

# ALICE BUFFETT MAGNET MIDDLE SCHOOL

Phone 561-6160 • Fax 561-6170  
14101 Larimore Avenue  
Omaha, Nebraska 68164-5135

[www.ops.org/middle/buffett](http://www.ops.org/middle/buffett)

***Where academic excellence is the standard  
and communication is an art!***

Dr. ReNae S. Kehrberg, Principal

## **Buffett Magnet Middle School Mission Statement**

**Buffett Magnet Middle School will provide rigorous academic experiences based upon research and best practices that enable all students to achieve their highest potential.**

**Our magnet program promises are:**

- to demonstrate “connections” between classroom learning and the world in which students live;
- to create a student-centered learning community in which students’ needs, interests, and readiness levels are the focus of teaching and learning; and
- to capitalize on using communication skills and electronic media with students to provide unique and enriching learning opportunities.

# 2009-2010 School Calendar

School Opens.....	August 17
Labor Day – No Students.....	September 7
Curriculum Day – No Students.....	September 28
First Quarter Ends / Second Quarter Begins.....	October 16/19
Middle School Conferences.....	October 28 & 29
Early Dismissal.....	October 29
Half Day Middle School Teacher Work Day – No Students.....	October 30
Planning-Inservice / Teacher Work Day – No Students.....	November 25
Thanksgiving Recess – No Students.....	November 26-27
First Semester / Second Quarter Ends.....	December 18
Winter Recess – No Students.....	December 21- January 1
Semester Break Day / Teacher Work Day.....	January 4
Second Semester / Third Quarter Begins.....	January 5
Martin Luther King Day – No Students.....	January 18
Middle School Conferences.....	February 10 & 11
Early Dismissal.....	February 11
Half Day Middle School Teacher Work Day – No Students.....	February 12
Presidents’ Day – No Students.....	February 15
Planning-Inservice / Teacher Work Day – No Students.....	February 16
Third Quarter Ends / Fourth Quarter Begins.....	March 12/15
Spring Recess – No Students.....	March 22-26
Planning-Inservice / Teacher Work Day – No Students.....	May 3
Second Semester / Fourth Quarter Ends / Last Student Day.....	May 21
Planning In-service / Teacher Work Days.....	May 24-25
Memorial Day.....	May 31
Summer School Begins.....	June 1

## Alternate Day Class Schedule

1st/2nd Block	7:40 a.m. – 9:03 a.m.
3rd/4th Block	9:07 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
5th/6th Block*	10:34 a.m. – 12:49 p.m. (Lunch)
7th/8th Block	12:53 p.m. – 2:16 p.m.
Bobcat Block	2:20 p.m. – 2:40 p.m.

\* Students will have a 30-minute lunch period every day during 5th/6th block.

# Welcome to Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School

Welcome to Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School, home of the Bobcats. We are very excited that you have selected Buffett as your middle school! This handbook has been prepared for you, our parents and students. The Buffett student handbook serves as a guide for you on school procedures, routines, and practices.

In the best learning environment youngsters are frequently reminded of expectations by all caring and nurturing adults in their lives. **Parents, we need your help!** Please share in the responsibility of making sure your child understands the information contained in this handbook. This information will also be helpful to parents.

As we establish a student culture where students will respect each other, our expectation is for cooperation and trust among students and teachers. Please keep this handbook with you and refer to it frequently. Students, as you follow the guidelines in this handbook your model behavior will set the tone for generations to come. Make your footprints large and leave them only on the high road. Through this, our school will be noted not only for laudatory communication skills but also, as the home of future leaders. We want to welcome you back someday to the legions of successful Buffett alumni and your behavior today will help shape your future integrity and personal standards.

We have built a state of the art school for you designed to support rigorous academic experiences and high student achievement. The facility boasts two technology and living labs, four computer labs, ten laptop carts with classroom sets of laptops, eight science labs, two fully equipped art production rooms, two health and fitness centers, a TV lab broadcast lab, a radio broadcast lab, a multimedia production room for journalism, a large gymnasium, extensive athletic fields set on 29.6 landscaped acres, expansive music facilities, a comprehensive library with a media retrieval system and over forty of our classrooms are equipped with SMART boards.

Our greatest features of course, are the people. Students will be supported by a high performing team of teachers that were culled from not only the greater metro area, but also the midwest and internationally. What a perfect match for students coming with high commendations from their previous schools. We are proud of our staff, students, and parents. Together we will create an outstanding team.

Parents, should you have any questions don't hesitate to call or better yet come visit us! Our classroom doors are thrown wide open and you are always welcome to drop by the school. Please become acquainted with us through our website: [www.ops.org/middle/buffett](http://www.ops.org/middle/buffett) to locate everything from student announcements to homework assignments.

Sincerely,

Dr. ReNae S. Kehrberg  
Principal

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# Absences From School

## **UNPLANNED ABSENCES** (e.g. student is ill):

1. Parents should telephone the school between 7:00 and 8:15 a.m. at 561-6160 and ask for the attendance secretary or send a note with a brother or sister.
2. If we do not receive a call from a parent or legal guardian by approximately 8:15 a.m., we will attempt to call parents at home or at work to ensure that each student is accounted for and safe.
3. A written note signed by a parent or legal guardian, stating the date and reason for an absence is required when students return to school **IF** the parent did not previously contact the school about the absence.
4. Parent verified absences are excused absences for which missed student work may be made up with full credit, if completed within two student class contact days of the absence.
5. Absences not verified by a parent are unexcused. Work is to be made up and credit will be determined by the teachers. Work should be submitted within two student class contact days of the absence.

**PLANNED ABSENCES:** Planned absences are rare but do occasionally occur for emergency reasons (e.g. a family members funeral, specialized medical tests that can only occur during school hours, etc.)

1. If parents or legal guardians know their student will be absent for one or more days, parents or legal guardians should send a note with the student for the office.
2. Homework will be given to students by teachers either prior to the absence or when students return to school. Students will receive full credit for the homework if completed within two student class contact days of the absence.

**ABSENCES DUE TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:** Occasionally school activities (e.g. an away game in athletics, a math competition, etc.) require an absence from class.

1. Teachers will be notified in advance of all school activity absences through the attendance bulletin or Buffett e-mail.
2. Students are to obtain assignments in advance for school activity absences and to provide a courtesy reminder to teachers regarding the absence.
3. Students will receive full credit for all work that is made up within two student class contact days of the absence.

## **ABSENCE FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION ONLY:**

1. Parents must send a note to the school nurse who will issue a "PE excused" pass that the student must deliver to the PE teacher. The note must come from a physician if students are to be excused from PE classes for an extended period of time.

## **ABSENCE DURING THE DAY:**

1. To ensure that our students are safe, we require all parents or legal guardians to stop in to the main office and "sign out" their child if needed during the school day.
2. A student may leave school **only** with their parent, legal guardian, or someone the parent has designated and whose name is on file at the school.

## **ABSENCE FROM MUSIC AND INSTRUMENTAL CONCERTS**

All Buffett students that participate in chorus, band or strings are required to attend the evening performance concerts as part of the course. There will be up to five required evening performances. Failure to attend evening performances will negatively affect students' grades in the chorus, band or strings course. **There will not be an alternate assignment provided in**

**lieu of concert attendance. If a student does not attend a concert, he or she will receive a NHI (54%) for their grade for the concert.** Parents provide transportation to concerts. If a student is unable to attend the concert due to a verified illness or a suspension, an alternate assignment will be provided for the student.

