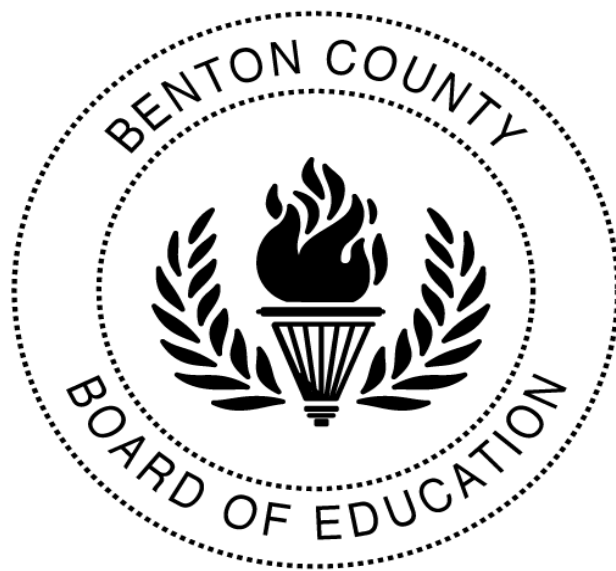


# **Benton County Schools**

## **Parent Handbook**

**2009-2010**



## **Benton County Statement of Assurance**

The Benton County Board of Education and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicapping condition or age and affirms that it complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that states

No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Anyone who believes that the school system or food service department has discriminated against them or another individual may file a complaint. The complaint can be sent to:

Betty Jordan, Title VI, IX Coordinator  
Benton County Schools  
197 Briarwood Avenue  
Camden, TN 38320

and/or

Lesley D. Farmer, Esq.  
Director, Office for Civil Rights  
Tennessee Department of Education  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower  
710 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, TN 37243

and/or

The Office of Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2048, 04-3010  
Atlanta, GA 30301

## **Parent Notification**

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) ensures that parents are actively involved and knowledgeable about their schools and their children's education. Our district provides many kinds of information and notices to assist in fulfilling the requirements of the law. However, it is our goal to build a partnership with you so that we strive to provide the best education and environment for positive learning. We are committed to providing "Family Friendly" schools and continually use stakeholders' input in the development of district improvement planning.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments please take an active role to become involved. You may contact the following for specified issues:

All Areas -	Randall Robertson (randall.robertson@tennk12.net)	584-6111
Food Service -	Pam Brazzell (pam.brazzell@tennk12.net)	584-6111
Transportation -	Mark Florence (mark.florence@tennk12.net)	584-6111
Special Education Services -	Pam Chmelik (pam.chmelik@tennk12.net)	584-6111
Building Maintenance -	Larry Beasley (larry.beasley@tennk12.net)	584-6111
Technology -	Art Collier (art.collier@tennk12.net)	584-6111
504 Services-	Pam Chmelik	584-6111
Attendance -	Mark Florence	584-6111
Instructional -	Steve Baker; Cindy Lumpkin; Betty Jordan	584-6111
No Child Left Behind (NCLB)	Betty Jordan (betty.jordan@tennk12.net)	584-6111
Federal Programs	Cindy Lumpkin (cindy.lumpkin@tennk12.net)	584-6111
Safety and Drug Free Issues -	Cindy Lumpkin	584-6111
Adult Education Courses -	Alvin Smothers (alvin.smothers@tennk12.net)	584-1372
Parent Workshops -	Karen Hudson (karen.hudson@tennk12.net)	584-5511

Listed below are items that must be provided by public school districts to parents.

- School report card
- Teacher qualification
- Individual achievement of your child
- Limited English proficiency programs
- Schools identified for improvement, corrective action or restructuring
- Supplemental educational services if a school fails to make adequate yearly progress
- Parental involvement policy
- Safe and drug-free schools programs
- National Assessment of Education Progress
- Military recruiter access to student information
- Homeless programs
- Student privacy
- Waiver requests to the U.S. Secretary of Education
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers
- Schoolwide programs

**Please Note:** With the growing use of technology, you may want to reach your child's teacher through email communication. Email accounts for teachers follow this pattern: first name.last name@tennk12.net

## NCLB Parent Notice/Information Requirements

The Benton County School System addresses the importance of the Elementary and Secondary Education, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. Law 107-110 and supports parents' right-to-know policies about educational issues.

As a parent you have a right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teachers and any paraprofessional providing support to your child. You are entitled to this information and the Board of Education recommends the Tennessee Department of Education, Teacher Licensing Web available online. The site location is:

<https://www.k-12.state.tn.us/tcertinf/>

If you do not have access to a computer, you may use one at the school your child attends. Please contact the principal for arrangements. Or contact the Director of Schools or the Supervisors of Instruction at Central Office. Parents will receive notification if your child has a teacher for four or more consecutive weeks who does not meet the highly qualified requirement.

Parents must receive annual academic assessment results. This includes both the student and school test score data. Student score data is distributed at the end of the school year, usually with the last student report card for grades K-8. Schools shall provide information on the level of achievement in each of the State academic assessments as required in all grades on any standardized tests. School report cards will be sent home annually. This public information is compiled from three-year averages in both achievement (academic) and value-added scores (growth of grades and individual students). The school report card is the primary instrument for guiding the development of school improvement plans which assists each school in the evaluation of curriculum, teaching strategies, student progress, and goal timelines. Upon request, the School Improvement Plan is available for review. Should any school in the system be identified for improvement or fail to meet adequate yearly progress, parents will be informed with all options and information including availability of supplemental educational services.

