



the student handbook

Benson High

2025-2026

BENSON
MIGHTY BUNNIES



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

The Omaha Public Schools (OPS) implements Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) to promote student use of positive behavior. Through this framework, OPS 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.

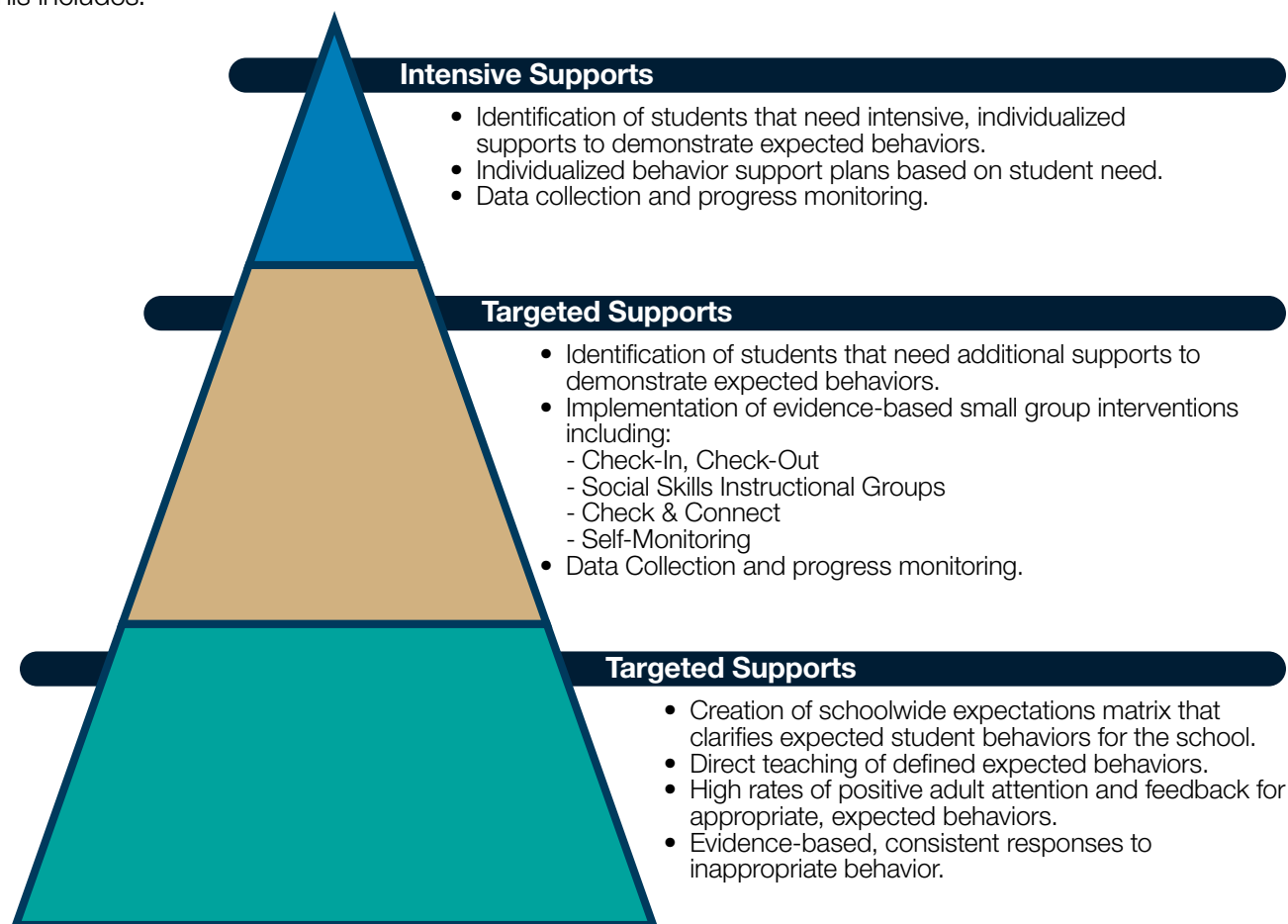
We believe that we cannot “make” students learn or behave. But we can create environments to increase the likelihood of positive behaviors occurring.

