, give false information, or forge.
• submit identical work in more than one course without the prior approval of the instructor. Students may further develop previous work with prior approval of the instructor.

The parents will discuss the district’s Academic Integrity policy (see parent handbook) with their students and promote circumstances that will help to uphold this policy.

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**Student Complaints**

The purpose of this policy is to secure at the first possible level prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints, including those alleging discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, or handicap.

PRESENTATION: The student may be represented by an adult at any level of the complaint.

If the complaint involves a problem with a teacher, the student shall discuss the matter with the teacher before requesting a conference with the principal at Level One.

LEVEL ONE: A student who has a complaint shall request a conference with the principal, who shall schedule and hold a conference with the student.

LEVEL TWO: If the outcome of the conference with the principal is not to the student's satisfaction, the student may request a conference with the Director of Student Services, who shall schedule and hold a conference. Prior to or at the conference, the student shall submit a written complaint that includes a statement of the complaint and any evidence in its support, the solution sought, the student's signature, and the date of the conference with the principal.

LEVEL THREE: If the outcome of the conference with the Director of Student Services is not to the student's satisfaction, the student may request a conference with the Superintendent who shall schedule and hold a conference.

LEVEL FOUR: If the outcome of the conference with the Superintendent is not to the student's satisfaction, the student may request a conference to go before the Board of Education.

The Superintendent shall inform the student of the date, time, and place of the board meeting. The Board President shall establish a reasonable time limit for complaint presentations. The Board shall listen to the student's complaint and take whatever action it deems appropriate.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: If the complaint involves complaints or charges about an employee, it will be heard in executive session unless the employee requests it to be in public.

If students, or the parent(s) of a student involved in a disciplinary ruling, wish to contest the ruling, they must state their complaint to the school principal. If an agreement cannot be reached, they may appeal to the Director of Student Services. If an agreement cannot be reached, they may appeal to the Superintendent which will be the final appeal.
Conduct To and From School

Students are subject to the same rules of conduct while traveling to and from school as they are while on school grounds. Appropriate disciplinary actions may be taken against commuting students who violate student code of conduct rules.

The preceding paragraph also applies to student conduct while on school buses. The driver of a school bus shall not operate the school bus until every passenger is seated. Disciplinary measures for problems related to bus behavior shall include suspension or expulsion from school, or suspending or terminating the student’s transportation privileges. Transporting students to and from school who have lost their transportation privileges shall become the responsibility of the student’s parent or legal guardian.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-19-119 (b)

Bullying

Respect for the dignity of others is a cornerstone of civil society. Bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, robs a person of their dignity, detracts from the safe environment necessary to promote student learning, and will not be tolerated by the Board of Directors. Students who bully another person shall be held accountable for their actions whether it occurs on the school grounds; off school grounds at a school sponsored or approved function, activity, or event; or going to or from school or a school activity in a school vehicle or school bus; or at designated school bus stops.

Definition:
Bullying is any pattern of behavior by a student, or a group of students, that is intended to harass, intimidate, ridicule, humiliate, or instill fear in another child or group of children. Bullying behavior can be a threat of, or actual, physical harm or it can be verbal or electronic abuse of the child. Bullying is a series of recurring actions committed over a period of time directed toward one student, or successive, separate actions directed against multiple students.

Examples of “Bullying” may include but are not limited to a pattern of behavior involving one or more of the following:

a. Sarcastic "compliments" about another student’s personal appearance,

b. Pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate,

c. Mocking, taunting or belittling,

d. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidation such as “fronting” or “chesting” a person,

e. Demeaning humor relating to a student’s race, gender, ethnicity or personal characteristics,

f. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money or other involuntary donations or loans,

G. Blocking access to school property or facilities,

h. Deliberate physical contact or injury to person or property,
i. Stealing or hiding books or belongings, and/or
j. Threats of harm to student(s), possessions, or others.

Students are encouraged to report behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to their teacher or the building principal. The report may be made anonymously. Teachers and other school employees who have witnessed, or are reliably informed that, a student has been a victim of behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, shall report the incident(s) to the principal. Parents or legal guardians may submit written reports of incidents they feel constitute bullying, or if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to the principal. The principal shall be responsible for investigating the incident(s) to determine if disciplinary action is warranted.