Parents of students in schools identified as unsafe are notified in writing of their rights. All Benton County Schools are classified as "safe."

Each year any board policies approved or revised relating to student privacy and parental access to information will be on file in each principal's office.

Benton County School System must obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, under Section 9528 of the new law, local school districts are required to disclose "directory information" of high school students without written consent to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories-names, addresses, and telephone listings-unless parents have advised the local district that they do not want the information disclosed. Allowed release of other directory information would include appropriately designated information for purposeful publications such as playbills, programs, sports activities, newspaper articles, and recognition lists. Any disclosure would be in accordance with District procedures. The procedure is explained in the (FERPA) ***Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Information***. Another notification of rights is discussed in the (PPRA) ***Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment***.

Any questions about these may be forwarded to Central Office.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Notice for Directory Information**

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that the Benton County School System, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Benton County School System may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Benton County School System to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain publications.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEA's) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories—names, addresses and telephone listings—unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.<sup>1</sup>

If you do not want the Benton County School System to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify your child's school in writing. The Benton County School System has designated the following information as directory information:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| -Student's name          | -Participation in officially recognized activities and sports |
| -Address                 |   |
| -Telephone listing       | -Weight and height of members of athletic teams               |
| -Photographs             |   |
| -Date and place of birth | -Degrees, honors, and awards received                         |
| -Major field of study    | -The most recent educational agency or Institution attended   |
| -Dates of attendance     |   |
| -Grade level             |   |

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) FERPA requirements afford parents and students over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to a student's education records. The Benton County School System does not deny eligible persons the right to inspect, review, or seek to amend education records. District procedures are stated in School Board Policy JR and are available from each school.

Upon request, Benton County Schools will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Disciplinary records, with respect to a suspension or expulsion, are transferred as required by Section 4155, as amended by NCLB.

*Parents who feel their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

Family Policy Compliance Office	or	Family Policy Compliance Office
Benton County Department of Education		U. S. Department of Education
197 Briarwood Avenue		400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Camden, TN 38320		Washington, D. C. 20202-5901

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<sup>1</sup>These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (P.L. 107-110) the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002* (P.L. 107-1107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.

## Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or part by a program of the U. S. Department of Education (ED)--
  1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
  2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
  3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
  8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of*--
  1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use--
  1. Protected information surveys of students;
  2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
  3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The Benton County School System has adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution purposes. The Benton County School System will notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The Benton County School System will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey by notifying the school in writing. Parents will be provided reasonable notification in the event of the planned activities and surveys listed above and be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

*Parents who feel their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

Family Policy Compliance Office	or	Family Policy Compliance Office
Benton County Board of Education		U. S. Department of Education
197 Briarwood Avenue		400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Camden, TN 38320		Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

## **Parent Participation**

All schools in Benton County are eligible for federal funds under Title I. Camden Elementary, Briarwood, Camden Junior High, Big Sandy, and Holladay are **School-Wide** schools. Camden Central High School and Benton County Career and Technical Center decline to participate. However they do receive benefits from Title sources other than Title I. Federal funds support **all** students equally sharing benefits to further expand student success and achievement. Federal money, in this district, is used for but not limited to, teacher and paraprofessional salaries/benefits, training, equipment, supplies, and materials. School committees submit proposals for spending based on an annual evaluation of data and *School Improvement Plans*.

A parent advisory board (district wide) approves annual budgets for spending and is involved in the decisions regarding how the money will be spent, including the promotion of family literacy and parenting skills. 1% of the Title I allocation must be used for parental involvement because the district's allocation exceeds \$500,000. Benton County elects to fund a Family/Community involvement office, secretary, and coordinator.

Parent Advisory Committees are established for ongoing communication and partnership between home and school. Parents and community members are involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programming. Meetings are held periodically for input and informative discussions. These meetings are separate from PTO meetings. ***Anyone interested in serving on the advisory team should contact the school principal.*** Title I school families are given an opportunity to sign and support a School Compact each year. The compact/contract and school Parent Involvement Plan are revised and approved each year by the committee.

Family Resource Centers are located in each school for material checkout. Items relating to parenting skills, assistance with academics, and miscellaneous reading materials are available.

“Partners Enriching Programs” [PEP], under the direction of Title I Family/Community Involvement of the ESEA Consolidated Plan, is a successful volunteer and tutoring program for students throughout the county for levels K-8. The coordinator organizes, conducts training, and schedules times for this program. Interested family or community members should contact 584-5511.

Services are available for Families in Transition (FIT). The Benton County School District provides funds for instructional supplies and materials (and other approved services, including but not limited to- counseling and academic tutoring) for any identified student. Responses from the student residency affidavit as well as temporary/situational circumstances make funds available for eligible students.

A student is eligible for the FIT program if a situation includes:

- home destroyed due to weather or fire
- moving frequently because you don't have a permanent home
- lack of running water in the house
- sharing someone else's (family or friends) housing due to economic hardship or a similar reason
- living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, motels, hotels, or camping grounds

In compliance with the McKenney-Vento Act, Title X, Part C, our schools ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment.

## **District Wide Family Involvement Plan**

### **General Expectations**

Benton County agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools. Title I schools, Part A programs will be consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

The school district will incorporate the district wide family involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.

In carrying out the requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under NCLB in an understandable and uniform format in a language parents understand.

The LEA will solicit parent comments for ongoing improvements on an annual basis.