## **Adopt-A-School**

Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School is proud of the strong alliances which have been formed with neighboring businesses and corporate settings. These alliances provide benefits to both Buffett students and the participating businesses. The student body is afforded the opportunity to learn from the various organizations and the Adopt-A-School partners are able to contribute to the school in the areas of: academic reinforcements, career development, as well as tangible donations to a given organization. It is a mutually beneficial sharing of resources and Buffett Magnet Middle School is proud to announce the following partners: **AAA Travel Agency; Borders Books; Carrabba's Grill; Cheeseburger in Paradise; Community Rehab (Sports Medicine); Curzon Promotional Graphics; CV's Floral; Godfather's Pizza; Ideal Images; Mulhall's; Omaha State Bank; PIP Printing; Texas Road House.**

## **Activity Bus**

To support students who live outside the immediate neighborhood, Omaha Public Schools will provide free bus rides to eligible students. Students who ride Omaha Public Schools contracted buses (students who live more than 1.5 miles from school) may ride the 3:40 p.m. or 4:40 p.m. activity bus if they are participating in an after-school activity. Students will be dropped off at their nearest neighborhood school. Teachers/club sponsors will be required to submit the names of students riding the late bus to the main office by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the activity. **Only students who remain for authorized school activities or at the request of a teacher are allowed to ride the activity bus.**

## **After School Help and Homework Hideout**

At Buffett Magnet Middle School teachers are available for special help after school. Teachers are usually available from 2:40 until 3:10 p.m. Students are requested to make appointments for such help in advance so as to ensure the availability of teachers who have meetings or other appointments after school. Each team provides an after school homework hideout study room for the students on that team. Each team will establish the days and times for its homework hideout study room and communicate that information to students and parents.

## **After School: Departing & Waiting for Rides**

In order to ensure the safety of all students and the security of the building, neighborhood students who do not ride a bus and live within walking distance of Buffett are required to leave school grounds before **2:50 p.m.** Only students with approved and supervised after school activities should remain in the building.

Students who wait for a ride after school should arrange for their ride to pick them up before 3:00 p.m. Students on the campus after 3:00 p.m., will wait inside the building with adult supervision. These students will be seated on the benches in the commons. The adult picking up the student(s) will need to enter the building and notify the supervising adult of the student(s) they need to pick up.

## **Alice Buffett**

Our school has been named in honor of an exceptional Omaha Public Schools teacher, Alice Buffett. Her dedication to students was evident during her 34-year tenure. Alice Buffett taught family and consumer sciences at both Benson High School and Central High School from 1935-1969. She was noted as a caring educator and described by one of her students,

Dr. Sandra Hodges, former OPS Assistant Superintendent, as "...an educator who always took care of her students and demonstrated a protective, nurturing demeanor while still setting high standards."

Alice Buffett, in addition to having a love for her students had a love for adventure. During her life, she traveled extensively in the summer throughout Europe, Asia and South America. She taught until 1969 and passed away in 1970.

In honor of his favorite aunt, Omaha's favorite son, Warren Buffett, international financier, has used the Buffett Foundation since 1988 to give 15 OPS teachers the Alice Buffett Outstanding Teacher Award annually, which includes a \$10,000 gift. Warren Buffett said he was "delighted" that his aunt was honored, "just because of who she was and what she did." "She was a terrific teacher," he said. "Every student was an individual to her."

Warren Buffett said he has run into his aunt's former students all across the country. "As near as I can tell," he said, "every student she had remembered her and remembered her interest in them specifically."

"You remember those outstanding teachers" Buffett said, "and there's probably nobody aside from your parents, that had a greater impact on you."

The school family takes great pride in carrying the namesake of one of Omaha's own outstanding teachers and at the same time honoring a family that has given so much to the school district. The Buffett family have demonstrated not only their philanthropy, but moreover their staunch and committed support of the Omaha Public Schools.

## **Appointments During the School Day**

Whenever possible, parents and students are encouraged to arrange appointments so they do not conflict with the school day. If, however, it is necessary for students to be excused sometime during the school day for an appointment, students must bring a note to the office before school. This note should include the following:

- the student's name
- the reason for the appointment
- the date and time to be excused
- a parent's/guardian's signature
- a telephone number where a parent/guardian can be reached

Students must report to the office to sign out with their parent/legal guardian before leaving the building. When a student returns to school, parent and student again report to the office to sign in and the student receives an admit slip before returning to class. Students will only be released to their own parents/guardians. No students will be allowed to leave the building with anyone other than their own parents/guardians or an approved designee by the parent that is on file at the school.

## **Arriving Early at School**

Students may enter the building at 7:10 a.m. If they are participating in the free breakfast program or if they are participating in the supervised reading Rise and Shine Club. Otherwise, fifth grade students should enter the doors located on the east side of the building and sixth grade students should enter the main entrance. The main entrance is adjacent to the large parking lot. Seventh grade students enter through the doors on the north side of the building, located next to the circular drive and eighth grade students enter through the patio doors located on the west side of the building.

At 7:30 a.m. students should report to their lockers to empty book bags and gather materials they will need for their first class.

# Assembly Conduct

For special events and to enrich learning, various assemblies will be scheduled throughout the school year. Students are expected to follow established guidelines. All students are expected to walk to the assembly with their teachers and sit quietly in the designated areas. Students are expected to behave in a mature manner during the assembly, and to extend the proper courtesies to those people conducting the presentation. At the conclusion, students should remain seated until specifically dismissed. Inappropriate behavior may result in students' loss of assembly privileges and/or other disciplinary action.

# Athletics & Intramurals

We are pleased to offer a full array of after school athletics and intramurals. All seventh and eighth grade students are eligible to try out for the competitive athletic programs. Buffett Magnet Middle School students are encouraged to participate in athletics and other co-curricular activities. It is the feeling of Buffett's teachers, coaches, and administrators that students have a primary obligation to complete their schoolwork to the best of their abilities and to behave appropriately while in school before considering athletics and intramural activities.

Eligibility requirements in the area of scholarship are consistent with the guidelines for promotion that are stated in the *Secondary Student Code of Conduct*. To be eligible for participation in competitive athletic activities, a student-athlete must be passing all courses. To be eligible to compete, students must be in attendance a minimum of two out of their four classes on the day of competition. Student athletes are strongly encouraged to be in regular attendance every day. We encourage interested students to try out for interscholastic athletic activities. A physical examination for athletics, proof of insurance, parent consent, and purchase of a Buffett Magnet Middle School Student Activity Card are required. Join an athletic team or come watch our students compete. Go Buffett Bobcats!

## ATHLETIC OFFERINGS

Football - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls  
Cross Country - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls  
Soccer - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls  
Volleyball - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls

Basketball - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls  
Swimming - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls  
Wrestling - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls  
Track - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls

# Athletics – Eligibility Requirements for 7th & 8th Grade

**PHYSICAL EXAMINATION:** A physical examination is required for all 7th & 8th grade students participating (includes practice) in interscholastic athletics and must be on file with the nurse prior to practice and competition. Eighth grade student athletes must get a physical prior to the start of their 8th grade year since the 7th grade physical is only valid for one year.

**ATTENDANCE:** All student athletes must be in attendance for at least 2 classes on the day of an activity in order to be eligible to participate. Students who are truant from school or skip a class period the day of an athletic event will be ineligible to compete that school day. Students with ten or more days of absence during a given semester or students with excessive tardies to school may be judged ineligible to compete in athletic activities at the discretion of the building administration.

**CITIZENSHIP:** Student athletes are school ambassadors and should exhibit positive behavior and citizenship. Student athletes who are suspended from school are ineligible to attend practice or to participate in competition during the period of their suspension. Student athletes who are assigned to the PAC room for the entire day will not be able to practice and compete during the day of their PAC assignment.

**RULES:** Coaches and building administrators may formulate other rules of participation for athletes. These rules will be written and circulated to players and their parents at the time of the first meeting or practice.

**ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY:** A weekly eligibility check will be completed by teachers. Students whose work or behavior for the week has been unsatisfactory may be ineligible to compete in upcoming events. Students must be successful academically. Coaches will explain the specific guidelines at the beginning of each season. **Student athletes should read the buff pages of this handbook on Behavior Rules for Participants in Co-curricular Activities.** Additional school district rules are outlined. Students will have many athletic opportunities during the year. These will be announced in the daily bulletin.

## Attendance and Tardy Policy

The goal of our attendance policy is to encourage students to attend a maximum number of days during their four years at Buffett Magnet Middle School. Students who attend Buffett Magnet Middle School should be aware of the advantages of regular attendance and the possible consequences of irregular attendance.

Students between the ages of seven and eighteen are required by Nebraska law to attend school regularly. In the Omaha Public Schools a student who is absent from ten (10) class sessions during a semester will be considered to be in failing status and ineligible to take part in athletics or other activities.

