

**Student
and
Family
Handbook
2024
2025**



OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Walnut Hill
Elementary**

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) is being implemented in all Omaha Public Schools and Programs.

The Omaha Public Schools implements Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) to promote student use of positive behavior. Through this framework, Omaha Public Schools has committed to providing staff with tools and resources to positively engage students and families through implementation of school-wide positive behavior interventions. These practices are designed to support safe and encouraging learning environments.

We believe that we cannot “make” students learn or behave. But we can create environments to increase the likelihood of positive behaviors occurring.

MTSS-B is a research-based, highly effective behavioral framework that is designed for teaching and reinforcing students’ social, emotional, and academic learning skills in order to sustain academic achievement and support the social, emotional, and behavioral well-being of students. Consistent implementation of MTSS-B leads to:

- Improved school climate;
- Reductions in major disciplinary infractions;
- Improved academic achievement;
- Improved concentration, positive social behavior, and emotional regulation.

Omaha Public Schools is committed to supporting students through behavior interventions and alternatives to exclusionary practices that require removal from the educational setting where the safety of the student and/or others is not of immediate concern.

MTSS-B utilizes consistent practices that have tiers of increasingly intensive supports, and in our schools, this includes:



Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

In addition to MTSS-B, Omaha Public Schools continues to support Social Emotional Learning (SEL) development through curriculum, strategies, and resources. SEL is defined by the Collaborative of Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) as the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

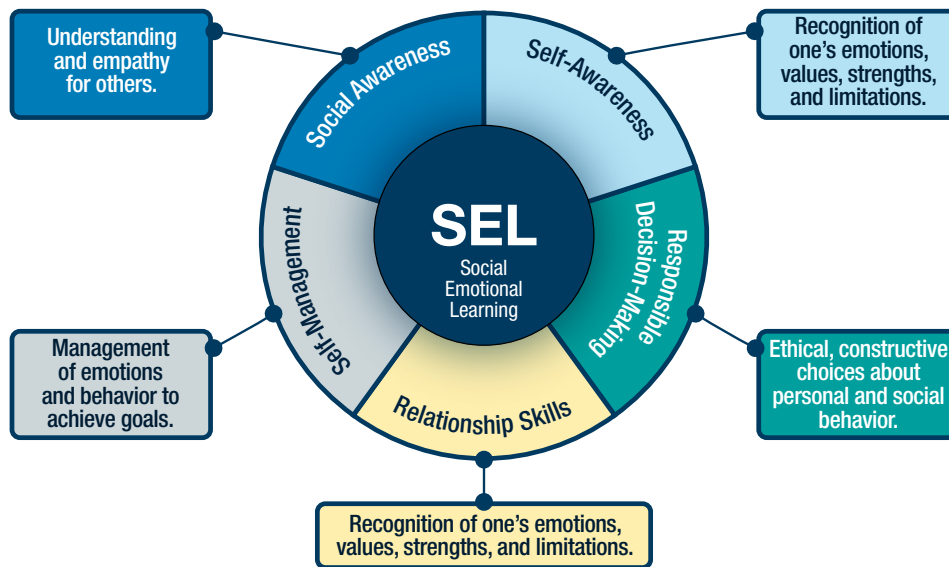
Within the Omaha Public Schools, our goal is to focus on CASEL's five SEL competencies:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making

SEL promotes knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support lifelong success and advance educational equity and excellence.

How do MTSS-B and SEL Align in all Omaha Public Schools and Programs?

MTSS-B and SEL are frameworks that work together to provide an ethic of care for students and promote success in students' academics, behavior, attendance, and overall well-being. Combined they create positive learning environments where students and staff are equipped with resources and skills for successful school communities.



If you would like more information about how MTSS-B and SEL are implemented in your school, contact the building principal.



Walnut Hill Elementary

Student and Family Handbook 2024-2025

4355 Charles Street / Omaha, Nebraska 68131-1023
531-299-2200 / Fax 402-554-8638 / www.ops.org/walnuthill

Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

This handbook is prepared to serve as a guide to Walnut Hill Elementary students. In it you will find the policies and procedures that are followed at Walnut Hill. We hope that you will find this handbook a convenient reference during the school year.



Mission Statement

Omaha Public Schools prepares all students to excel in college, career, and life.