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.

OPS 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.

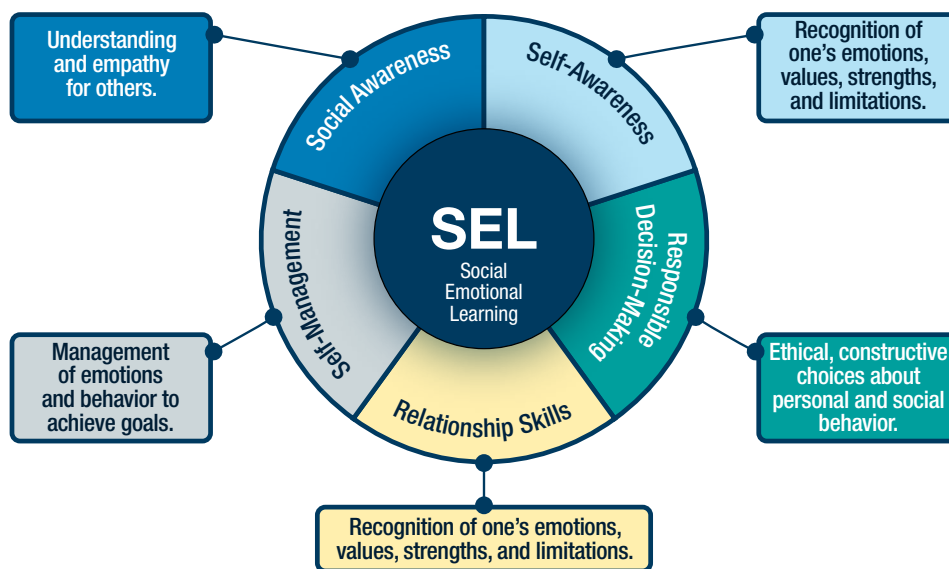
Within the Omaha Public Schools, our goal is to focus on CASEL's five SEL competencies:

- 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.



Benson High

5120 Maple Street / Omaha, Nebraska 68104-3599

531-299-2520 / ops.org/benson

BHS Mission:

The mission of Benson High is to prepare students to excel in college, career, and civic-life through career academies, high-performing educators, and community partners.

BHS Vision:

To graduate students prepared to excel in college, career, and civic-life.



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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BENSON
MIGHTY BUNNIES



About Benson High

- The forerunner of Benson High was organized in 1904 as a two-year program added to Benson Central School located at 60th and Maple Streets. The district added 11th grade in 1905 and completed the addition of 12th grade in 1908. Benson proudly celebrated its centennial in 2004 with an all-class alumni banquet.
- Benson High graduated its first four-year class consisting of six girls and two boys in 1913 and in the early 1920's, the Omaha School District approved building a Benson High School and Monroe School on a 22 acre site northeast of 52nd and Maple Streets.
- On December 17, 1926, Benson High students marched in a parade from Benson Central School to their new building at 52nd and Maple. The new high school cost \$481,000 to build. Benson was designed in the Georgian colonial style, with stately columns at the south entrance and three cupolas on the roof that would lend the school's yearbook its name. Miss Mary McNamara, the school's first principal, organized the parade so that students could move the furnishings of their old school to their new school. All boys pulled wagons that they brought from home full of school furnishings, and girls carried items in their aprons. Additions to Benson took place in 1957-58, and a multimillion-dollar renovation was completed in 1991. The latest addition to Benson High School includes a Memory Garden that leads to the new Benson Community-Based Health Center at the north entrance of the building. The Health Center includes resources for mental and physical health and is open to Benson students and the public.
- Today Benson enrolls about 1,400 students in grades 9 through 12 and is a comprehensive high school offering a full array of high school, vocational, and college preparatory courses to meet the needs of today's students..