If at the end of the semester, the student has satisfactorily made up the work for those absences, the teacher, parent, or student may appeal to the school administrator for a waiver of the failing status. No student can be failed based solely on his/her absences until the teacher has had an opportunity to discuss this with an administrator and the student's parents.

An attendance letter, required by the district, will be mailed after five and ten days of absences. After the fifteenth absence, the attendance issue will be turned over to the Student Personnel Assistant (SPA), for further review.

### Attendance Practices

We are pleased to have your child at Buffett Magnet Middle School! In order to help you with the transition from elementary to middle school, here are some helpful reminders about our attendance policies.

- Our office phone is 561-6160. Please call before 8:15 a.m. if your child is sick, or going to be late. It is helpful for you to let us know why your child is not going to be in school. We will call you if you don't call us.
- If you have called or sent a note because your child is going to be late, you do not have to come into the office. We will write a pass for your child and send him/her to class.
- If you are going to be out of town for an extended period of time, please let the office know in addition to your child's teachers.
- If you need to check your child out during the day, please call or send a note to the office in advance so we can look up the schedule and make sure they are not at lunch or P.E. when you need to get them.
- If you need to get a message to your child, we deliver messages during Bobcat Block at the end of the day. We try to limit the number of times we interrupt when a teacher is teaching.

### Tardy Practices

Arriving to school on time is important for the academic success of your student. We ask for your support in the matter of making sure your student starts the day at 7:40 a.m. When a student accrues **3 tardies to the first block of the day**, the block 1 and 2 teachers should notify the appropriate deans, Mrs. Ziola (Grades 5/6) or Ms. Heineman (Grades 7/8). The stu-

dent will then meet with the dean and serve a detention after school with the dean or the PAC facilitator. For **every third tardy thereafter**, the student will again serve a detention. Students who are repeatedly late to school may be required to meet with a student personnel assistant from the Omaha Public Schools.

## Behavior Expectations & the Buffett High Five

Excellent behavior and conduct are expected for all students based on the **Buffett High Five**:

- *1st Be Safe* • *2nd Be Responsible* • *3rd Be Respectful*
- *4th Be Prepared* • *5th Be Ready To Learn*

### Behavior expectations:

1. Students are to behave in a manner that allows other students to learn.
2. Students are to behave in the cafeteria in a manner that allows others a pleasant atmosphere in which to eat their meal.
3. Students may **only** leave classrooms with the teacher's permission and a signed hall pass.
4. Students are to respect each other and never throw objects, push each other, or act in any manner that may bring harm to another individual.
5. Students are to act in a friendly and supportive manner and should never say harsh words to other students. There is a no tolerance policy for bullying. It is neither acceptable nor allowed.
6. Students will use responsible, respectful language. Profanity is not tolerated. In addition, discourteous or inappropriate language toward adults or other students is not acceptable.
7. All food and drink are to be consumed in the cafeteria during lunch. Classrooms are food free zones. Students are not to bring gum, candy, pop or sunflower seeds to school.
8. School is a drug-free zone. Nebraska State Law and OPS Board of Education policy strictly prohibit tobacco products, alcohol or drugs at school or on school property. (Refer to the **Student Code of Conduct**.)
9. Student safety is a priority and weapons of any type (pocket knives, scissors, firearms, etc.) are strictly prohibited. **Student consequences are severe for carrying or using a weapon. Specific examples and consequences are listed in the buff pages of this handbook.**
10. Students are to be respectful of teachers, school authorities, and other school employees. Defiance, threats and/or verbal disrespect will not be tolerated.

Parents/guardians will be informed and asked to help in the event of any serious violation of school expectations or in the event of repeated disregard of the behavior expectations outlined for the good of all students. When parents' expectations support the schools' behavior expectations, appropriate student conduct follows. We thank parents for their support and encourage them to discuss behavior expectations that are safe, responsible, respectful, and prepare students to come to school ready to learn.

### BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OUTLINE:

#### A. Hall and stairwells

1. Walk, not run.
2. Keep hands, feet and objects to self.
3. Walk on the **right side**.
4. Use inside voice level.

#### B. Assembly

1. Enter quietly.
2. Sit in assigned areas.

3. Listen attentively.
4. Show appreciation only by clapping.

### **C. Classroom**

1. Be safe - school is a drug, alcohol and weapon free zone.
2. Be responsible - choose appropriate, polite language and demeanor.
3. Be respectful - keep hands and feet to self and provide helpful not hurtful comments.
4. Be prepared - complete all assignments in a timely fashion, participate in all activities, and bring needed items to class.
5. Be ready to learn - listen to the teacher, focus on the task at hand and follow directions.

### **D. Restroom**

1. Use facilities appropriately.
2. Wash hands before leaving.
3. Throw paper towels in waste receptacles.

### **E. Cafeteria**

1. Walk quietly with your teacher and class to the cafeteria.
2. Move through the receiving lines in an orderly manner and sit in your assigned area.
3. Always stay with your class.
4. Return your tray and discard trash in waste receptacle.
5. Leave eating area seats and floor clean.
6. Pick up all necessary materials prior to being seated, (Includes second helpings, ketchup, mayonnaise, napkins, silverware, snacks, etc.)
7. Raise your hand if you need something.
8. When everyone at the table has finished, raise your hands and wait for the lunch professional to release you for clean up.
9. Return to your seat after clean up.
10. Wait to be dismissed from your table until your teacher signals.

### **F. Bus & Van**

1. Cooperate with driver.
2. Stay seated, facing forward.
3. Sit and talk or read quietly.
4. Keep hands, arms and feet to self.
5. Nothing is thrown from bus/van windows.
6. Use appropriate language and inside voice level.
7. Curb side windows are closed.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT FOLLOWING SCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:**

All teachers and teams will have classroom management plans based on the Buffett High Five. Teachers will teach the expectations and life skills curriculum to support students in making good behavior choices. If students do not meet school behavior expectations, teachers will reteach positive behavior skills. Students that are repeatedly not meeting expectations will be sent to the Positive Action Center (PAC) for reteaching and support. Habitual or serious violations of the code of conduct such as fighting or bringing prohibited substances or weapons to school will require parent support to address the concern. **Please refer to the buff pages of this handbook for the student code of conduct based on school district policy.**

### **TEACHING BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:**

1. All students will receive a student handbook. It will be read and discussed in class. Students will be assessed on their knowledge of the student handbook.
2. Parents will support the schools expectations by reviewing the school handbook with their child and signing off on the student handbook review form.

3. Team and classroom expectations are based on the Buffett High Five and will be explained by teachers, modeled and posted in all classrooms. This will be done extensively during the first two weeks of school and repeated throughout the school year.
4. Life skills will be taught by teachers during class, and during Bobcat Block, and reinforced by facilitators in the PAC room.

### **PAC ROOM (Positive Action Center):**

The PAC facilitator will keep parents informed and send home a letter/referral form every time a student visits the PAC room. In addition, the staff member will review and reteach the Life Skill expectation that was not met by the student.

*Follow-up with chronic offenders may include:*

- a parent conference scheduled with the student's administrator;
- restricted participation in certain team or school activities; or
- suspension from school

### **LIFE SKILLS**

The Buffett faculty and counselors will teach the Life Skills curriculum throughout the school year. Possible topics would include:

Listening	Disagreeing Appropriately	Negotiating	Being a Team Member
Following Directions	Making a Decision	Making an Apology	Dealing with Peer Pressure
Accepting Consequences	Avoiding a Fight	Expressing Feelings	
Accepting Redirection	Being Honest	Managing Anger	

## **Bicycles & Skateboards**

Students who ride bicycles to school should secure the bicycle to the bike rack using a lock. The school can not be responsible for the safe keeping of bicycles. Bike racks are located at both the southeast and southwest corners of the building, on the northeast side of the building (near the front entrance) and on the north side of the building (near the bus/van drop off area). As all responsible bicyclists know, you must lock up your bike every day and walk it in areas of high pedestrian traffic. In addition, for safety reasons, all Buffett students who ride a bicycle are encouraged to wear a helmet when riding to and from school.