Vision Statement

Every student. Every day. Prepared for success.

Omaha Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, citizenship status, veteran status, political affiliation or economic status in its programs, activities and employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following individual has been designated to accept allegations regarding non-discrimination policies: Superintendent of Schools, 3215 Cuming Street, Omaha, NE 68131 (531-299-9822). The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Equity and Diversity, 3215 Cuming Street, Omaha, NE 68131 (531-299-0307).

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Omaha Public Schools District Handbook

Omaha Public Schools Code of Conduct

Welcome to Walnut Hill Elementary!

The entire Walnut Hill staff welcomes you to Walnut Hill Elementary and a new school year.

This handbook contains important guidelines concerning Walnut Hill Elementary. It also identifies school rules, which all students are responsible for knowing and observing. Parents, we need your help. In the best learning situations, students are frequently reminded of expectations by the caring and nurturing adults in their lives.

Parents share in the responsibility of making sure their student understands the information contained in this handbook. This information will also be helpful to parents as we begin a new school year. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school, or better yet, come visit us!

Please review the handbook carefully, with your student, as soon as possible. Thank you for your help! Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

**Sincerely,
Walnut Hill Staff**



An Invitation to Parents

Parents are invited and encouraged to be active participants in their student's educational experiences at Walnut Hill. Special invitations do not need to be sent home for you to be a welcomed visitor at Walnut Hill. Please inform the teacher at least one day in advance to arrange a visit. Your student will be pleased to have you visit, as will the teacher. Please report to the office for a visitor's badge and to sign-in. Visits should generally last no longer than 30 minutes.

Parents are also welcome to eat lunch at school. However, we need to inform the Cafeteria Manager of your reservation at least two days in advance. Commercially prepared items are not allowed in the cafeteria. (McDonald's, Burger King, etc.).

There are many occasions when parent help is appreciated. If you are willing to volunteer, please call the office or notify your student's teacher. We will be happy to have your assistance and support. Together, we can make this an outstanding school year. Please know that there is an application process for volunteers that may require a background check.

Bicycles, Skateboards, and Scooters

For safety reasons, bicycles, skateboards, and scooters should not be ridden on school grounds.

Gold Cards

Students who demonstrate our College Bound Expectations (Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe, and Be your Best) can earn a Gold Card from a staff member. Students enter the Gold Cards they've earned into a weekly drawing for a prize.

Cell Phones

Cell phone use is limited to emergency purposes only, such as calling a parent/guardian. Students must have permission from a staff member to use their cell phone or device during dismissal. All cell phones should be powered off and left in the office or with the classroom teacher until after school.

Citizenship Plan

The staff at Walnut Hill will spend time throughout the year discussing Walnut Hill's expectations. Appropriate student decision-making in school is a responsibility to be shared by students, parents, and staff members.

In addition to rules and regulations established by State Statute, reasonable guidelines for student behavior have been established by the Omaha Public Schools to help students develop an increasing amount of self-discipline. The guidelines apply to the classroom, school building and grounds, all school functions, and on buses and vans. This handbook outlines district guidelines for discipline.

As a parent, you have a very important role in helping us with this critical part of the educational process. Below are some ways you can assist:

1. Work with school officials when discipline is necessary
2. Seek help in correcting a student's misbehavior
3. Make sure the student attends school daily and on time

All students are expected to act in a way which does not negatively impact the learning of others.

Classroom Management Philosophy

At Walnut Hill, we believe classroom management is an ongoing teaching process that fosters respect and dignity for everyone. Students will meet high learning standards in a safe, secure and caring environment. Growth, responsibility, and problem-solving are consistently stressed in a collaborative effort among all stakeholders. Parents will be informed in the event of serious and/or repeated violations of school rules and guidelines.

Evacuation Site

In the event of an evacuation, all students and staff members will walk to the City Light Church (4383 Nicholas St.). Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety and security of all students and staff.

Field Trips

Field Trips are an extension of learning outside the classroom and may be scheduled throughout the year. Written permission from the parent of each student is required for participation. Students are expected to represent Walnut Hill well in public. For a student who isn't meeting expectations at school, he or she could lose the opportunity to attend or participate in school sponsored activities.