The school district will involve parents of Title I schools in decisions about Title I funds allocated for family involvement and will ensure that 95 percent of the one percent of the total budget reserved goes directly to the schools.

The school district will be following the statutory definitions of family involvement and will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Family involvement means the participation of families in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities.

Including ensuring—

- (a) that families play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- (b) that families are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- (c) that parents are partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and serve on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;
- (d) the school district will inform families of the "right to know" requirements and offer important insight into their children's education, the professional qualifications of their teachers, and the quality of the schools they attend.

Benton County School District will develop a family handbook and distribute district wide all information pertaining to parent rights, NCLB, and general procedures. The district family involvement plan will be included for review and suggestions.

The district family involvement plan will be annually updated with revisions/suggestions from stakeholders.

### **Descriptions of Implementation**

1. Benton County School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district wide family involvement plan;
  - Select a broad stakeholder committee to serve as a district improvement team
  - Provide summaries of board minutes and openly recruit new members
  - Publicize meeting dates in advance
  - Select an executive advisory board to serve the district from the current school PAC members
  - Disseminate information/updates to PAC members
  
2. Benton County School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement;
  - School report card information will be distributed from each school
  - District report card information will be presented for review with the Board of Education
  - Parents will serve on individual school improvement committees
  - (PAC) Advisory meetings for each school will review student achievement information
  - Family Advisory Board will evaluate plan yearly
  - Develop electronic contacts
  
3. Benton County School District will provide necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing effective family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance through;
  - Parent surveys
  - Federal Programs Supervisors will attend Parent Advisory Meetings and serve as liaison between school, PAC, and school system.
  - Annual review and goal setting with the Family/Community Involvement Coordinator
  - Provide professional development regarding family/community involvement
  - School improvement planning
  - Provide funding for materials and supplies for independent (teacher) activities
  - Approve family involvement activities for in-service credit
  - Provide materials and supplies for any projects that are assigned for grades
  - Develop and copy flyers for parent involvement activities that are based on curriculum standards
  - Discussions for eliminating barriers to create open environments for participation (PTO, PAC, and staff meetings)
  - Provide ongoing leadership training to administrative staff for issues relating to homework, attendance, and discipline
  
4. Benton County School District will coordinate and integrate family involvement strategies under the following other programs: School Board 's Five Year Plan; ESL program; Head Start screenings; Pre-school orientations; In-service invitations for private schools; Parent/Teacher organizations; School improvement committees; Grade level/school orientations, including Special Education; Volunteer Pre-K workshops.
  
5. Benton County School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation (parent survey) of the content and effectiveness of this policy in improving the quality of its schools. The district will use

the findings of the evaluation about its family involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective family involvement, and to revise, if necessary its policies.

Parent/committee surveys will be used to reflect public opinion

Staff surveys will reflect effectiveness of professional development

Review effectiveness of any components regarding *family involvement* within the district improvement plan

Monitor action steps of district goal

Monitor and revise Board's Five-Year Plan

Provide comment sheets for input

Request (and act upon appropriate) feedback and suggestions from parents from the PAC or general submitted comments

6. Benton County School District will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong family support in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, families, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities;

The school district will provide assistance to understanding topics of interest

FAST team: The coordinator meeting new families in the district and giving them information

Workshops; Orientations and transitional meetings

High School "Program of Studies" books

School and/or parent handbooks

Provide materials and supplies to improve academic achievement for all students

Educate teachers and administrators through professional development activities

Provide family resource materials for checkout

Provide newsletters and calendar of events

Train PEP volunteers for assistance and tutoring

PEP volunteer appreciation training and recruitment

Tutoring programs

High School credit recovery

Parent Teacher Conferences

Encourage website use

Provide curriculum standards in every family resource center at each school

Provide volunteers and families time to participate and observe at the schools

Publish and/or distribute copies of school FI plans for parents

Distribute copies of signed contract/compacts at Parent Teacher Conference

Invitations to attend workshops/orientations including secondary course of studies

Provide access to learning through textbook checkout at the public library

7. Each school in the district will develop and implement an individualized family involvement plan. All school plans will then collectively be joined with the district plan.

**School Bus Rules and Safety Tips from Benton County School System**  
*Safe, On Time, and Ready to Learn*

Benton County School System bus drivers receive training in many areas, including driver safety and student behavior management. Our responsibility is to take students safely to school in the morning and return them safely after school is dismissed. To help us accomplish this task, we believe it is important for both students and parents to review Benton County School Bus Safety Rules. It is important that your student understands these rules so that we can better ensure they get to school safe, on time and ready to learn.

### **School Bus Rules**

The bus driver is responsible for student safety and has the authority to enforce rules of safety. Because we do not compromise student safety, the following rules are provided. Failure to follow school bus rules may result in the loss of riding privileges.

#### **Students are expected to follow Bus Safety Rules**

1. Arrive at the pickup point before the bus is scheduled. The bus can not wait for latecomers.
2. Remain seated at all times (except to enter and exit the bus); face the front of the bus; keep the aisle and emergency exits clear of arms, legs, backpacks, etc.
3. Talk Quietly – Shouting, yelling, boisterous behavior, or any unnecessary loud noise cannot be permitted.
4. Littering the bus, vandalism, or throwing anything on or out of the bus will not be permitted.
5. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus, unless authorized by the driver.
6. Glass objects, balloons, or any other hazardous articles may not be carried on to the bus.
7. Passengers should remain quiet when the bus stops at a railroad crossing.
8. Harassment of any kind (verbal, sexual, physical, etc.) is not permitted.
9. Students are expected to be respectful and courteous to the driver and other students.
10. Students are expected to refrain from profane and/or obscene language and/or gestures.
11. When getting off the bus, follow your driver's instructions, and **always cross in front of the bus if you live on the opposite side of the street.**
12. After exiting the bus, students should not attempt to retrieve items left on the bus or retrieve items that fell under the bus. "Things" can be replaced...children can't.