Benson High Administration

Name	Title	Student Discipline	Phone	Email
Melinda Bailey	Principal		531-299-7224	melinda.bailey@ops.org
Deondre Jones	Assistant Principal – Athletic Director	Administrator for Grade 12 (L-Z)	531-299-2530	deondre.jones@ops.org
Kristin Hughes	Assistant Principal – Activities	Administrator for Grade 11	531-299-8984	kristin.hughes@ops.org
Cathy Bell	Assistant Principal – Data	Administrator for Grade 12 (A-K)	531-299-8864	catherine.bell@ops.org
Shauntae Starks	Dean of Students	Administrator for Grade 9	531-299-8864	shauntae.starks@ops.org
Jason Rhine	Dean of Students	Attendance Specialist	531-299-7986	jason.rhine@ops.org
Laura Geiger	Dean of Students	Administrator for Grade 10	531-299-7193	laura.geiger@ops.org

Department Administration

Name	Department	Phone	Email
Michael Duggan	Special Education	531-299-7942	michael.duggan@ops.org
Angela Johaneck	Career Academy Specialist	531-299-8040	angela.johaneck@ops.org
Allison Johnson	English as a Second Language	531-299-5270	allison.johnson@ops.org
Holly Murphy	AP, Drama, English, Journalism	531-299-3283	holly.murphy@ops.org
Mary Reece	Health, JROTC, Social Studies, World Languages	531-299-7947	mary.reece@ops.org
Jared Wagenknecht	Art, Industrial Tech, Math, P.E., Science	531-299-9713	jared.wagenknecht@ops.org

Attendance Procedures

- Please call the attendance office at (531) 299-8009 if your student will be absent from school.
- Regular attendance is directly related to school success and is required of Benson High School students. Our goal is to encourage students to attend a maximum number of days each year. Students attending Benson High are made aware of the importance of regular attendance and the consequences of poor attendance.
- On return to school after an absence, students will not need a note if a parent or guardian previously called to report the absence. Students whose parents did not call the school must bring a note from a parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence with a phone number at which the parent can be contacted during the school day.
- If an absence of several days is anticipated, the parent or guardian should notify the Attendance Office in writing at least two days in advance of the absence. This allows the student and his or her teachers to plan for make-up work in advance.
- Students that need to be excused during the school day for a non-medical reason must bring a note from a parent or a guardian to the attendance office before school begins. A call will be made to the parent to verify the need to leave early. The student must sign out from the attendance office before leaving school.
- Students that need to be excused for medical reasons must bring a note from a parent or guardian to the nurse before school begins. The nurse will call a parent to verify the appointment. The student must sign out from the attendance office before leaving school.
- **Only legal guardians and/or parents may sign a student out of school**, unless otherwise specified as “authorized to pick up” in Infinite Campus. Parents and guardians who have not made arrangements in advance must come into the school to sign a student out. **Parents/Guardians will be asked for photo ID at this time for verification purposes.** Students will not be released solely on the basis of a phone call to the office or nurse.
- Students who are absent, whether excused or not, are expected to complete daily assignments.

Tardy Policy

- Students are expected to be present and on time to all of their classes on a daily basis. We see this as a skill they will need for the rest of their lives and consider it to be very important. Failure to report directly to class may result in disciplinary action.
- Hall Sweeps will occur during the school day either during classes or between classes, where administrators will assign consequences if students are out of area without valid passes. Administrators may contact parents as part of this process. Failure to serve detention will result in further consequences.
- Students are expected to be present and on time to all of their classes on a daily basis. We see this as a skill they will need for the rest of their lives and consider it to be very important.
- An automated phone call will be sent to parents if their students are tardy to at least one class that day. Another email will be sent to parents on Fridays indicating their students’ attendance for each class throughout the school year. Please help us to reinforce the importance of being on time to every class, every day.

Visitors to the School

Many times throughout the year, there are reasons for people to visit the building (dropping off/picking up student, meeting with a teacher, meeting with administrator, etc.) We welcome visitors to Benson High School. Below is the process for visiting:

- Visitations to a classroom must be arranged at least 24 hours in advance with the student’s administrator. The visit cannot disrupt the classroom learning environment. We ask that visitors follow classroom & school procedures (no disruptions, classroom cell phone policy is followed, etc.).
- If there is potential for disruption, the principal or his/her designee has the discretion to deny access to the classroom. Should this happen, a private meeting will be arranged with the parent, teacher, and other appropriate school personnel.
- Parents/guardians wishing to pick up their students, after signing in with security, must present ID to the attendance secretary. For this reason, please make certain we have accurate records for who may or may not pick up your student.