The person or persons reporting behavior they consider to be bullying shall not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, consideration may be given to other violations of the student handbook which may have simultaneously occurred.¹

Notice of what constitutes bullying, the District’s prohibition against bullying, and the consequences for students who bully shall be conspicuously posted in every classroom, cafeteria, restroom, gymnasium, auditorium, and school bus. Parents, students, school volunteers, and employees shall be given copies of the notice.

Copies of this policy shall be available upon request.²

Notes: The Act permits different consequences depending on the age or grade of the bullying student.

¹Example: a student might be disciplined both for bullying and sexual harassment, in an appropriate situation, or bullying and assault.
²There should be a statement in the Student Handbook to this effect.

Suggestion for the posted notice: Create a circle with a line through it over the word Bullying (similar to a non-smoking logo). Beside the logo write: Mean talk or hurting other people is called bullying. Bullying is against the rules and can get you in trouble, suspended, or expelled. If someone bullies you, or you see someone being bullied, get help by telling an adult.

Legal Reference: Act 681 of 2003

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### Disruption of School

No student shall by the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or any other conduct, intentionally cause the disruption of any lawful mission, process, or function of the school, or engage in any such conduct for the purpose of causing disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function. Nor shall any student encourage any other student to engage in such activities.

Disorderly activities by any student or group of students that adversely affect the school’s orderly educational environment shall not be tolerated at any time on school grounds. Teachers may remove from class and send to the principal or principal’s designee office a student whose behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher’s ability to teach the students, the class, or with the ability of the student’s
classmates to learn. Students who refuse to leave the classroom voluntarily will be escorted from the classroom by the school administration. The student must be escorted to the office.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-511

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**Code:** S.14  
**Date Issued:** 8-16-77  
**Date Revised:** 01-27-09  
**Review Date:**  
**Secondary**

### Discipline

The Board of Education expects that when students willfully violate school rules, defy instructions of teachers and administrators, or interfere with the normal operation of the school program, the administrator in charge will take appropriate action as prescribed by the Board of Education policies, procedures, ordinances of the City of Bentonville, and statutes of the State of Arkansas.

The constitutional rights of individuals assure the protection of due process of law; therefore, this system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures is used with regard to the administration of discipline in Bentonville Public Schools:

1. The hallmark of the exercise of disciplinary authority shall be fairness.

2. Every effort shall be made by administrators and faculty members to resolve problems through effective utilization of School District resources in cooperation with the student and the student’s parent or guardian.

3. Staff have the authority to give reasonable instructions to any student while (s)he is under school jurisdiction. The staff is responsible for reporting the violation of a school regulation by a student.

Discipline is a matter for each individual teacher. It should be realized that no satisfactory work can be done where there is not the proper conduct or behavior on the part of the student. Hence, well-planned work, good motivation, individual assignments for students will take care of most disciplinary problems. In other cases teachers will try to anticipate the difficulties and handle them in their early states. Conference with such pupils and their parents will often settle the differences.

Building administrators will contact local law enforcement officers when situations develop that warrant this action. The Superintendent’s office will be notified of such action.

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**Code:** S.15  
**Date Issued:** 8-16-77  
**Date Revised:** 06-01-09  
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### Suspension From School

Students not present at school cannot benefit from the educational opportunities the school environment affords. Administrators, therefore, shall strive to find ways to keep students in school as participants in the educational process. There are instances, however, when the needs of the other students or the interests of the orderly learning environment require the removal of a student from school. The Board authorizes school principals or their designees to suspend students for disciplinary reasons for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) school days, including the day upon which the suspension is imposed. The suspension may be in school or out of school. Students are responsible for their conduct that occurs at any time on the school grounds, off
school grounds at a school-sponsored function, activity, or event or going to and from school or a school activity. A student may be suspended for behavior including, but not limited to that which:

1. Is in violation of school policies, rules, or procedures.
2. Substantially interferes with the safe and orderly educational environment.
3. School administrators believe will result in the substantial interference with the safe and orderly educational environment; and/or
4. Is insubordinate, incorrigible, violent, or involves vulgarity or immorality.

The school principal or designee shall proceed as follows in deciding whether or not to suspend a student.

1. The student shall be given written notice or advised orally of the charges against him/her.
2. If the student denies the charges, he/she shall be given an explanation of the evidence against him/her and be allowed to present his/her version of the facts.
3. If the principal finds the student guilty of the misconduct, he/she may be suspended.