**Remember, riding the bus is a privilege.**

### **Discipline**

School Administration and/or the Discipline committee will determine the disciplinary action based on a case by case basis.

### **Video Observation Equipment**

In order to promote a safe environment, video cameras and recorders are placed on school buses.

Parents, please remind your neighbors that big yellow school buses are traveling your streets. Motorists should be aware of the amber and red flashing lights and drive appropriately. When the red lights are flashing (and the stop arm is extended from the bus), all motorists are required by law to stop.

### **Enrollment**

Each student must have a certified copy of a birth certificate or a certified verification of age; a physical examination form dated and signed by a doctor; a completed immunization card from the Health Department (signed and dated); and a Social Security Card copy.

### **Dismissal**

In the event of inclement weather, please listen to the local radio station and/or TV for school dismissal information. Make sure that your child knows where to go anytime school might dismiss early due to weather conditions. Make sure there are several emergency numbers on file with the office to contact during these circumstances.

### **Family Life Curriculum**

The State Family Life Curriculum is available in the school library or guidance office for review and comments.

### **Asbestos**

Benton County Schools are in compliance with the regulations regarding asbestos. A copy of the Master Plan is on file in the Benton County Board of Education for your review upon request.

### **Medicine**

Classroom teachers are not allowed by State Laws and Board Policy to administer medications. Medication and written instructions, signed by the parent/guardian, will be delivered personally by the parent/guardian to the school office. If your child must retain any medication for immediate administration (asthma/diabetes), contact the principal. Non-prescription medication may be administered only with written request and permission.

### **Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled each year. You are encouraged to attend. If you need to speak with a teacher at other times, please call in advance so that a scheduled time, when the teacher does not have students in the classroom, can be arranged. We want to be accommodating while not interrupting class any more than necessary.

### **Visiting Schools**

All guests will report to the school office when entering and leaving the school to sign in and out. A pass is required for visibility as a safety requirement.

### **Guidance**

The Guidance Department provides assistance to students in the areas of personal growth, academic, vocational, and career planning. Students are encouraged to utilize the career information centers and consult with a counselor for interpretation of standardized aptitude tests. Counseling services are available in many areas including: individual counseling, group counseling, career and post-secondary information, transfer student orientation, and pupil appraisal. Please contact the school for service requests or private needs for your child.

### **Fees**

**Tennessee Law regarding school fees states the following “The school shall not require any student to pay a fee to the school for any purpose, except as authorized by the board of education, and no fees shall be required of any student as a condition to attending the public school, or using its equipment while receiving educational training.”**

### **Child Nutrition Program**

The Child Nutrition Program is a federally funded program that is designed to feed each student a nutritious meal based upon USDA recommended guidelines and meal patterns. Studies have shown that eating a nutritious breakfast and lunch improves overall student performance and health. **We are extremely pleased to offer free breakfasts to all students again this year. However, lunch prices have increased. (PreK-8 \$1.50; 9-12 \$1.75)** School meals offer your child a simple solution for healthy eating. We encourage all students to eat in the cafeteria and gladly accept visitors to join at meal time with your child. **(Adult visitor lunch-\$3.00; Special/Holiday visitor lunch-\$4.00)** We strive not only to provide a nutritious meal but a meal that students will enjoy.

#### **Extra Menu Items**

Extra menu items, referred to as Ala'Carte items, may be purchased by students and are based on menu and product availability (i.e. rolls, desserts, cookies, etc. may not be served daily). Students are discouraged from purchasing single items in place of a regular meal and therefore should either be eating in the cafeteria or have brought a meal from home.

#### **Free or Reduced Priced Meal Applications - ONE APPLICATION PER FAMILY**

Because it is so important for every child to eat, the federal government has provided a way to offer free or reduced price meals to families with limited incomes. An application will be sent home with every child. Anyone who thinks his/her child may qualify for these benefits should fill out an application for the family and return it promptly to school. If you were receiving Families First assistance and/or food stamps during the month of June 2008, you do not need to fill out this application. You will automatically qualify for these benefits. You may apply for benefits at any time during the school year that you feel your child is eligible.

#### **Charge Policy**

Student meals are expected to be paid at the beginning of each week or at the time of meal service. However, the Benton County Child Nutrition Program recognizes that circumstances may warrant the need to charge meals. Students will be allowed to charge up to 10 days. Parent reminder letters or phone calls will be made when a student's account is unpaid after the 7<sup>th</sup> day of charges. Monies received for meals will first go toward retiring any charges owed. All charges are to be paid by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester (Christmas break) and by the last full week of school.

#### **Refunds**

Any amount left over in the student's account at the end of the school year will be transferred to the next school year. Students who have a refund due and will not be returning to a Benton County school the next year may request a refund through the cafeteria manager. A refund of more than \$2.00 will be referred to the Benton County Board of Education office for payment by check within thirty days of the last day of school.

#### **Checks**

Checks should be written for the amount of purchase only. Any check received for more than the amount of purchase will be applied to the student's account. No checks will be cashed for adults or students.