ACADEMICS

Academic Letter

Students earning a 3.5 term GPA for three (3) semesters at Benson will be awarded an academic letter at Honors' Night. Students that have not already received a Benson High School letter will receive a letter and all will receive an academic pin. At five (5) semesters at Benson, students will receive a bar. At seven (7) semesters at Benson, students will receive an additional bar.

Block Scheduling

Benson High School has an A/B alternating block schedule. Students take four classes each day. There are no study halls.

Benson High • Regular Bell Schedule 2025 – 2026

Block Name	Time
Block 1	7:40-9:09
Block 2 (Advisement)	9:14-9:43
Block 3	9:48-11:16
Block 4 (Lunch)	11:21-1:33 – First lunch – 11:21-11:51 – Second lunch – 11:55-12:25 – Third lunch – 12:29-12:59 – Fourth lunch – 1:03-1:33
Block 5	1:38-3:05

Class Rank

A student's class rank is determined by the cumulative grade point average. The GPA takes into account the credit earned, the points awarded with the grade, and the weight of the course. Courses are weighted according to the following chart:

Grade Earned	Grade Points Awarded
A	4 (or 5 for Honors/AP)
B	3 (or 4 for Honors/AP)
C	2 (or 3 for Honors/AP)
D	1 (or 2 for Honors/AP)
F	0

College and Career Academics

Benson High School resides in the middle of the historic community of Benson, one of Omaha's most famous arts and entertainment districts. Every student is involved in a career academy program. Our career academies are made relevant by community members, business leaders, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders. We have three Career Academies: Business & Entrepreneurship, Construction and Design, and Health Professions. Each of the career academy programs will introduce students to College and Career opportunities for students to enter employment directly after high school, continue their postsecondary training (at a community college and/or university) or do both; work can be tailored to the individual student. Real life experiences are offered in each academy. Each student will have access to Honors, Cambridge Courses, and Advanced Placement® coursework in each of the three academy programs.

“Our goal is to prepare students to be both college and career ready upon graduation”.

Counseling Program

Students are assigned to a counselor. That counselor is responsible for students' four (4) year academic plan, post-secondary plan, and social-emotional needs. Counselors coordinate assemblies, classroom lessons, small groups and individual planning with students to meet these needs. They are available daily to respond to families and student's needs.

Name	Assigned Students	Phone	Email
Susan Barnes	Records/ Business (S-Z), Design (T-Z), Health (Q-R)	(531) 299-7695	susan.barnes@ops.org
Andrea Brown	Director/Health Professions Last Names (S-Z)	(531) 299-8043	andrea.brown@ops.org
Katie Cameron	Design Academy Last Names (A-S)	(531) 299-8012	deborah.cameron@ops.org
Anne Dyke	Health Academy Last Names (A-P)	(531) 299-8033	anne.dyke@ops.org
Daniel Gavin	Business Academy Last Names (A-R)	(531) 299-7992	daniel.gavin@ops.org
Julie Mason	Social Worker	(531) 299-7974	julia.mason@ops.org
Jessica Mukherjee	Freshman Academy	(531) 299-8993	jessica.mukherjee@ops.org

Final Exams

Final Examinations will be given at the end of each semester in nearly all courses. Students are expected to take final assessments at their scheduled date and time. All students are expected to attend school through the last day of the semester and take all final examinations. If an exam is not taken at the scheduled time, the final course grade may be affected. Those who must leave early for emergencies must make special arrangements with their counselor well in advance of final examination time. Permission will not be given except for true emergencies. If permission is granted by the counselor, it is then the responsibility of the student to arrange their finals exams with their teachers.

Honor Roll

Students who earn a 3.50 GPA or higher during a semester are named to the Principal's Honor Roll. Students who earn a 3.00 or 3.49 GPA during a semester are named to the Academic Honor Roll.

Library Media Center

Benson High School's library offers a diverse selection of print and digital resources to support learning across all subject areas. Our print collection is organized by genre and available for checkout. Students may borrow up to five books for a three-week period, with the option to renew online or in person. Digital books can be accessed through the Sora app, and a variety of online databases provide articles on nearly any topic. All digital resources are accessible via the Clever app.