When possible, notice of the suspension, its duration, and any stipulations for the student’s re-admittance to class will be given to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) prior to the suspension. Such notice shall be handed to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or mailed to the last address reflected in the records of the school district.

Generally, notice and hearing should precede the student's removal from school, but if prior notice and hearing are not feasible, as where the student's presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice and hearing should follow as soon as possible.

Out-of-school suspensions shall be treated as unexcused absences, and during the period of suspension students shall not be permitted on campus except to attend a student/parent/administrator conference.

In-school suspension shall be treated as if the student were present at school. The student shall not attend any school-sponsored activities during the imposed suspension nor shall the student participate in any school-sponsored activities.

- Parent may appeal suspension decisions to the building principal.
- If the principal upholds the suspension, the parent may make a second appeal to the Director of Student Services.
- If the Director of Student Services upholds the suspension, the parent may make a third appeal to the Superintendent.
- At each level of appeal, the person or group hearing the appeal may affirm, revoke or alter the decision made at the previous level.
- Procedural due process, as defined by statutes and court decisions, will be followed at the stage of the suspension process.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-507
Goss v Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975)
**Expulsion**

The Board of Education may expel a student for a period longer than ten (10) school days for violation of the District’s written discipline policies. The Superintendent may make a recommendation of expulsion to the Board of Education for student conduct deemed to be of such gravity that suspension would be inappropriate, or where the student’s continued attendance at school would disrupt the orderly learning environment or would pose an unreasonable danger to the welfare of other students or staff.

Prior to any expulsion recommendation being forwarded to the Board of Education, the entire case is reviewed by the Administrative Disciplinary Hearing Team. Three current administrators will hear the case as presented by the Principal or designee. The Principal will also make a recommendation for action to be taken. At this time, the ADHT renders their decision and that is what comes to the Board of Education for action.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall give written notice to the parents or legal guardians (mailed to the address reflected on the District’s records) that he/she will recommend to the Board of Education that the student be expelled for the specified length of time and state the reasons for the recommendation to expel. The notice shall give the date, hour, and place where the Board of Education will consider and dispose of the recommendation.

If the parent or legal guardian of the student involved in the disciplinary actions wishes to appeal the expulsion to the Board of Education, they may request an appeal hearing through the Superintendent.

The hearing shall be conducted not later than ten (10) school days following the date of the notice, except that representatives of the Board and student may agree in writing to a date not conforming to this limitation.

The Hearing Officer, President of the Board, or other designated Board member shall preside at the hearing. The student may choose to be represented by legal counsel. The hearing shall be conducted in open session of the Board unless the parent requests that the hearing be conducted in executive session. Any action taken by the Board shall be in open session.

During the hearing, the Superintendent/building administrator will present evidence, including the calling of witnesses, that gave rise to the recommendation of expulsion. The student, or his/her representative, may then present evidence including statements from persons with personal knowledge of the events or circumstances relevant to the charges against the student. Formal cross-examination will not be permitted. However, any member of the Board, the Superintendent, or designee, the student, or his/her representative may question anyone making a statement and/or the student. The presiding officer shall decide questions concerning the appropriateness or relevance of any questions asked during the hearing.

The Superintendent shall recommend the expulsion of any student for a period of not less than one (1) year for possession of any firearm or other weapon prohibited on school campus by law. The Superintendent shall, however, have the discretion to modify the expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis.

Parents or legal guardians of a student enrolling from another school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a weapons policy violation shall be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a weapon on school property. The parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to the student being enrolled in school.

The Superintendent and the Board of Education shall complete the expulsion process of any student that was initiated because the student possessed a firearm or other prohibited weapon on school property regardless of the enrollment status of the student.
**Discipline of Disabled Students**

A disabled student, as defined in state standards, who engages in inappropriate behavior is subject to normal disciplinary rules and procedures, provided the student's right to a free and appropriate public education is not violated.

The individualized education plan (IEP) team for a disabled student should consider whether particular disciplinary procedures should be adapted for that student and included in the IEP.

Reference: I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 6-4-1997)

**Student Insurance Program**

Liability insurance is not provided by the district for any student enrolled in regular education; however, optional supplemental accident insurance is offered at the beginning of each school year and can be purchased for student coverage. The school in no way profits from this supplemental accident insurance.