### **Safe and Drug Free**

Benton County Schools have established disciplinary policies that prohibit disorderly conduct, the illegal possession of weapons, and the illegal use, possession, distribution, and sale of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs by students. Security procedures for all students while at school and on the way to and from school have been developed. Benton County implements the Tennessee State Board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy and insures all staff, parents, and students are aware of their rights and responsibilities. The district shall provide any student who attends a persistently dangerous school, or any student who has been the victim of a violent crime while at school, the opportunity to attend a safe school.

Principals are authorized under Board Policy to order students to be tested for drugs and alcohol during the school year when there is reasonable suspicion and/or cause. The use of tobacco or tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, is prohibited by all students in Benton County Schools. Any student who possesses tobacco products shall be issued a citation by the school principal or resource officer.

Benton County School System operates under a **"Zero Tolerance Behavior Policy."**

*In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment free of drugs, drug paraphernalia, violence and dangerous weapons, any student who engages in the following behaviors will be subject to suspension for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The Director shall have the authority to modify this suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis. Zero tolerance acts are as follows:*

- 1. Students who bring or possess a drug, drug paraphernalia, or a dangerous weapon onto a school bus, onto school property, or to any school event or activity.*
- 2. Any student who, while on a school bus, on school property, or while attending any school event or activity*
  - A. is under the influence of a drug or*
  - B. possesses a drug, drug paraphernalia, or dangerous weapon, or*
  - C. assaults or threatens to assault a teacher, student or other person.*

Prevention activities that are designed to create and maintain safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments have been selected and implemented. Anyone wishing to join the *Safe and Drug-Free* advisory committee please call Cindy Lumpkin, 584-6111.

In compliance with the federal Pro-Children Act of 2001, and TCA 39-17-1601, smoking is prohibited on any public or private school property, including restrooms and bleachers at sporting events.

For the safety and well-being of students, Benton County School System believes that acceptable behavior is an essential ingredient of effective education programming. Students are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner to reflect favorable on themselves and to prevent others from being prohibited from learning. The professional staff is expected to ensure student conduct which allows for an acceptable learning atmosphere both in and outside the classroom and to help students develop self-direction. To this end, the staff is authorized to take reasonable measures to establish appropriate school and bus behavior. Any professional employee shall have the authority to control any student's conduct while under the supervision of the school system. This authority to control student conduct will extend to all activities of the school, including trips, excursions, and all other activities under school sponsorship and direction. Each school shall provide a code of conduct and disciplinary procedures in the student handbook.

## **Disruption**

Harassment, intimidation and other conduct that may be considered “bullying” will not be tolerated. Students shall not engage in conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with another student’s academic development or that creates a hostile or offensive learning environment. No student shall

1. Occupy any school building, gymnasium, school grounds, and properties of any part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use or where the effect is to deprive others of its use.
2. Block the entrance or exit of any school building or property or corridor or room so as to deprive others of access thereto.
3. Prevent or attempt to prevent the convening or the continued functioning of any school class activity or lawful meeting or assembly on the school campus.
4. Prevent student from attending a class or school activity.
5. Except under the direction of the principal, block normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on a school campus or adjacent grounds.
6. Set fire to or otherwise damage or attempt to damage any school property.
7. Cause or attempt to cause damage to private property either on the school grounds or during an activity, function or event off school grounds.
8. Cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a student or school employee.
9. Possess, handle, transmit, use or attempt to use any fireworks, explosives, dangerous weapon or other object that reasonably can be considered a dangerous weapon.
10. Dress or groom in a manner likely to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school.
11. Use tobacco while on school property or while participating in a school sponsored event, while on school buses to and from school sponsored events.
12. Lie, cheat, steal or attempt to steal school property or steal or attempt to steal private property either on school grounds or during an activity, function or event off school grounds.
13. Engage in immoral or disruptive conduct or use obscene language
14. Continuously and intentionally make noise or act in any other manner so as to interfere with the teacher’s ability to conduct class.
15. Possess a personal pager, beeper, or buzzer in school facilities during normal school hours.
16. Refuse to identify himself/herself upon request of any teacher, principal, director, bus driver, or other school personnel.
17. Fail to comply with reasonable directions or commands of teachers, principals, school bus drivers or their authorized school personnel.
18. Use a cell phone without permission (verbal or text) during school hours. Cell phones must be left in the “off” position and must not be visible during instructional classes or on bus routes.
19. Willfully and/or persistently violate the rules of the school.

A student found guilty of misbehavior may receive punishment ranging from verbal reprimand to suspension and/or expulsion dependent on the severity of the offense and the offender’s prior record.

## **Student Goals and Objectives**

Students are the first concern of the Benton County School District and must receive the primary attention of the Board and all staff members. Each student shall be considered and treated with respect as an individual. Staff members shall seek to be wise counselors of children and youth and skillful facilitators of learning. To this end, the Board and staff shall work together to establish an environment conducive to the very best learning achievement for each student through meeting the following goals regarding students:

1. To assure all students the same educational opportunities regardless race, color, creed, religion, ethnic origin, sex or disabilities
2. To protect and observe the legal rights of students
3. To promote a learning environment which provides opportunities for all students without regard to race, color, creed, religion, ethnic origin, gender or disabilities
4. To enhance the self-image of each student by helping him/her feel respected and worthy through a learning environment which provides positive encouragement from frequent success
5. To provide an environment of reality in which students can learn personal and civic responsibility for their actions through meaningful experiences as school citizens
6. To deal with students in matters of discipline in a fair and constructive manner
7. To provide for the safety, health, and welfare of students
8. To promote faithful attendance and good work

### **Absences**

When your child is late to school or is signed out early, the student must be checked in/out through the office. A record of late and early sign-out is kept on file. These times accumulate and reflect absences. A student who is tardy or who leaves early is not considered to have perfect attendance. Excessive absenteeism can result in a decline in academic performance and possible lowering of grades. It is strongly recommended that absences be kept to a minimum if possible (illness only). When a student has missed 5 days throughout the year, the parent will be contacted. Should a student's absences remain excessive, other possible actions could be taken. When your child is late or leaves early, teaching time is lost. Benton County School System wishes to offer the best education possible.