National Honor Society

Membership in the Benson High School National Honor Society is gained through the selection by a Faculty Council. In order to be considered, a student must be eligible. A student's eligibility is based on the following criteria:

1. **Scholarship** — Each sophomore or junior to be considered must have a Grade Point Average of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale.
2. **Character and Leadership** — Each student will be rated for the qualities of character and leadership only by those members of the teaching staff who have had that student in class.
3. **Service** — Each student will have an opportunity to complete a Student Activity Information Form on the service he/she has rendered to his/her school and community.
4. **Eligibility** is determined after the third semester of high school career. (2nd semester of sophomore year.)

Utilizing these four sources of data (scholarship, character, leadership, and service), the Faculty Council will select its members for the National Honor Society. Membership is open to all eligible students. Every year each student in the National Honor Society is reconsidered for re-election. Membership in the National Honor Society is both an honor and a responsibility. Students selected for membership are expected to maintain a standard of excellence in the four areas of selection or they will be dismissed.

Shortened School Day

A shortened school day is an option for seniors only. In order to be eligible for class release, seniors must earn 32 credits by January of their junior year. Class schedules will not be rearranged to accommodate a shortened day once schedules have been printed and distributed to students. Arrangement for a shortened day must be made prior to the beginning of the school year. A complete guide to eligibility can be found in the Course Catalog. **Students must sign out and leave the school area immediately upon their release. Failure to do so will result in reinstatement of a full schedule.**

Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The top two students who have earned the highest cumulative grade point averages after their seventh semester, will be recognized as senior class valedictorian and salutatorian at Honors' Night and Commencement. Ends after Class of 2027.

Benson High Wall of Distinction

Benson High students who complete a Wall of Distinction Application by the last Friday in March and have achieved an exceptional level of excellence, as outlined below, will be recognized on the Wall of Distinction.

	Local Academic	National Academic	Extra-Curricular	Leadership/Character
5	Weighted GPA 4.40 and above	ACT > 90% or SAT > 90% or National Merit Finalist/ Semi-finalist or 5 AP Exams Score 4 or Higher	Involvement in 4 or more activities (athletics, music, drama, journalism, JROTC, NHS, academic decathlon, student council, other clubs) or National Recognition	Holds officer/captain position in any school activity/ organization and no behavior incidences.
4	Weighted GPA 4.10 and above	ACT > 80% or SAT > 80% or National Merit Commended Student or 4 AP Exams Score 4 or Higher	State Place Winner and involvement in 2 additional activities	More than just a passive member of any school activity/ organization and no behavior incidences.
3	Weighted GPA 3.80 and above	ACT > 70% or SAT > 70% or 3 AP Exams Score 4 or Higher or an AP Scholar	Involvement in 3 or more activities	Holds officer/captain position in any school activity/organization and fewer than 3 behavior incidences.
2	Weighted GPA 3.50 and above	ACT > 60% or SAT > 60% or 2 AP Exams Score 4 or Higher	State Qualifier/Competitor and involvement in 1 additional activity	More than just a passive member of any school activity/organization and fewer than 3 behavior incidences.
1	Weighted GPA 3.20 and above	ACT > 50% or SAT > 50% or 1 AP Exam Score 4 or Higher	Involvement in 2 or more activities	More than just a passive member of any school activity/organization and fewer than 4 behavior incidences.

- Any member of the senior class with a score of 16 or higher and at least one 5 will be recognized on the Wall of Distinction.
- Student must have attended Benson High for the last 4 semesters or score an 18 or higher.
- If more than one score in a column applies, the higher of the two scores will be applied to the overall score.

ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS

Activities

Co-curricular activities at Benson are considered an important part of a student's total educational experience. Students are urged to participate in a variety of activities. Participation in co-curricular activities can help students succeed in their classes and benefit fully from their high school years. Most organizations are open to anyone who is interested in participating.