**Student Health Services**

The School District Nurses shall cooperate with state, county, and city health departments in providing health services for the schools. Each school in the District has at least one Registered Nurse (RN) on staff. Nurses provide basic healthcare services while in school, including health education and promotion.

When a student becomes ill while at school, (s)he should go to the school nurse. If the illness is of such a nature that the student should go home or to the doctor's office, every effort will be made to contact the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Students should not be sent home without first contacting the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) unless the age of the student and the family situation justifies an exception. A sick room shall be maintained to meet emergency needs at all times.

In case of an accident, the principal will be notified immediately and the parents will be contacted. If a student becomes seriously ill or is injured while at school, or as a participant at a school sanctioned event, and the parent/legal guardian cannot be contacted, the failure to make such contact shall not unreasonably delay the school’s expeditious transport of the student to an appropriate medical care facility. The school assumes no responsibility for treatment of the student. When available, current, and applicable, the student’s emergency
contact numbers and medical information will be utilized. Parents are strongly encouraged to keep this information up to date. Accident Reports on all accidents shall be filed to the Director of Budget and Finance.

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**Communicable Disease Policy for Students**

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all eligible school-age children. It also recognizes the trauma that can accompany severe disease. In the case of severe contagious disease, strict adherence to safety measures is required.

In an attempt to maintain a balance between the individual rights of students and the control of communicable diseases, the Board of Education requires that no child with a communicable disease shall be denied access to school on the basis of an opinion by a single individual. All decisions regarding the educational status of a student with a communicable disease shall follow the steps outlined in the procedure adopted by the Superintendent.

A child suspected of having or being able to transmit a communicable disease is excluded from school upon advice of a physician or school nurse. If the suspected condition is found not to exist, the same person may readmit the child. In case of actual existence of a communicable disease, the child is readmitted upon presentation of a physician's certificate or recommendation or the school nurse.

The school building administrator also may require a written statement of health from a physician of the district's choosing in order for the affected student to re-enter school.

Criteria will be established to determine whether a student with a communicable, contagious, and/or infectious disease, including common childhood diseases, will be permitted to attend classes. All cases will be reviewed on an individual basis.

If it is determined that the student will not be permitted to attend classes and/or participate in school activities, arrangements will be made to provide an alternative education program.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Confidentiality is of extreme importance; and, therefore, the identity of infected students, if not already public knowledge, should be kept to a minimum. Neither confirmation nor denial of suspicion or positive testing will be given by school officials, even if public knowledge is alleged.

**APPEAL PROCESS:** An appeal process will be established that will allow the student and/or parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to appeal decisions regarding exclusion from school in writing to the Superintendent.

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent to develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy.
Psychological Testing

The Bentonville School District employs educational and/or psychological examiners to do specialized testing in the referral-placement process. Any test deemed necessary that cannot be legally or effectively given by a qualified staff member will be referred to an outside agency.

Specialized testing is considered a part of the special education program, and procedures are enumerated in the District plan.

Student Social Services

Bentonville School District employs social workers to work with educationally and/or environmentally deprived students. The social workers aid in providing clothing, shoes, medical and dental services, and other items in cases of definite need. The social workers work to mitigate any problem of the child and/or his family that affects the child.

Social workers encourage parent involvement in the student and his/her school setting. Social workers work in cooperation with community agencies, organizations, and individuals in meeting the needs of families.

Emergency Drills

Each school will develop and implement emergency drill preparedness as prescribed by law. These will include fire, tornado, and terrorist alerts and drills. Each building will address specific needs and develop appropriate plans for their site. All staff are to follow directions explicitly and take all necessary measures to insure that students are safe at all times.

Emergency procedures are to be posted in each classroom and in large group areas by the first day of school. Fire drills are to be held at least once per month; tornado drills at least once per semester.
Threats

Persons making threats to any schools or District offices will be prosecuted. Students making such threats will also be recommended for expulsions. Appropriate action may be taken by legal authorities.

Legal Ref.: § 5-17-101, § 5-71-207, Arkansas Code Annotated, 2005-06

Supervision of Students

The Bentonville School District is obligated to provide a safe and secure environment for students that attend our schools. Students are to be supervised during times of normal operation and should be under the care and guidance of staff assigned supervision responsibilities by their building principal(s).