**Students who ride a skateboard to school must secure it in their locker during the school day. Inappropriate conduct related to skateboards may result in a student losing the privilege of riding his/her skateboard to Buffett Magnet Middle School. Roller blades, Heelys, and scooters are not allowed at school.**

## **Bobcat Block - Advisor/Advisee Program**

Bobcat Block is a program designed to help students find success in school both academically and socially. Bobcat Block is the last period of the day and lasts 20 minutes. Bobcat Block is a time to check homework assignments and organize student planners, as well as to respond to student questions and concerns. Three days per week DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time will be embedded into Bobcat Block. In addition to the Life Skills program that is taught during Bobcat Block, students will also have time set aside for Daily Analogies and student Newsbowl activities (an in class competition that challenges students on their current events knowledge). Together students and teachers will discuss important academic and social issues that students face in grades five through eight.

Fifth through eighth grade students undergo rapid physical and emotional growth, and are faced with new social pressures and increasing academic rigor. Students have important decisions to make about working with others, completing schoolwork, planning for the future, and connecting to the world around them. Bobcat Block sessions give students a chance to focus attention on academic organization, decision making, and study skills. The teacher-advisor will

be sensitive to the interests of the students, listen to their concerns, and encourage students to develop student responsibilities and organizational skills.

## Book Bags & Back Packs

Book bags, back packs, duffel bags, large purses, cinch bags or any other large storage containers must be kept in student lockers during the school day. Students should put their back packs or book bags in their lockers upon arrival first thing in the morning. Student lockers are conveniently located in each team area next to the core classrooms. It will be easy for students to exchange books at their locker throughout the day during passing periods due to the convenient locker placement. Keeping back packs in lockers ensures clear classroom aisles in case of a fire alarm or evacuation. **Be sure you do not purchase large back packs with wheels, as oversized back packs will not fit in student lockers.**

## Breakfast & Lunch

### BREAKFAST

We are pleased to offer our students the opportunity to eat breakfast in the cafeteria without charge. Breakfast is served from 7:10 to 7:30 a.m. Students who arrive on buses will go directly to the cafeteria for their breakfast. Students who walk or have a ride from a parent or guardian may enter the cafeteria between 7:10 and 7:20 a.m.

### LUNCH

The Buffett Magnet Middle School cafeteria serves hot lunches daily. The full lunch is a balanced meal and costs \$1.65 per day. Reduced pay lunch is 40 cents. Students may bring their lunch and buy milk for 25 cents. Due to federal regulations, no commercial or fast food or pop is allowed in the cafeteria during breakfast/lunch period(s). All vending machines will be turned off during the school day, which includes the lunch period.

Students who purchase their lunch may buy a balanced meal consisting of the following: meat dish, vegetable, fruit, milk, and bread. Students may also select items a la carte. A la carte items are snacks (predominately healthy choices) that are an additional cost above the school lunch price. Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to sign off on a snack exclusion form if they do not want their student to purchase these a la carte items. Each student has the responsibility to behave appropriately and to make the lunchroom a pleasant place for everyone.

### CAFETERIA PIN NUMBER

Each student is issued a personal identification number (PIN) for use in the cafeteria when purchasing breakfast or lunch. It is important that students memorize their PIN number since they will need to enter their number on a keypad located next to the register, once they reach the end of the serving line. **Students should never give their PIN number to another student.** Parents may deposit money in their son's or daughter's account at any time. Specific information is provided in the August school lunch mailing, newsletters and student orientations. Questions should be directed to the Buffett cafeteria.

In accordance with Federal law & U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, DC, 20250-9410, or call (202) 720 5964 (voice & TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider & employer.

# Bus/Van Safety, Behavior Expectations, Consequences

## RESPONSIBILITY & PROCEDURES

Parent support and cooperation is asked regarding bus/van rules and guidelines. The safety of all children is our primary concern. The bus/van ride is an extension of the classroom and thereby requires the same acceptable behavior as is required in the school and classroom. **The provision of transportation is a privilege offered and may be withdrawn if the student's misconduct warrants such action.**

If a student fails to follow the bus rules (i.e. obey bus driver, remain seated, talk or read quietly, keep hands, arms and feet to self, nothing is thrown from windows, use appropriate language), **the bus driver is required to "write-up" the student on a special Bus Conduct Report Form and submit it to the Dean of Students and/or Assistant Principals.**

Consequences for improper bus conduct may include:

- The student conferences with his/her administrator, parent contacted
- The student is assigned a lunch or after school detention, parent contacted
- The student is assigned to the PAC room, parent contacted
- The student is excluded from bus service for 1-5 days, parents contacted
- The student is excluded from bus service for 5 days or more, parents contacted
- The student is excluded from bus service and may receive further discipline action such as suspension from school

**NOTE:** It becomes the responsibility of the parent to get the student to and from school if the student has been advised s/he is excluded from bus service.

Excluded from bus service does not mean that the student is suspended from school. Students who miss class because they are off the bus are required to make up all class work. Any violation of the Omaha Public School's *Code of Conduct* will supersede the bus write-ups.

## Change of Address, Phone Number, or Transfer

If parents change their address or telephone number, please update the office with the current information. If an address change is needed the parent must provide address verification such as a rental/purchase agreement or a MUD/OPPD statement from the new address. We may need to contact parents in case a student is ill, misses a bus, receives an award, or for some other reason. We want to make sure parents receive school calls as well as newsletters, progress reports, etc. Address changes or phone changes can be reported during the summer months, as well as the regular school year. Please note that in order for a student to be enrolled at Buffett Magnet Middle School, students must live in the attendance area as specified by the OPS Board of Education's Student Assignment Plan.

If student moves or transfers to another school, all textbooks and other materials belonging to the school should be returned and any unpaid bills and fees paid. Once this is done, the student will be withdrawn from school and transcripts may be sent upon request.

## Clubs & Co-Curricular Activities

Students at Buffett Magnet Middle School have many opportunities to become involved with co-curricular clubs and activities. Student involvement fosters self-confidence for learning and a sense of belonging. Participation in clubs and activities also offers opportunities for developing social skills while interacting with students who hold similar interests. Clubs and activities may vary slightly from year to year depending upon student interest and sponsor availability.

<u>CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS</u>	<u>SPECIAL EVENTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</u>
Aerobic intramurals	African American History Challenge
African American History Challenge	Book Blasters
Art Club	Buffett in the Groove
Boards and More	Buffett Spirit Singers
Bobcat Book Club	Destination Imagination
Bobcat Buddy Program	French, Spanish Contest
Buffett Bravo	Geography Bee
Buffett Publishing	History Day Contest
Chess Club	Industrial Technology Competition
Drama Club 1st/2nd Semester	Junior Thespians
Diversity Club	Knowledge Master Open
FCA	Math Contests
Golf Club	Math Counts
History Club/History Day	Metropolitan Engineering & Science Fair
International Language Club	Music Concerts
Journalism Club	National Junior Honor Society
Math Club	Nebraska Visual Arts Competition
Pen and Ink	Newspapers in Education
Project Citizen-Service Learning	Read to Succeed
Spanish Club	Speech Contests
Student Council	Spelling Bee
Tech Time Club	Student Ambassadors
Walking Club	Think Tank
Weight Training Club	Writing Contests
Young Film Makers Club	

## Counselors - The Bobcat Guidance Team

The mission of the Omaha Public Schools Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program is to ensure student success through the combined efforts of students, staff, families, and community. This Pre-K through 12th grade Omaha Public School Guidance and Counseling Program is both proactive and responsive to the unique needs of students. There are four components of the guidance program:

- A **Guidance Curriculum** is delivered to all students and emphasizes personal, social, occupational, and academic skills. The guidance curriculum is the main component of the 40 Developmental Assets program. Students are taught guidance lessons on a rotation basis during their team classes by any of the four Buffett counselors.