### **Student Progress**

Student progress reports shall be provided every six weeks during the school year. The reporting procedure shall be in writing and shall be uniform for all reporting periods during each school year. In addition to the regular progress reports, principals and teachers shall be available at reasonable times to confer with parents on the educational progress of their children. Teachers shall consult with parents of students who are working at an unsatisfactory level, or when their performance shows a marked or sudden deterioration. If a student is doing failing work, the parent will be notified before the end of the grading period. Parents shall be notified by the teacher as early in the school year as possible and not later than the fourth six-weeks grading period if the retention of a student is being considered.

#### **Grading System**

A	93-100
B	85-92
C	75-84
D	70-74
F	69 and below
I	incomplete

## **Materials and Supplies**

Textbooks issued to students are the property of the Benton County Board of Education. They should be used with care and returned in good condition. Students will be responsible for books which are lost, stolen, or damaged beyond use. No child will be prohibited from learning in the event restitution must be made for lost and/or stolen books or materials. NCLB funds are made available for projects that are assigned in schools. Materials and supplies are provided for students. Please contact central office or the school office if your child is required to purchase materials and supplies for the completion of an academic requirement to receive a grade and you have not been given the availability of free supplies.

## **Dress**

Students of the Benton County School System are expected to dress in a manner supportive of a positive learning environment that is free of distractions and disruptions. A new dress code policy is in effect for grades 6-12. Specific guidelines appropriate for grades PreK-5 shall be addressed in individual school handbooks. The dress code shall apply to school day attire and co-curricular activities whereby the student represents Benton County Schools.

Shirts or tops must be properly fitted, have appropriate necklines and length, and be either long or short sleeved. Shirts or tops must be tucked in unless designed to be worn on the outside. The back and midriff are to be covered at all times.

Slacks, jeans, skirts and shorts must be knee length or longer. Pants must be worn at the waist and be size-appropriate, so as not to expose undergarments. Belts must be of appropriate size with buckles proportionate to the belt width and when worn, belt loops must be used.

Dresses must be knee length or longer and have appropriate necklines, backs and sleeves.

Pajamas and sleep wear are not considered appropriate attire in the school setting.

All clothing should not be torn, ragged, ripped, frayed, excessively soiled, transparent, have holes or the appearance of holes. Chains and spikes are not considered appropriate attire. Any language or logo on clothing must be appropriate to the school environment.

Shoes must be worn at all times and lace, tied, strapped, hooked, or fastened appropriately as designed.

Short-length, light-weight, non-bulky jackets, sweaters, and school jackets with zippers, buttons or snaps may be worn inside the building, but must be open. Longer coats or jackets should be stored in lockers immediately upon entering the building.

Body piercing jewelry is permitted in the ears only. Large chains, key chains or other objects may not hang from belts or clothing or be worn as jewelry. Jewelry should be of appropriate size for the educational setting.

Tattoos must be covered.

Extreme cuts, hairstyles, hair colors and /or fads that would interfere with the learning process, cause a disruption of the educational environment or be a health hazard are prohibited.

Head coverings are prohibited inside the building except for medical/religious purposes.

**Students found to be in violation of the dress code are subject to disciplinary action.**

## **Consequences of Dress Code Violations**

### **First Violation:**

1. The student must immediately become compliant or be assigned to ISS.
2. The parent/guardian will receive a “Notice of Non-compliance” which will require the parent/guardian to call or come to the school to discuss the dress code guidelines.

### **Second Violation:**

1. The student must immediately become compliant.
2. Student will be assigned to one day ISS.
3. Parent/guardian will be notified and must contact the school to address the issue with a school administrator either by phone or in person.

### **Third Violation:**

1. The student must immediately become compliant.
2. The student will be assigned three (3) days in ISS.
3. Parent/guardian will be notified and must contact the school to address the issue with a school administrator either by phone or in person.

### **Fourth Violation:**

1. The student must immediately become compliant.
2. The student will be assigned five (5) days in ISS.
3. The parent/guardian will be notified and must contact the school to address the issue with a school administrator either by phone or in person.
4. A hearing before the Disciplinary Hearing Authority will be scheduled.

### **Fifth Violation:**

1. Student will be suspended pending a hearing before the Disciplinary Hearing Authority.
2. Student may be placed in the Alternative Education Program for a minimum of twenty (20) days.
3. A petition may be filed in Juvenile Court for willful and persistent violation of school rules.

## **Gang Activity**

The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute which indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger. In accordance with Board policy governing student conduct with regard to bullying, gangs and drugs; clothing and/or jewelry shall be free of inflammatory, suggestive, racial, or other inappropriate writing, advertisement or artwork. This includes offensive words and designs, violence (blood, death, weapons) sex, hate groups, tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, adult clubs or magazines. No clothing or other article may be worn or displayed at school or any school function which may indicate membership in or affiliation with any gang associated with criminal activities.