While certified and classified staff in the district work different hours, school hours are generally considered to be from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for grades K – 6 and 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. for grades 7 – 12. Those generally assigned the responsibility of supervising students fall into two categories: teachers and instructional aides / paraprofessionals. These two categories of employees have assigned work hours from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for grades K – 6 and 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. for grades 7 – 12 and, therefore, cannot be responsible for the supervision of students on the campus outside of their hours of employment. Appropriate signage will be placed at all student delivery points.

Dismissal Precautions

PERMISSION TO LEAVE: Students will not be permitted to leave the campus without first checking with the Principal’s Office. No other persons, unless specifically authorized, shall give a student permission to leave the school campus. Specific rules and procedures are outlined in building student handbooks.

A student may leave only after permission has been granted and properly signing out. Leaving school without proper permission or properly signing out will be considered an act of truancy.
**Student Automobile Use**

Students who have presented a valid driver’s license to the appropriate office personnel may drive their vehicle to school. Vehicles driven to school shall be parked in the area designated for student parking.

Students are not permitted to loiter in parking areas and are not to return to their vehicles during school hours for any reason unless given permission to do so by school personnel.

It is understood that there is no expectation of privacy in vehicles in parking areas. Drivers of vehicles parked on a school campus will be held accountable for illegal substances or any other item prohibited by District policy found in their vehicles.

**Student Organizations**

Student Clubs that provide group activities which are in conformance with the educational objective of the school system are to be encouraged to the extent that they contribute to the training and development of the student.

Such clubs shall be under the direction and supervision of school personnel and in conformity with the policies of the Board.

Student clubs must be approved by principals, and any fund-raising projects must have prior approval of the building principal and Superintendent.

Activities and organizations may adopt more stringent policies governing the conduct of students belonging to said activity or organization. Students that are members of an activity or organization are subject to these policies. Even if these policies may differ from regular student policies, a student that violates activity or organizational policies, and/or school policies, is subject to the penalty stated in both policies, but in no case may the policies be in conflict with board policies.

**Secret Societies**

The State Laws of Arkansas specifically prohibit student participation in any secret organization, sororities, or fraternities. These will not be allowed.
**Student Government**

Schools may organize and maintain a student council or similar group. Student councils shall provide students an opportunity to participate in the organization of student activities by serving as a representative and helping to plan social and special programs during and after school. The council also serves as a forum for students’ expression.

**Student Publications**

Distribution of student publications on school property is not permitted, unless authorized by the principal. Publications for distribution need to be handled through the office of the principal prior to their distribution. Student publications include school-sponsored publications or classroom publications.

Student publications shall recognize that truth, fairness, accuracy, and responsibility are essential to the practice of journalism, and that the following types of publications by students are not authorized.

1. Publications which are obscene to minors, as defined by state law;
2. Publications which are libelous or slanderous, as defined by state law;
3. Publications that constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy, as defined by state law; or
4. Publications that so incite students as to create:
   a. A clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises; or
   b. The violation of lawful school regulations; or
   c. The material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Legal Reference: ACA 6-18-1201 – 1204 (these are accurate)

**Off Campus Activities / Field Trips**

The Bentonville School District recognizes the educational and social benefits that students derive from participating in organized off campus activities / field trips. These activity trips should be planned as an extension of classroom curriculum or as part of an ongoing effort to promote positive behavior and citizenship in our students.

**Definition:** An off-campus activity trip / field trip is defined as any student trip taken during regular school hours, which can be documented as a supplement to the classroom curriculum, or is designed to foster positive behavior and citizenship.
PROCEDURES:

1. All trips must be approved at least ten (10) days in advance by the building principal.
2. All trips will be subject to the availability of funding and transportation.
3. All transportation costs associated with the trip will be paid for by the District.
4. All trips will be conducted within normal school hours, however special exemptions can be approved by the Superintendent or the Director of Transportation.
5. Each teacher will be allowed to participate in no more than three (3) trips per year.
6. Each school campus will be allowed five (5) “community service project” trips per year (e.g., choir to perform, help at recycling center, patriotic ceremony participation, etc.)
7. Each student will be required to provide a signed parent permission slip in order to participate in the activity.
8. The teacher(s) in charge (as assigned by the principal) will be responsible for providing appropriate supervision to ensure the safety and well being of each student (generally not less than a ratio of 25:1).
9. Overnight trips such as the Ozark Natural Science Center in grade 5, Walton Arts Center trips, Arend Arts Center trips and classroom outings that do NOT require transportation or additional funding, will not fall under the procedures outlined in the policy.
10. For all trips covered by this policy, no child shall be charged more than $18 per year.
11. Interpretation and exceptions to the policy and procedure above may be granted by the Superintendent or the Executive Directors of Elementary / Secondary Education.