### **Guidance Lesson Delivery:**

Ms. Comstock - Career & Occupational Planning  
 Mrs. Lewandowski - Academic & Educational Planning  
 Mrs. Meister - Academic & Social Skills Development  
 Mr. Thull - Personal & Social Skill Development

- **Individual and Small Group Meetings** developmentally help students plan for their future, manage conflict, prepare for their next level of education, strengthen academic and social skills, and more. Students will have the opportunity to sign up for various small groups. Small groups meet once a week for six weeks to discuss various topics of interest. A menu of topics are offered to all Bobcats including study skills, stress management, growing through grief and loss, and coping with changing families through divorce / separation / remarriage.
- **Response Services** provide support for issues of concern to students and their families. Each student is assigned a counselor based upon grade level. Students loop with the same counselor all four years they are at Buffett. New students learn the procedure for scheduling a counseling appointment and tour the Guidance Office during a guidance lesson in August. The Guidance Office is located on the west side of the commons, directly across from the first floor elevator.

### **Assignments:**

Mrs. Meister - 5th Grade Class  
Mrs. Lewandowski - 6th Grade Class  
Ms. Comstock - 7th Grade Class  
Mr. Thull - 8th Grade Class

- **System Support** recognizes the school counselor as part of the school team. At Buffett counselors are involved in a variety of staff organizations such as SAT teams; the Safe, Secure, and Disciplined Schools committee; and Students of Distinction committee.

## **Curriculum**

The seventh and eighth grade curriculum at Buffett Magnet Middle School provides continued development of basic skills and exploratory experiences. The curricular offerings are also designed to promote understanding, develop interest, and encourage the expression of talent in special area courses. Courses are 83 minutes unless otherwise noted. All seventh and eighth grade students are enrolled in language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, reading or international language, information technology (computers), physical education, human growth and development, tech and living, music, and art. Music and physical education are offered during a split block.

In addition, seventh and eighth grade students may select magnet elective courses. Students will be selecting two of the four magnet courses; broadcasting, oral interpretation of literature, digital media, and journalism based upon interest.

As a magnet school, Buffett Magnet Middle School offers a more comprehensive communications curriculum than other middle schools in the district. As a result, all subject areas will embed the extra value magnet standards of advanced oral communication, advanced written communication, and advanced communication technologies.

## **Daily Bulletin**

The daily bulletin will be broadcast to students each morning during 1st/2nd block utilizing the intercom system. It will contain important information about upcoming events and student activities and will be produced by our Radio Broadcasting students. In addition, the daily bulletin can be accessed by parents/guardians via the Buffett Magnet Middle School website at <http://www.ops.org/middle/buffett/>

## **Detention Policy**

Teachers and administrators may assign lunch and after-school detentions to students for inappropriate behavior. Lunch detentions will be served during the student's lunch period with a supervising staff member. After-school detentions will be held in the student's team area, with teacher supervision, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays, beginning at 2:40 p.m.

## **Dress Code**

Your personal appearance is basically a concern of you and your parents. However, the administration of a school has the responsibility to help students develop good taste in manners of dress and appearance. Good grooming is the basis for any dress code. Students should report to school ready for work and should not wear anything that is in poor taste or could be considered distracting to the learning environment. Shoes must be worn at all times.

The following items of clothing are inappropriate for school and may not be worn during school time:

- Clothing with suggestive pictures or language, offensive or obscene language, pictures, or symbols, or clothing with references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, gangs, or violence;

- Hats, hoods, head bands, scarves, bandannas, or head coverings of any kind; Sunglasses, curlers, combs, picks, and other such items;
- Shorts and skirts should generally be finger-tip length or longer (preferably Capri pants, cargo shorts, walking shorts, Bermuda shorts, etc.)
- Tops with straps less than one-inch wide, short-waisted/bare midriffs, lowcut tops, sleeveless athletic wear, fishnet shirts, sleepwear, or undergarments worn as outerwear, and other such articles of clothing;
- Boxer shorts worn as outerwear, and other such articles of clothing;
- Chains of any kind, wallets with chains, choke chains, dog leashes, and similar items; or
- Slippers and house shoes and other such items.

This is not an all-inclusive list. As a visual rule of thumb, if the attire more closely resembles the wardrobe of a hard rock star or pop diva, it may not be appropriate for school. During the winter months, students are encouraged to keep a warm sweatshirt or sweater in their locker to wear in the classroom. Hoods attached to sweatshirts should not be on a student's head while in the building. Students are not permitted to wear winter coats while in the classroom. **Students who are not dressed appropriately may be required to go home and return to school properly dressed or students may be asked to change into their P.E. attire.** Students should review the Buffett Powerpoint on "What to Wear" and "What NOT to Wear" on the Buffett website.

## Early Dismissal for School Closing

The Omaha Public Schools recognize the right and responsibility of parents to make a choice in the matter of school attendance in bad weather. If weather is questionable, please listen to the radio for word of school closing. **Announcements are made beginning at 6:00 a.m. If school closes DURING the day, we will follow the instructions you have on your child's emergency card.** If this information should change, please notify the office immediately.

## Emergency Drills

The school has clear signals for both fire and tornado drills and actual warnings. Students have regular drills to be certain that they recognize those signals, know how to react and where to seek safe shelter.

## Extra Value Standards for the Magnet Theme

The teamed courses (reading, math, social studies, language arts, and science) will embed the three magnet extra value standards:

- Advanced oral communication;
- Advanced written communications; and
- Advanced communication technologies.

The cooperative arts courses (art, music, physical education, tech and living, human growth and development, international languages, information technology, and oral interpretation of literature) will embed the advanced written communication extra value standard. In addition, these subjects will also embed advanced oral communication or advanced communication technologies in their course work.

All three of the extra value standards will be standardized at grades 5-6 and 7-8. These standards will have separate elements for each grade level. Each element will have increasing levels of difficulty for each grade level dependent upon the curriculum content and the corresponding scoring guides' increased level of rigor for each element.

## Failure Reports

Constant communication between home and school is the key to success. If your student has low grades at Progress Report time (mid-quarter) and is struggling, please call your student's teachers for support and assistance. Even if a parent does not call, all teachers will (at a minimum) make at least one contact with parents (other than parent-teacher conferences or progress reporting) during the semester in which a student is going to fail.

## Field Trips

Bus/van rules apply for all field trips and other related experiences. Permission and release of liability forms are sent home whenever students will participate in field trip activities. These forms must be signed and returned to the school before the student may participate in the field trip experience. **We are not able to accept oral parental permission in lieu of written permission.**

## Grading Policy

1. **Behavior Policy:** Nonacademic factors such as behavior, attendance, and effort are not incorporated into grades. Participation points may be used if that is the actual skill that is being taught.
2. **Redo Policy:** In each course students will be allowed a minimum of three redos of formative assignments for full credit each quarter if the original assignment was turned in on time. **Teachers will determine which assignments will be eligible for redos.** Assignments turned in late are not eligible to be redone; however, one late assignment, per quarter, will be allowed without penalty (student will receive full credit). A student who chronically turns in late work may be penalized four percentage points each day for a maximum reduction of 20% in the grade if turned in within five contact days. Work not turned in (at all) within five contact class days will receive a NHI failing grade of 54%. Because summative assignments (E.g. CRT form B or Unit tests, etc.) have been taught and assessed previously, they are not eligible to be redone.
3. **Late Policy:** One late assignment without penalty will be allowed per quarter if turned in within five student contact days. Work not turned in (at all) within five contact class days will receive a Not Handed In (NHI) failing grade of 54%. No late work will be accepted during the last 10 days of a grading period (quarter or semester) to allow for grades to be entered.
4. **Weighting Policy:** Grades are composed of assignments and assessments that are both completed in class or assigned as homework. These assignments are categorized into three categories: practice, formative and summative assignments or assessments that will be weighted as follows: Practice assignments are worth 10%, formative assignments are worth 35%, and summative assignments are worth 55% of the total grade.
5. **Accommodation Policy:** Accommodations are provided to students with special needs without adjusting or reducing grades.
6. **Content Policy:** Grading is based on content not decorations. Decoration is not higher level thinking whereas rigorous writing is one of the highest level thinking skills.
7. **Extra Credit Policy:** There will be no extra credit or bonus points.
8. **Group Grade Policy:** Group grades are not utilized.
9. **Bell Curve Policy:** Grading is not based on a curve.
10. **No Zero Policy:** Zeros are never used. A student who attempts the assignments and fails is to receive a failing grade of 62%. Students will receive a Not Handed In (NHI) failing grade of 54% for work not handed in.