## **Electronic Devices**

Personal pagers are not permitted. Students may be in possession of a cell phone during school hours. The devices must be left in the “off” position and must not be visible during regular school hours. CD players, radios and other electronic devices may be permitted, but must not be operated during regular school hours unless the principal or a designee has granted permission for their operation on school property. If problems arise from the improper use of electronic devices, sanctions may occur. Inappropriate use of cameras on personal communication devices is strictly prohibited on school property or at school functions. A student improperly or illegally using cameras on personal communication devices (or otherwise) will have the device confiscated and is subject to disciplinary action. Neither the school system nor individual schools shall retain any responsibility/liability for loss, theft, or unauthorized use of electronic devices brought on or confiscated on school property.

## **Emergencies**

All schools maintain current safety plans. A crisis management plan for responding to violent or traumatic incident has been developed, implemented and drilled. The purpose is to provide a set of actions that would serve to ensure the safety of students and staff in the event of acts of emergency within the school building or grounds. Drills are practiced regularly. When emergency drills are in progress, parents and guests shall help us to follow strict procedures in order to better prepare all of us should a situation arise. We encourage and stress the importance of listening and following directions during this time for students, staff, visitors, and parents. Responses to drills are seriously observed.

Teachers report students’ injuries to the office and an accident report is filed. Parents are contacted if there is any concern about a student’s welfare.

If your child’s name, address or telephone number changes at any time during the school year, please notify the teacher and the office immediately. This is very important in keeping our records up-to-date and also in being able to contact a parent in case of an emergency. It is also essential that emergency numbers are made available to the office.

For safety, if anyone is restricted from picking up your child, notify classroom instructors and office personnel with the name(s).

## **Homebound Instruction**

The Homebound Instruction Program is for students, who because of health impairments, are unable to attend the regular instructional program. To qualify for the Homebound Program, a student must have a health impairment of sufficient seriousness to be absent for a minimum of ten (10) consecutive school days. The student must have a physician’s order. Contact Brenda Hudson at Central Office for services. (731-584-6111)

## **Home School Instruction**

Parents selecting to provide home school instruction for students must **register** this intent with the Board of Education **each year**. For more information call Mark Florence, 584-6111.

## **Health and Wellness Initiatives**

The Benton County School District promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment.

Physical education is required of all students. If your child must be excused, please send a written statement from your doctor stating the timeframe for this request and when participation or return is expected.

A focus on healthy food, snacks, exercise, and lifestyle has become a priority for the district.

The Benton County Board of Education is committed to establishing a school environment that enhances learning and the development of lifelong wellness practices. Furthermore, the Benton County Board of Education believes that:

1. Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive;
2. Good health fosters student attendance and education;
3. Schools should share the responsibility with parents and the community to help students establish and maintain healthy lifestyles through proper nutrition and exercise; and
4. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

## **Head Lice**

In the event a student is found to have lice, parents will be notified immediately. The student must be removed from school and treated. Benton County has a “no nit” policy, which means your child cannot return to school until all nits have been removed from the hair.

### **Head Lice Policy**

The student will be sent home immediately. The parent will pursue treatment.

The parent must accompany the student upon return to school with written medical documentation that no nits are present. No more than two (2) days absence will be excused for treatment.

### **What To Do If Your Child Comes Home With Head Lice**

Head lice cannot survive without a human host. They cannot survive on family pets. Choose an effective treatment, use as directed, and perform the steps listed to eliminate head lice from you home and to help prevent the spread in the school community. Anyone, adult or youngster can get head lice. It is passed from person to person by direct contact or on shared objects (combs, towels, headphones, caps, etc.) It has nothing to do with cleanliness and does not reflect poorly on parenting skills. The problem is easily managed. Follow these suggestions:

1. Check every member of the family. Look for tiny white eggs (nits) on hair shafts, near the scalp, especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears.
2. Use an effective head lice treatment. Several are available without a prescription. Treatment requires a second application 7-10 days after the first.
3. Remove all nits. Gently comb the hair with a special nit removal comb. These combs are usually provided in the treatment kit.
4. Wash clothes, bed linens, and towels. Use hot water and dry on hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items not washable must be dry cleaned and stored at room temperature in a tightly sealed plastic bag for a least 2 weeks. Items such as headphones and helmets should be similarly bagged and stored.
5. Soak combs, brushes, etc. in hot water. The hotter, the better, but at least 130 F. Items should be allowed to soak for 5-10 minutes.
6. Vacuum everywhere. Make sure the rest of your home is louse free; vacuum carpets, pillows, mattresses, upholstered furniture, and even the car seats.

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM  
CORDELL HULL BUILDING, 4TH FLOOR  
425 - 5TH AVENUE NORTH  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37247-4911

**Immunization Requirements for School Entry as of January 1, 2007**

This memo summarizes the vaccinations required for day care through grade twelve in Tennessee. These requirements are created by the Commissioner of Health and listed under state Rules and Regulations 1200-14-1-.29, available at <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/1200/1200-14/1200-14-01.pdf>. Each school is responsible for enforcing these requirements.