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**Student Participation in Non-School Sponsored Extra-Curricular Activities**

The District understands that some students might be involved in extra-curricular activities that are not specifically offered by schools. Examples include, but are not limited to, ice hockey, dance, music instruction and individual voice lessons.

While participation in these non-school sponsored activities is important, it cannot come at the expense of class attendance and participation. Interruptions of instructional time due to non-school sponsored extra-curricular participation shall be kept to a minimum.

In order to participate in non-school sponsored extra-curricular activities, students must meet eligibility rules established by the Arkansas Department of Education, the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) pertaining to attendance, discipline and academic achievement and Bentonville High School. Pre-approval should be obtained from school officials five (5) days in advance of the anticipated absence.
Extra-Curricular Activities

The Bentonville School District Board of Education strongly encourages participation in the many activities that are offered at the secondary level. It is the District’s belief that these activities can help enrich the educational experience, positively impact student achievement and lead to a stronger student-school connection.

In order to participate in school sponsored extra-curricular activities, students must meet eligibility rules established by the Arkansas Department of Education, the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) and Bentonville High School.

Solicitations of Students

Unauthorized solicitations will not be allowed on school property at any time.

Child Care Enrichment Services

The Bentonville School District currently operates two programs designed to meet the PRE-SCHOOL and BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL needs of the community. More specifically, the Building Bridges Program (preschool) and the Adventure Club (before and after school care) were created to meet the needs of children in several different categories and in the following priority order:

1. The children of teenage parents who reside in the district and attend the Bentonville Schools. By attending to the child care needs of the infant, toddler, or pre-schooler, the teenage parent can better focus on being successful in school and complete the requirements for a Bentonville High School diploma.

2. The children of staff members. Whether they are a Bentonville School District resident or non-resident, the staff members of the District may opt to enroll their children in the program(s). This shall be viewed as a benefit of employment with the Bentonville School District.

3. Pending available space, other Bentonville School District residents may enroll their children in the program(s).

4. Pending available space, out-of-district residents may enroll their children in the programs. Continuation would depend on in-district waiting lists.
Under no circumstances will out-of-state residents be allowed to enroll in either Building Bridges or Adventure Club. These Bentonville School District programs exist solely to benefit district residents and in-state staff members.

Both Building Bridges and Adventure Club are State of Arkansas licensed and ADA compliant. The Parent Handbook, which is distributed to all participants, shall serve as procedure to implement this policy.

5. The Bentonville Public Schools also offer a complete Preschool Program for three and four year-old students, whose families qualify, at the district Early Childhood Center (ECC).

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**Permanent Records**

Permanent school records, as required by the Arkansas Department of Education, shall be maintained for each student.

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**School Records – Cost of Transcript**

1. All individuals will be given at least one free transcript.

2. Individuals, while enrolled in Bentonville Schools and through August immediately following graduation, may receive as many free transcripts as necessary for application for scholarships, college, work, and similar items. In addition, those transcripts mailed between schools other than post high schools shall be free.

3. There will be a charge of $5.00 for all transcripts, other than the first free one, after August following graduation. (cost is current)

4. Those who have dropped out will be allowed one free transcript; others will be $5.00 each.

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**School Records – Confidentiality of Information**

It shall be the policy of the Bentonville School District to establish procedures in accordance with detailed criteria prescribed under Section 615(c) with regard to confidentiality of personally identifiable information including, but not limited to, notice to parents, access rights, hearing process, consent, safeguards, protecting children’s rights, enforcement, and destruction of data. Bentonville School District shall accept the
confidentiality requirements as prescribed under 80-2133 Arkansas Statutes Annotated, as set forth in Procedures of Evaluation and Placement.

The Bentonville Public Schools operates under the Arkansas Code Annotated 6-20-310 (repealed in 2003); the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) amendments of 1997; and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Arkansas State Board of Education which are applicable. The Bentonville Public Schools has adopted Special Education and Related Services: Procedural Requirements and Program Standards, 2000, and Special Education Eligibility Criteria and Program Guidelines for Children with Disabilities, Ages 3-21, 2000 and subsequent rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education, as regulations for the administration of the special education program.