11. **Posted Grades Policy:** Grades will be posted every other week. Students will chart their progress. Parents that request in writing will be sent email progress reports every other week from teachers.\* Music and PE teachers will email progress reports once a month. Teachers will post all grades. For families who do not have email access teachers may print and mail progress reports, or send progress reports home with students, or call parents of students who do not receive email reports.
12. **Quantity of Assignments Policy:** Fifteen or more assignments will be recorded each quarter in all classes except PE and music. PE and music will have 8 or more assessments or assignments each quarter. Homework will average 10-15 minutes per day times the students grade level. Eg. 5th graders will have 50-75 minutes per day of homework on the average.

## Grading Reports

Constant Communication between home and school is the key to success. If your student has low grades, and is struggling, please call your student's teachers for support and assistance. Even if a parent does not call, all teachers will (as a minimum) make at least one contact with parents (other than conferences) during each semester. **Teachers will also email progress reports (to parents that request it in writing) every two weeks for parents to view student progress. Music and PE teachers will email progress reports on a monthly basis.**

## Grading System

All OPS secondary schools use an "A-F" grading system with "A" as the highest grade and "F" as failing. Buffett Magnet Middle School will use percentage equivalents for number grades as follows:

A = 93 - 100%

D = 70 - 77%

D.M.E. = 62% (did not Meet Expectations)

B = 85 - 92%

F = 69% - 63%

N.H.I = 54% (Not Handed In)

C = 78 - 84%

All Buffett teachers utilize a standardized grading policy throughout the school. The Buffett grading policy is provided to all students and parents.

## Health Services: School Nurse, Medication Policy, Illness at School

The health office is also located on the first floor by the main office. A school nurse is assigned to Buffett Magnet Middle School on a full-time basis. Seventh grade students should have a current physical and dental examination on file by November 1 of the year they enter seventh grade. Height and weight screenings are completed in the seventh grade. In eighth grade, screening tests for height, weight, vision, hearing, dental and scoliosis are completed. Parents will be notified of any irregular findings. A health record card is on file for each student.

If a student becomes ill during school, permission to go to the nurse's office should be obtained from the teacher. **Under no circumstances should a student "text" or call his/her parent/guardian on a cell phone prior to reporting to the nurse's office.** Once the student arrives at the nurse's office, the nurse will assist the student in contacting his/her parent/guardian. Any prescribed medication that needs to be taken at school must be checked-in with the school nurse. Omaha Public Schools medication policy requires that a written statement from a medical doctor be on file for any medication or prescription in order to be given at school. (See districtwide buff pages of this student handbook.)

## Homework Hotline and Website

Buffett Magnet Middle School has a "Homework Hotline" to assist students and parents in obtaining any missed assignments due to absence from class. **The "Homework Hotline" can**

be accessed by calling (402) 561-6199 and following the automated instructions.

In addition, assignments and homework can be assessed by parent/guardians via the Buffett Magnet Middle School website: <http://ops.org/middle/buffett/>. Please click on the tab titled homework and select your student's team.

## Homework Policy

### Background Knowledge:

Homework is defined as any tasks that are assigned to students by teachers that are to be carried out during non-school hours. Effective homework practices have a positive correlation with high student achievement. Students have higher achievement when they are provided and complete appropriate, meaningful homework.

### Researched Best Practices for Homework:

homework should be:

- purposeful to prepare for future lessons, practice an independent skill or process, elaborate on information to deepen knowledge, and to explore topics of their own interest.
- designed at the appropriate level of difficulty or readiness level.
- designed to take the amount of time that is appropriate according to the students age. Students should have about 10 minutes (up to 15 minutes if reading is included) of homework each night for each grade they are old.
- clearly understood by parents and students.
- updated daily via the homework hotline and website.
- scaffolded with a clear scoring guide and rubrics.
- categorized into three types: practice, formative and summative.
- a tool for feedback.
- frequent and with shorter assignments.
- distributed material across multiple assignments.
- a mix of both easy and hard materials throughout an assignment in order to keep students engaged and interested.
- provided that gives students homework choices and assignments should be varied according to individual students' learning styles.
- designed to keep parental involvement to a minimum.
- preceded by teaching and modeling.
- intermittently graded.
- should be tracked by the student for self reflection.
- different for students with verified disabilities.
- supported with an after school homework program called, "Strategic Tutoring".

These best practices reflect the review of the literature on homework and are the recommended practices that teachers at Buffett will adhere to as a standardized process for assignments and homework.

## Honor Roll & National Junior Honor Society

### HONOR ROLL

A quarterly honor roll will be maintained for each grade level and will be sent home via the Wednesday folder. It will be posted after each quarter in designated areas around the school. To qualify for the quarterly honor roll, a student will maintain a 3.25 grade point average (GPA) for that quarter.

In addition, exemplary levels of cumulative achievement are celebrated as follows:

Gold: Summa Cum Laude	3.75 - 4.00 cumulative GPA
Silver: Magna Cum Laude	3.50 - 3.74 cumulative GPA
Bronze: Cum Laude	3.25 - 3.49 cumulative GPA

## **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

Membership in the National Junior Honor Society is both an honor and a responsibility bestowed upon a select number of seventh and eighth grade students. Selection of students for membership is the responsibility of the Buffett Magnet Middle School faculty through the National Junior Honor Society Faculty Council. Students selected for the membership must have at least a **3.75** cumulative grade point average, be in attendance at the school the equivalent of one semester, and demonstrate outstanding qualities in citizenship, character, leadership and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities. National Junior Honor Society candidates will be inducted into membership at a special ceremony.

## **Leaving School Early**

If parents or guardians need to pick their child up early from school they may do so in person by stopping into the office and signing their student out of the building. If possible, please call ahead so your student can be waiting in the office when you arrive to pick him/her up. For safety reasons, we can not release students from school early with a phone call. A parent's designee may also sign out a student if the parent has indicated that to the school and it is on file in the office.

## **Library**

The library is a spacious state of the art resource for students that is open during and after school every school day. The aim of the library is to serve all students. Students should get acquainted with the library and its numerous resources. Students will find a current collection of magazines, and thousands of fiction and nonfiction books. Internet resources through school paid subscriptions can link students to thousands of newspapers and Library of Congress approved web sites. Reference books, compact discs, DVD and VHS recordings are also housed in the library. An electronic card catalog and CD-Rom technology are in use in the library. Word processing computers are available for student use. A librarian or library aide is available to assist in selecting books or finding information.

### **USE OF THE LIBRARY**

*Library Hours:* Between 7:40 a.m. and 2:40 p.m., students and/or classes may use the library for research or to check out books. Students may use the library between 2:40 and 3:40 p.m. for school related study or to check out books. The Library is not open after school on Mondays.

*Book Check Out:* Most books can be checked out for two weeks. Overnight books (those in heavy demand by many students) may be checked out after school and are due before 7:40 a.m. the following morning. Encyclopedias may be checked out for one period only or overnight. Magazines may be checked out for a week of research work.

## **Lockers**

We are proud of our facilities, including our navy student lockers. We need our students to help us keep them clean and in new condition. Lockers are a service to help students with storage. Students should:

1. Use only your assigned locker.
2. Use only magnets to decorate the inside of the locker. Affixing stickers or tape will quickly ruin our lockers.
3. Make sure the locker is locked after using it (unlocked lockers are the main cause of theft).
4. Never slam or shut hard a locker door, as this is the main cause for lockers to jam.
5. Never bring prohibited or expensive items to school. (To ensure school safety, security will do periodic locker checks).

6. Memorize the locker combination. **Never** give the combination to others or write it down where other students will see it.
7. If having trouble with the locker, report it to the teacher, and the team leader or security aide can assist you in getting it opened.

Students will have an opportunity to practice their locker combinations at the August student orientation nights. Due to increased enrollment, some students may be asked to share a locker with another student.

## Lost and Found

If you lose something...check your locker first, then report the loss to your teacher. Tell the office secretary and check the lost and found in the hallway benches by the health office. Please turn in any found article to the office. Lost articles found in possession of another student may result in strong disciplinary actions. Unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization.