Library

Every student has a scheduled library period with the librarian to learn skills and to check out books. Students are responsible for the books they check out. Students will be fined for any lost or damaged books they check out.

Lost and Found

Students are asked not to bring unnecessary items to school. Lost or damaged items cannot be replaced by the school. Unnecessary items may be confiscated by Administration and will be the responsibility of a parent to reclaim them.

If your student loses an item, please have him or her check the Lost and Found. Found items are displayed periodically for students to claim.

No Excuses University (NEU)

As a No Excuses University School, we believe in incorporating the Six Exceptional Systems.

- Culture of Universal Achievement
- Collaboration
- Standards Alignment
- Assessment
- Data Management
- Interventions



College Bound Expectations

Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe, Be your Best

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) is a problem-solving framework for improving behavior in our school. With consistent implementation, MTSS-B

- improves school climate
- reduces aggressive behavior
- reduces major disciplinary infractions
- improves pro-social behavior and emotional regulation
- improves academic achievement
- enhances the perception of organizational health and safety
- reduces teacher reports of bullying behavior and peer rejection

Our goal is to frequently teach, practice, and acknowledge expected behavior.

All Settings <i>Be Respectful</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow directions the first time asked - Use appropriate voice level (Walnut Hill Voice Chart) - Accept feedback - Respond to the quiet signal (Neu-Eyes on You) - Use kind words <i>Be Responsible</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean up ("I spot it, I got it") - Attend school every day - Complete tasks - Use your time wisely - Use school approved websites and programs appropriately <i>Be Safe</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk appropriately - Single file line - Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself (including rocks, sticks, snow etc.) - Report safety concerns immediately <i>Be Your Best</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be a positive role model for other students 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use calm down strategies - Use greeting and manners to address others - Be helpful Classroom <i>Be Respectful</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to the speaker - Cooperate <i>Be Responsible</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers define expectations based on: <i>Be Respectful</i> <i>Be Responsible</i> <i>Be Safe</i> <i>Be Your Best</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask for and accept - Focus on the task <i>Be Safe</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use materials and furniture appropriately - Maintain your personal space <i>Be Your Best</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be on task and participate - Listen to each other - Put forth your best effort and apply yourself 		Hallway <i>Be Respectful</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep your body calm and to yourself - Voice Level 0 <i>Be Responsible</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a pass - Walk directly to your destination <i>Be Safe</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk on the right-hand side - Keep your eyes forward <i>Be Your Best</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take care of items in the hallway - Respect items in our hallways and lockers Cafeteria <i>Be Respectful</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eat quietly at a voice level 1 or 2 <i>Be Responsible</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use good manners - Clean up after yourself - Use the appropriate signals <i>Be Safe</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stay seated until dismissed - Eat your own food 		<i>Be Your Best</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use good manners - Use time wisely - Eat at your assigned table Restroom <i>Be Respectful</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wait your turn - Give others privacy <i>Be Responsible</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put paper towels in the trash - Only toilet paper should be placed in the toilets <i>Be Safe</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One person in a stall - Wash your hands with soap and water <i>Be Your Best</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take care of your own business Playground <i>Be Respectful</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Play fairly (share, trade, take turns) - Keep all playground equipment away from the portable <i>Be Responsible</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use equipment correctly and return everything to the assigned spot
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Line up immediately when the whistle blows - Report any problems to an adult that is present 	<p><i>Be Your Best</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be inclusive <p>Arrival/Dismissal</p> <p><i>Be Respectful</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the driver's/ adult directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - report immediately to their designated areas - Turn off your device and turn it into the office or to your teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow classroom and school expectations for dismissal - Wait at your designated dismissal spot
<p><i>Be Safe</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use play structures in a safe manner - Stay within the playground boundaries 	<p><i>Be Responsible</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep track of your belongings - Watch for your ride - Bus students should 	<p><i>Be Safe</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow breakfast procedures - Wal on the sidewalk - Cross at the designated areas 	<p><i>Be Your Best</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greet anf thank your driver when entering and exiting the vehicle

Physical Education

If a student cannot participate in PE, he or she should bring a note signed and dated by a parent or guardian. A student excused from gym for more than three class periods should bring a note from a physician. For safety reasons, all students are required to wear gym/tennis shoes to PE.