The person responsible for assuring confidentiality procedure in the Bentonville School District shall be the building principal.

A list of people who have permission for access to confidential records will be posted on the file containing said records. Others who gain access to a specific file and whose name does not appear on the list, will be added to that individual student's file.

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**Student Fees, Fines and Charges**

Fees for instructional supplies, other than textbooks, may be required by the schools as needed. Authorized fee lists from Grades 1 through 12 will be reviewed annually and approved by the Executive Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education.
CHAPTER SCHR

School, Community and Home Relations
Teacher / Parent Communication

Teachers shall communicate with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each student during the school year to discuss the student’s academic progress. Frequent communication should occur with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students not performing at the level expected for their grade.

Teachers shall communicate with parent(s) or guardian(s) of each student at least once a semester through a parent-teacher conference, telephone conference, email or home visit.

All grade level conferences with parent(s) or guardians(s) shall be scheduled at a time and place to best accommodate those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or nonparticipation in required conferences. If a student is to be retained at any grade level, notice of retention and the reasons for retentions shall be communicated promptly in a personal conference.
District Parental/Community Involvement

The Bentonville School District understands the importance of involving parents and the community as a whole in promoting higher student achievement and general goodwill between the district and those it serves. Therefore, the district shall strive to develop and maintain the capacity for meaningful and productive parental and community involvement that will result in partnerships that are mutually beneficial to the school, students, parents, and the community. To achieve such ends, the district shall work to:

1. foster effective parental involvement strategies and support partnerships among schools, parents, and the community to improve student achievement by:
   a. involving parents and the community in the development of the district’s long range school improvement and parental involvement planning process;
   b. scheduling regular parent involvement meetings to explain to parents and the community the State’s content and achievement standards, State and local student assessments and how the district’s curriculum is aligned with the assessments and how parents can work with the district to improve their child’s academic achievement;
   c. maintaining a coordinated involvement program where the involvement activities of the district enhance the involvement strategies of other programs such as Head Start, HIPPY, Parents as Partners, Parents as Teachers, ABC, ABC for School Success, area Pre-K programs, and Even Start;
   d. communicating to parents all available opportunities to participate in parental involvement programs, meetings, and other activities, including those activities specific to parents of limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and/or gifted and talented students. Such communication shall be, to the extent practical, in a language the parents can understand; and
   e. locating and modifying other successful parent and community involvement programs to suit the needs of our district.

2. provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement by:
   a. designating a highly qualified, certified staff member at each school to serve as a parent involvement facilitator;
   b. reserving a minimum of 1% of the Title I, Part A annual allocation to support parental involvement activities, with 95% allocated to participating Title I, Part A schools. Parents of children receiving Title I, Part A services shall be involved in the development of the school’s parental involvement plan and decisions regarding how the school’s Title I, Part A Parental Involvement set aside funds are utilized;
   c. providing parents with the materials and training they need to be better able to help their child achieve. The district may use parent resource centers or other community based organizations to foster parental involvement and provide literacy and technology training to parents;
   d. implementing strategies that eliminate barriers that keep parents from being involved in their child’s education. This may include providing transportation and childcare to enable parents to participate, arranging meetings at a variety of times, and being creative when scheduling parent/teacher conferences; and
   e. providing reasonable support for other parental involvement activities as parents may reasonably request.
3. build the school’s capacity for strong parental involvement by:
   a. providing schools the support necessary to enable them to plan and implement effective parental involvement activities;
   b. educating district staff, with the assistance of parents, in ways to work and communicate with parents and to know how to implement parent involvement programs that will promote positive partnerships between the school and parents; and
   c. training parents to enhance and promote the involvement of other parents.

4. ensure the continued improvement of the district’s parental/community involvement program by:
   a. conducting, with the involvement of parents, community members, district administration, and certified and classified staff, an annual evaluation of its’ parental involvement policy as it relates to strategies for increasing parental participation, identifying barriers to greater parent participation, and promoting higher student achievement; and
   b. utilizing the findings from the evaluation process to make recommendations to each school for parental involvement plan revisions and provide suggestions for designing school improvement policies as they relate to parental involvement.

This policy shall be part of the district and each school’s Title I, Part A plan and shall be distributed to parents of the district’s students and provided, to the extent practical, in a language the parents can understand.