## Makeup Work

In order for students to be successful it is essential that students absent from school complete all missed work. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate requests for makeup work at a time convenient for the teacher, complete the work, and hand it in on time. A student who is absent from class(es) must submit all make-up work to the designated teacher(s) prior to the conclusion of the second class period that the class convenes, following the absence. Please review the example below for clarification:

*Student A is absent from class(es) on Wednesday and returns to school on Thursday of the same week. The next time Student A would have the same class(es) is Friday of the same week. The second class period would convene on Tuesday of the following week. Therefore, Student A would have until the end of class(es) on Tuesday to complete all make-up work.*

Teams will make allowances for individual circumstances based on consultation with the student and/or parent/guardian.

## Money

On very few occasions is the child asked to bring money for school activities. When such occasions arise, printed notices are sent home by the school. When sending money for lunch or any other reason, it is helpful if the money is placed in an envelope and labeled with student's name and grade. We request checks, not cash, for all school activities.

Students should be discouraged from bringing unnecessary or large amounts of money to school for personal reasons. Small change may be appropriate for use at the school store or for the after school vending machines. The school can not be responsible in any way for loss, recovery, or replacement of money.

## Parent Teacher Organization

Active participation by parents of Buffett Magnet Middle School students is strongly encouraged. Strong community support has provided funds and facilities for an outstanding educational program. Parents are encouraged to join the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Your active participation will allow you to become more informed about the school program and will give you an opportunity to become acquainted with other parents and teachers. Parent-Teacher Organizations will be held once a month for one hour in the Buffett library. Generally, these meetings will be on the first Thursday of the month from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

## Parent Visitations

Parents are encouraged to visit children's classrooms at any time. Visitors who wish to confer with a teacher are to arrange for an appointment at a time outside regular class hours. All visitors are asked to check in at the office to obtain and wear a visitor name badge before going to the classroom.

## Physical Education Class Attire

Guidelines for attire in 7th and 8th grade physical education classes are as follows:

1. Students should have a change of clothing, different than what was worn to school. The change of clothing should include: t-shirt, loose fitting elastic waist shorts, sweatpants and/or sweatshirts, socks and athletic shoes. This clothing must adhere to the *OPS Student Code of Conduct* guidelines on "Dress and Personal Appearance".
2. Students who do not provide their own physical education clothing will be provided appropriate attire.
3. A part of a student's grade may reflect the responsibility to be prepared daily for class by bringing and wearing appropriate attire in physical education class.
4. Lockers and showers will be provided in the physical education locker rooms.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated, in any form, at Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School. Students who are found to have plagiarized information either from a written source or electronic source will be subject to the following consequences:

1. A "D.M.E." (Did Not Meet Expectations - 62%) will be given to that student for that assignment.
2. The student will not be given the opportunity to redo that particular assignment.
3. The administrator will review the Academic Integrity Position Statement (see student handbook) with the student.
4. The administrator will contact the parents/guardians and discuss the student's choice.

Omaha Public Schools Student **Code of Conduct**: "Plagiarizing computer-based copyrighted materials in reports and assignments is defined as inappropriate use."

## Progress Reports

Progress reports will be completed by each teacher at each mid-quarter point. They are then mailed home. All students will receive progress reports. These reports indicate the student's achievement to date in a class. Individual teachers may require their own progress reports to be signed by parents and returned to the teacher.

## Prohibited Materials

To ensure a healthy school environment students should bring only necessary materials to school. Unnecessary items are distractions to the learning atmosphere and create unnecessary opportunities for theft for which the school cannot be responsible. Staff members are directed to take all such items when seen and give it to the student's administrator.

Confiscated items may be returned to the student at the end of the school day or kept until a parent/guardian can make arrangements to come to school to claim them. The school can not accept responsibility for security of items confiscated.

**The following are some, but not all, of the items that students should not bring to school: radios, DVD players, CD players, headsets, pagers, cell phones, lasers, iPods, MP3s, PSPs, electronic games, cameras and other non-school related items. Toys of any**

**kind, including stuffed animals and collectors cards do not belong in school. Permanent markers are not permitted.**

Please leave the above items at home. Students who elect to bring radio headsets for use to and from school must remove the items upon entering the school and secure them in their lockers before 7:40 a.m. Any such items found in the possession of students during the school day will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian.

## Promotion Guidelines

In order to earn promotion from seventh to eighth grade and eighth to ninth grade, students must earn a minimum of 5 credits per semester for a yearly total of 10 credits.

1. A student can earn 1 credit for passing any semester class.
2. A student can earn 1/2 credit for passing any quarter class.
3. A student can earn 1/2 credit per semester for any class which alternates days with another class (i.e. P.E., Music).
4. At least 3 of the 5 credits each semester should be earned by passing language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, international language (French, Spanish), or reading.

## Report Cards

Students learn best when they own their academic achievement and progress. Our school uses student led conferencing so that students are engaged in their own progress. Buffett Magnet Middle School follows "Best Practices For Grading" (see grading system). Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter. First and third quarter report cards are given to parents at student led conferences. Second quarter and final report cards are mailed home. Progress reports are mailed to parents approximately five weeks into each quarter. **Teachers will also e-mail progress reports (to parents that request it in writing) every two weeks for parents to view student progress. Music and PE teachers will email progress reports on a monthly basis.**

## Rise and Shine Book Club

Students who wish to enjoy literature prior to school beginning each day may do so in an informal quiet environment at Buffett. Any fifth through eighth grade student may bring a self-selected reading book (paperback) to the Garden Level Radio Broadcast Lab and read quietly before school from 7:10 a.m. until 7:40 a.m.

## School Colors & Mascot

Buffet Magnet Middle School colors are navy blue and silver. The school mascot is the Bobcat. We are proud of our school and the traditions that are burgeoning into school culture. School clothing and apparel are available for sale at the school store. Wear your Bobcat apparel with pride!

## School Store

Buffet Magnet Middle School has a school store located in the center of the commons area next to the office. The school store is open each morning from 7:30 to 7:40 a.m. The school store will be open again after school from 2:40 – 2:50 p.m. Most necessary school supplies are sold in the store. Supplies include paper, pencils, pens, notebooks, planners and Wednesday folders. School t-shirts and sweatshirts are also available for purchase.

## Special Needs

The Special Education curriculum is designed to interface with the instructional program at each grade level. Buffett Magnet Middle School will be using the best practice of co-teaching

for the delivery of instruction. The regular education teacher and special education teacher team teach together. Emphasis is placed on the development of academic and functional aspects of the curriculum with particular emphasis on the development of a student's skills. Study skill techniques are emphasized and integrated into the daily instructional program. Programming is based on the individual needs of the student. Students' schedules will be designed after consultation with their teachers.

## Student Activity Cards

There is a district-wide fee of \$15.00 for middle school participation in extra-curricular activities for which a fee is charged, whether participation is as a member or spectator. All students who pay the \$15.00 participation fee will receive an Activity Card, which enables students to attend designated Omaha Public Schools' middle school and high school activities/events. Students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch may have the participation fee waived and receive an Activity Card at no cost.

The extracurricular activities for which a membership participation fee is charged at Buffett Magnet Middle School are as follows:

7th and 8th grade Football, Cross Country, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Swimming, Wrestling, and Track

This Student Activity Card is non-transferable and is to be used by the purchaser. Replacement cost for lost cards is \$3.00. Misuse will result in confiscation without replacement. **Possession of this card permits access to high school activities at the student rate while accompanied by an adult 19 years of age or older during the entire event.**

## Student Conduct

Students, you are now at an age when you should be able to determine for yourself actions which are appropriate and which are inappropriate for a school situation. Seventh and eighth grade students should refer to the buff colored pages, *Secondary Student Code of Conduct*, where you will find a list of offenses for which you may be assigned to PAC, suspended or expelled from school.

It is, of course, impossible to list all of the things that you may do and may not do. In general, if you never do anything that will interfere with your own or another person's learning, if you act in a responsible manner and use good judgment, then you will have few problems.