Severe Weather

In the event a Severe Weather Warning is issued, all staff and students will go immediately to a designated shelter. All visitors in the building will also be directed to a shelter area. All school doors will be locked. A sign will be placed on the front doors indicating staff and students are in a shelter. Students will not be released to a parent or guardian until the warning has expired.

Social Media on School Grounds

The use of social media, any form of text messaging, and any games played from a cell phone or electronic devices are NOT allowed at Walnut Hill or on school property during school hours.

Social Media and Online Gaming

Social Media (Instagram, Snapchat, Kik, TikTok, etc.) and online gaming (PlayStation, Xbox, etc.) that is conducted off school grounds should not carry over to school and interrupt the learning environment. The OPS Student Code of Conduct will be applied, if warranted.

iPad Usage

Utilizing a district assigned iPad is a privilege. If a student chooses to engage in activities other than teacher assigned ones, iPad privileges maybe revoked, temporarily or permanently.

Special Occasions, Parties, Treats, Candy from Home

There are two parties during the school year. There is a Fall Harvest Celebration and a Valentine's Day Party. Special notices will be sent home with specific information regarding these parties.

NO HOMEMADE OR HOMEBAKED TREATS ARE PERMITTED IN THE OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS. All treats must be commercially purchased.

On days when a class celebration is not scheduled, students should leave all candy at home. Bringing candy to school causes a distraction to the learning environment and wrappers thrown on the ground create unsightly school grounds.

Student Dress Code

Students should dress comfortably and appropriately for school and playground activities. Students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner that does not distract others from learning. Parent cooperation is appreciated to ensure student dress is safe and suitable for all school activities. Students found to be wearing questionable attire will be offered a change of clothing or may contact a parent to request a change of clothing. To prevent loss, student items should be labeled with the student's name. Coats, jackets, backpacks and purses should be left in lockers.

The following are considered inappropriate for school:

- See-through/fishnet tops or athletic shorts
- Tank tops, Spaghetti straps
- Clothing with inappropriate slogans or pictures dealing with tobacco, alcohol, sexual activity, profanity, etc.
- Midriff and/or halter tops (no exposed stomachs)
- Any type of clothing/accessory or style of dress which distracts from school purposes
- Shorts should be an appropriate length (no biker shorts)
- Face paint, "tattoos", heavy make-up, hair coloring, glitter, etc. These can be disruptive to the learning environment. Students may be required to wash these items off.
- Body graffiti (writing/drawing on skin with a pen/marker)
- Hats and hoods worn in the building
- Bandanas, hair bonnets, wave caps, skull caps
- Pants not worn at the waist
- Shorts should be worn under dresses
- Pants or shorts with revealing tears
- Flip Flops
- Slides

Student-Led Conferences (Fall and Spring)

A Student-Led Conference is a conference in which students are not only present, but active participants. Students are encouraged and empowered to reflect on academic performance, behavioral choices, set short-term and long-term goals, and accept responsibility for their learning. It is important for each student to attend his or her conference with a parent or guardian.

Supplies and Books

Books and most other supplies are furnished by the district. At times, teachers may request that students bring a special item to school. Toys, games, and other materials should not be brought from home unless requested by the teacher or with the teacher's permission.

Students are expected to pay for lost or damaged books, supplies, and equipment. Students will be held responsible for willful damage to any school property.

Traffic Safety

Parents are urged to drive with extreme caution in the school neighborhood. Parents are not allowed to park in bus zones or in the driveway on the North side of the school. Students being driven to school should be dropped off at the curb in front of the school (Charles Street). At drop off, please pull up as far as you can to avoid backup of traffic. Dogs or other animals should not be brought to school during drop off or dismissal.

Walking Students to Class

For school safety and to help build student independence, after a student's first five days of school, we ask all parents/guardians to refrain from entering the building and walking their student(s) to class. Students should enter the building and walk to their classrooms independently. An exception is made for all PK students.

Walnut Hill Elementary Statement of Philosophy

Walnut Hill Elementary will provide the best possible learning environment for each of its students to acquire an appreciation of his or her value to society as well as the worth and contributions of other people.

It is the goal of Walnut Hill Elementary to provide a learning atmosphere which develops strong moral character, love for home and country, and respect for the rights of all people. Walnut Hill will strive to develop each student's self-esteem with regard to race, sex, and heritage. As a result, each student will make responsible decisions and develop the traits and characteristics necessary to be a contributing member of society.