**General requirements:**

To enter any nursery school, day care center, Head Start center, pre-school or grades kindergarten (“K”) through twelve of any public, private, or church related school, children must show proof of adequate (i.e., age-appropriate) immunization against seven diseases:

- Diphtheria, pertussis (“whooping cough”), tetanus (the DTaP shot)
- Polio (the IPV shot)
- Measles, rubella, mumps (the MMR shot). *Note:* Before entry into grades K-12, two MMR doses are required, with the first dose given on or after the first birthday. Because MMR is less likely to protect the child if given before the first birthday, the first dose must be given no more than 4 days before the first birthday. Doses given earlier must be repeated to comply with the school entry requirement.

**Limited requirements:**

- Immunization against hepatitis B is required only before entry into kindergarten or seventh grade. There is no hepatitis B immunization requirement for entry into other grades.
- Immunization against or history of varicella disease (chickenpox) is required only before entry into kindergarten or licensed child care facilities. This is not required for entry into other grades.
- The Department of Human Services (DHS) requires that children in DHS-licensed day care facilities be age-appropriately immunized against hemophilus influenza type B (“HiB meningitis”) in state regulation 1240-4-1-.06. This is not required for school entry.

**Exemptions:**

- Religious: In the absence of an epidemic or immediate threat of an epidemic, a religious exemption to immunization requirements is allowed by state law (TCA 49-6-5001). By law, the parent or guardian must provide to the school a signed, written statement that such immunization conflicts with their religious tenets and practices, affirmed under the penalties of perjury.
- Medical: Any immunization shall not be required if a qualified physician certifies in a written statement that the child should be exempted from the immunization for medical reasons. An explanation of the medical reason for exemption is not required.

**Recommended (not required) vaccines:**

- Several vaccines against serious childhood diseases are recommended for all children, but are not required for school attendance. These include vaccines against pneumococcal disease, hepatitis A, influenza, and, beginning at age 11, meningococcal disease. All children should be age-appropriately immunized with all recommended vaccines to prevent these serious childhood infections.

## **Student Rights and Services**

Tennessee Legislature Public Chapter 585 requires school districts to include information on contacting child advocacy groups and information on how to contact the State Department of Education for information on student rights and services.

Visit: [www.tennhelp.com](http://www.tennhelp.com)

Answers to many questions and helpful information may be obtained from the State Department of Education by calling 1-888-212-3162 or visiting  
<http://www.state.tn.us/education/speced/selinks.shtml>

This information is provided as a service to individuals seeking additional avenues for help and information. The Benton County Department of Education does not intend this as an endorsement or recommendation for any individual, organization, or service represented on this page.

### **Tennessee Department of Education Contact Information**

Legal Services Division  
Division of Special Education, Tennessee Department of Education  
710 James Robertson Parkway  
Andrew Johnson Tower, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243  
Phone: 615-741-2851  
Fax: 615-253-5567 or 615-532-9412

West Tennessee Regional Resource Center  
100 Berryhill Drive  
Jackson, TN 38301  
Phone: 731-421-5074  
Fax: 731-421-5077

### **Child Advocacy Group Contact Information**

Tennessee Protection and Advocacy  
416 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue South  
Nashville, Tennessee 37212  
Phone: 1-800-287-9636  
Fax: 615-298-2046

Tennessee Voices for Children  
1315 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Nashville, TN 37203  
Phone: 1-800-670-9882  
Fax: (West TN) 731-660-6372

## **Organizations that Protect Children and Promote Healthy Families**

**Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee** is dedicated to preventing the abuse and neglect of Tennessee's children through in home parent coaching, the Tennessee Parent Helpline/Domestic Violence Hotline and parent education and support programs. For more information, call 1-888-383-0994 or visit [www.pcat.org](http://www.pcat.org)

**Safe Haven** provides therapy to children as well as adults who have been a victim of sexual abuse or sexual assault. In-school education and prevention programs are available. 1-865-558-9040 (24 hour crisis line)

**Centerstone** serves individuals and families in Indiana and Tennessee each year—whether you need help with marital counseling, a child's behavioral issues, depression, addiction, the effects of abuse, or other emotional and behavioral issues. Responsible Parenting Project provides education and support to mothers and fathers of children under the age of 4. 1-800-681-7444

**LeBonheur Center for Children and Parents**- dedicated to providing services to children and families who are at risk for physical, psychological or developmental problems resulting from child abuse, neglect and other family crisis situations. Our vision is for every child in west Tennessee to grow up in a loving, nurturing home that is able to meet his or her physical, developmental, emotional and educational needs.  
[www.lebonheur.org](http://www.lebonheur.org)

**Child Care Resource and Referral Centers** assists both parents on child care providers and answers to questions on what type of care is best for that family.  
<http://www.tennessee.gov/humanserv/adfam/ccrrc.htm>

**University of Tennessee Center for Parenting** strengthens parent-child relationships by coordinating and enriching existing parent education efforts in Tennessee.  
[www.center4parenting.org](http://www.center4parenting.org)

**Exchange Club-Carl Perkins Center** provides prevention services to the general population to educate and prevent initial abuse. Services include a Parent Training Lab and a 24 hour hotline. 731-668-4000

**Tennessee Head Start** offers comprehensive social, educational, and health programs for children through classrooms in pre-school centers. It is aimed specifically at families of low income. [www.tnheadstart.org](http://www.tnheadstart.org)

**Wee Care** provides a safe, nurturing environment with adult supervision for children of working parents before and after school and during school closings and summer months. It is located at Camden Elementary School. 584-8106

**WRAP** provides crisis counseling for domestic violence victims in addition to individual and supportive counseling for domestic violence victims to help rebuild their lives. Their first priority is safety. Emergency shelter is available for domestic violence victims and their children. 584-1100