## Student Planners

It is requested that all students have a planner. Planners will be sold for three dollars during August student orientations, and at the school book store. Planners are used to assist each student to set personal goals, record achievements, manage time, record class assignments and homework, check off completed assignments, and for parent/teacher comments. In addition, the planner will be used as a pass for movement throughout the building during class time. Examples of hall pass use would be: calls to the office, counselor, library or nurse, restroom breaks and retrieval of belongings from lockers. Planners are not to be folded, cut, rolled or torn apart.

If a student loses his/her planner during the school year, a new one may be purchased at the school store. Planners cost \$3.00 each. If a family is unable to purchase a planner the cost may be waived.

## Student Supplies

The following items are considered "minor consumable items" which students are requested to furnish in the various courses and activities offered at Buffett Magnet Middle School. Each team of teachers will supply a suggested list with specific quantities during the August mailing to parents.

Backpack or bookbag  
Book covers (homemade or purchased)  
Clothing appropriate to activities, such as gym clothes and shoes  
Colored pencils  
Crayons  
Facial Tissue  
Folders  
Highlighters  
Musical instrument cleaners and items (reeds, valve oil, wax, pipe cleaners, etc.)

Non-specialized calculators (under \$15)  
Notebooks  
Pencil box or bag  
Regular paper (ruled or typing)  
Regular pencils, erasers  
Regular pens (black or blue)  
Rulers  
Student Planner (sold by the school)  
Tape (scotch)  
Three-ring binders

Items that may be commonly found in the home that are for projects or storage (shoeboxes, jars, empty milk jugs, protective clothes, old magazines) may be requested, but shall be provided for children who do not or cannot bring the items.

## Student Transportation

In August, the Office of Transportation will notify parents/guardians of students who will receive transportation to Buffett Magnet Middle School. Buses and vans will pick up students at a location designated by the Transportation Office. Parents should assist their students in being punctual, as the bus/van has a set schedule and picks up a number of students on the way to school. Students assigned to OPS bus or van transportation are expected to use that transportation daily. Submit a written parent request to the principal when making other arrangements. Questions about transportation can be answered by the school office. If you are calling after school hours, please utilize the following emergency contact numbers: First Student – (402) 572-6160 or (402) 341-6799.

## Tardy Policy

It is important that you arrive to school on time every day. **Students are required to be in their first class by 7:40 a.m.** Student are also expected to be on time to each class and prepared for instruction with the necessary materials. Students who are tardy to school due to appointments that must be scheduled months in advance (i.e. doctors, dentists) must present a note from the doctor to receive an excused tardy from the Attendance Office. For clarification, students who arrive to school between 7:45 - 7:50 a.m. will stop by their lockers and then report directly to Block 1/2. Students who arrive to school after 7:50 a.m. should report to the attendance window where they will receive an admit slip prior to reporting to class.

A student who is excessively **tardy to school:**

Arriving to school on time is important for the academic success of your student. We ask for your support in the matter of making sure your student start the day at 7:40 a.m. When a student accrues **3 tardies to the first class of the day**, the block 1 and 2 teachers should notify the appropriate deans, Mrs. Ziola (Grades 5/6) or Ms. Heineman (Grade 7/8). The student will then meet with the dean and serve a detention after school with the dean or PAC facilitator. For **every third tardy thereafter**, the student will again serve a detention.

A student who is excessively **tardy to class** will be assigned the following consequences.

After 1st & 2nd tardy	Warning to student by the teacher.
After 3rd tardy	Detention (lunch or after school) with teacher and call to parent.
After 4th tardy	Detention (lunch or after school) with teacher and call to parent.
After 5th tardy	The teacher will notify the appropriate administrator to discuss additional consequences as well as strategies to eliminate the tardiness.

If you are calling after school hours, please utilize the following emergency contact numbers: First Student – (402) 572-6160 or (402) 341-6799

# Telephone Use and Cellular Phones

Students who elect to bring cell phones for use before and after school must remove them upon entering the school and secure them in their lockers before 7:40 a.m. Any cell phone found in the possession of student during the school day will be confiscated by any Buffett staff member (teacher, counselor, administrator) and turned into the main office. First offense will result in the administrator giving the phone back to the student and a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian. Additional offenses will require that the parent be contacted to retrieve the phone from the office.

Students are not allowed to place calls or send text messages from their cell phones during school hours. If a student needs to use a phone, they should request permission to do so in the main office.

# Textbook Fines

Students are expected to carry with them necessary materials (e.g. notebooks/binders, paper, Buffett Assignment Planners, pencils and pens, colored pencils etc.). Students are responsible for all supplies provided for their use.

Textbooks are one of the most expensive items provided to students by the school district. The average middle school textbook cost is \$55. Textbooks need to be handled with care. **All students are asked to cover their textbooks with brown paper sacks** or a store bought book cover (instructions will be provided to students and parents at orientation). Students must check their text for damage upon receipt and report any discovered damage to the teacher. Once students take possession of a text, they and their parents are responsible for any damaged or lost text.

Textbooks are expected to be used a minimum of seven years. Therefore, replacement cost for any book that is lost or damaged is the following:

<u>YEAR OF USE</u>	<u>REPLACEMENT COST</u>
1	100% of original cost
2	80% of original cost
3	60% of original cost
4	40% of original cost
5 or more	20% of original cost

### FINES FOR DAMAGED TEXTBOOKS

Torn bindings	\$8.00 per book
Graffiti on outside/inside cover(s)	\$5.00 per side
Torn or mutilated pages	50 cents per page
Ink (related) spots	50 cents per page
Lost pages	\$1.00 per page
Minor damage	\$3.00 - \$5.00

Replacement damage is that which alters the binding or function of the text. Water damage, torn pages, ripped covers, broken binding, loosened pages are some but not exclusive examples of such damage. Teachers will make the final determination of fines.

Replacement costs must be paid before another text can be issued to any student. Paid costs will be refunded upon the recovery of the lost text. Textbooks must never be left unattended, unlocked in lockers, or loaned to peers. Most importantly, the student and only the student, is responsible for the safe keeping of each and every textbook assigned to him or her.

# Traffic Safety

All students should obey traffic signals and cross streets at approved crosswalks. Students should avoid walking through personal property and should always use the sidewalk. The school requested and received from the city, a traffic light and crosswalk at 144th and Larimore Avenue and at 140th and Fort Street. Although requested, the city did not grant approval for a north to south crosswalk on Maple Street. Students are encouraged NOT to walk across Maple Street due

to the heavy traffic. Parents or parent carpools are encouraged to pick up students residing south of Maple Street and less than 1.5 miles from the school. Should thirty or more parents request a parent paid bus, it could be contracted. As always, student safety is of utmost concern.

## Vending Machines

Buffett Magnet Middle School will have beverage vending machines for after school use. No regular pop will be sold; instead, juice, water and healthy drinks will be available in Buffett's vending machines.

## Visitors to the Building

Parents are always welcome at Buffett Magnet Middle School. It is advisable to schedule conferences with teachers in advance. Secondary students from other middle and high schools or school age friends of Buffett students are not allowed to visit. **ALL visitors** are required to come directly to the Main Office upon arrival to obtain a Visitor's Badge. We gladly welcome visitors...our classroom doors are flung wide open.

## Websites

The Buffett Magnet Middle School website is updated consistently throughout the school year. The website includes calendars of events and activities, homework assigned, school staff contact information, school publications, reminders and updates of information, and student broadcasts.

The Buffett Magnet Middle School website address is:

<http://www.ops.org/middle/buffett/>

## Restricted Websites Policy

The Omaha Public Schools Code of Conduct details the "Behavior Rules for Students Using School Computers and Networks" in the guidelines section of our Handbook.

Teachers have observed and redirected an increased number of students to stop reading their MySpace account, and various other personal webpages, while at school.

Students in the Omaha Public Schools are not to be on MySpace, Face Book, or any other restricted websites while at school. If students are caught using restricted websites while in school, the following consequences will be administered:

- A. If the student is in a technology class or keyboarding class (where computer use is central to the learning in that class), the student's seating will be changed to a place where the teacher can easily monitor the student's internet use; AND, dependent upon the content being viewed, may necessitate an office referral.
- B. If a student is not in a technology class, computer use for that student is restricted for fifteen days.