Walnut Hill Elementary Daily Schedule

Administration and Secretary on Duty.....8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Teachers on Duty.....8:35 a.m. - 4:25 p.m.

Breakfast8:35 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.

School Begins.....8:50 a.m.

Dismissal (PK – 6)4:05 p.m.

Due to safety concerns and no supervision, students should not arrive to school before 8:35 a.m. and are expected to be picked up by 4:15 p.m. Students are required to leave school grounds immediately after school. Loitering on school grounds is not allowed. A student may only attend an after-school event if he or she is directly supervised by a parent or guardian.

Combined District and School Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Omaha Public Schools intends to follow the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy guidelines in accordance with federal law, Section 1116(a -f) ESSA, (Every Student Succeeds Act) of 2015.

In General

The written District parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly with, updated periodically and distributed to parents and family members of participating children and the local community in an understandable and uniform format. This policy agreed on by such parents describes the means for carrying out the requirements as listed below.

- Parents and family members of all students are welcomed and encouraged to become involved with their child's school and education; this includes parents and family members that have limited English proficiency, limited literacy, are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, racial or ethnic minority background or are migratory children. Information related to school and parent programs, meetings, school reports and other activities are sent to the parents of participating children in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
 - Back to School Night
 - School Open House
 - Title I Annual Parent Meeting
 - Curriculum Night
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - Reading Night
 - Math Night
 - STEAM/STEM Night
 - Family Game Night
 - PTA/PTO – meetings & activities
- Parents are involved in the planning, review, evaluation and improvement of the Title I program, Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the School-Parent Compact at an annual parent meeting scheduled at a convenient time. This would include the planning and implementation of effective parent and family involvement activities.
- Conduct, with meaningful parent and family involvement, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Use the evaluation findings to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.
- Opportunities are provided for parents and family members to participate in decisions related to the education of their child/children. The school and local educational agency shall provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities
 - Climate Survey
 - Title I Annual parent meeting
 - Committee meetings
 - Development of the School Improvement Plan
 - Student Assistance Teams
- Parents of participating children will be provided timely information about programs under this part, a description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards. The school will provide assistance, opportunities, and/or materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement in a format, and when feasible, in a language the parents and family members can understand
 - The student handbook
 - Curriculum Night
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - Standardized Tests results
 - Progress reports & report card
- Educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, with the assistance of parents in the value and utility of contributions of parents, how to reach out to, communicate with and work with parents as equal partners.
- Coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State and local programs, including preschool programs that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
 - Summer Reading Program
 - College and Career Academies and Pathways Night with The Empowerment Network

Parent Right To Know Clause

At the beginning of the school year, any District that accepts Title I, Part A funding must notify parents that they can request information regarding their child's teacher and his/her qualifications, including certification and endorsements. Parents can also request information about paraprofessionals working with their children.

School-Parent Compact Walnut Hill Elementary

This Walnut Hill Title I School-Parent Compact has been jointly developed with parents and outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help students achieve the State's high academic standards. During student-led conferences, the compact shall be discussed as it relates to the individual student's achievement.

Administrator/Teacher:

It is important that students achieve. We will:

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment to enable students to meet the challenging state academic achievement standards.
2. Regularly communicate with parents on their student's progress.
3. Demonstrate professional behavior and positive attitude.

Parent / Caring Adult:

I want my student to achieve; therefore, I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

1. Communicate and work with teachers and school staff on an ongoing basis to be involved and support my student's learning.
2. Support my student's learning—volunteer in their classroom; participate, as appropriate, in decisions related to their education, guide positive use of extracurricular time.
3. Make sure my student is at school every day and on time, unless he/she is ill.
4. Provide a quiet place and time to do schoolwork and encourage my student to complete schoolwork.

Student:

*I know my education is important to me. It is important that I work to the best of my ability.
I agree to do the following:*

1. Be at school every day and on time unless I am sick.
2. Come to school each day with a positive attitude.
3. Be responsible for my own behavior.
4. Respect and cooperate with other students and adults.
5. Return completed schoolwork on time.
6. Read at home.

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Calendar**

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