- Academic Coaching
- African-American History Challenge
- Allies (GSA)
- Anime Club
- Art Club
- Band
- Benson Buddies
- Bits & Bytes
- Black Student Leadership Council
- Book Club
- Cheerleading
- Chelo
- Choir
- Color Guard (JROTC & Band)
- Culinary Club
- Dance Team
- DECA
- Drama Club & Productions
- Dungeons & Dragons
- Educators Rising
- EL College Club
- French Club
- Gaming Club
- Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA)
- International Thespian Society
- Jesus Club
- JROTC, JROTC Marksmanship
- National Honor Society
- Newspaper
- Native Indigenous Centered Education (NICE)
- Orchestra
- Pickleball Club
- Powerlifting
- Show Choir
- SkillsUSA
- Spirit Club
- Student Ambassadors & Council
- Thrive Club
- Trades for Days Club
- Trading Card Game Club
- Tranquility Club
- Yearbook

Athletics

The athletic program at Benson is designed to provide opportunities for athletes who desire competitive activity in sports. In order to participate in interscholastic athletic competition, a student must abide by eligibility rules of the Nebraska School Activities Association and Benson High School as well as have a current physical examination on file with the athletic director.

Fall

- Girls Golf
- Boys Tennis
- Boys Cross-Country
- Girls Cross-Country
- Football
- Softball
- Volleyball
- Unified Bowling
- Esports

Winter

- Boys Basketball
- Girls Basketball
- Boys Swimming
- Girls Swimming
- Boys Wrestling
- Girls Wrestling
- Boys Bowling
- Girls Bowling

Spring

- Baseball
- Boys Track and Field
- Girls Track and Field
- Boys Golf
- Girls Tennis
- Boys Soccer
- Girls Soccer
- Esports

For more information about our clubs, activities, and sports, please check out our website at www.ops.org/benson

Academic Coaching Required Attendance for both In-Season and Out-of-Season Student Participation:

For all In-Season and Out-of-Season Students, the following procedure will be utilized in determining the requirement of a student to attend the District's Academic Coaching Program:

- All students who are In- or Out-of-Season are expected to maintain a 2.0 Grade Point Average in their academic work.
- GPA Checks will be generated after each quarter for all In- and Out-of-Season students.
- Any In- or Out-of-Season Student subject to these guidelines as defined above whose GPA Check shows a current GPA of 2.0 or below will be required to attend Academic Coaching until their GPA rises above a 2.0 level as evidenced in a regularly scheduled grade check report.
- Failure to attend the Academic Coaching Program and complete guidelines for successful weekly participation as laid out by the Academic Coaching Lead in a given week shall render the student ineligible for participation for the following week in any NSAA-sanctioned or OPS-sponsored activity as defined above.

Exceptions:

- Notwithstanding any other provision in this Policy 5102, at all times, NSAA minimum guidelines for academic eligibility must be met to participate in NSAA-Sanctioned activities. No exception or other clause in this policy supersedes NSAA policy on academic eligibility.
- This policy does not apply to activities related to course objectives or extension of a graded course or of a high school credit course, e.g., concert or drama presentation, that would adversely affect the student's grade.
- In cases of extenuating circumstances, all waivers to academic eligibility to participate will align with NSAA policy on academic hardship considerations.

Local School Responsibilities:

Each High School Principal shall identify an Academic Coaching Lead to help with the general organization and facilitation of the Academic Coaching program annually. This Academic Coaching Lead shall ensure that:

- Their school communicates, in writing, to all students and parents a list of opportunities for student participation in extracurricular activities as well as a copy of the District Academic Eligibility requirements for those activities,
- Parents/Guardians of current and prospective student participants receive a copy of the District Academic Coaching Program outline and brochure.
- The Academic Coaching Program is coordinated and operated throughout the school year within their school, and, that the lead shall help the District Supervisor of Athletics annually evaluate the effectiveness of the District Academic Coaching Program.

Academic Coaching Leads, in conjunction with the District Supervisor of Athletics and Building Administration shall coordinate efforts to ensure effective, in-person Academic Coaching sessions occur as possible, including a minimum of one hour per week.


School Attendance Requirements for Activities and Athletics

- Classroom attendance on the day of a performance, contest, or game is required.
- Exceptions to this rule must be approved by school administration (Athletic Director or Activities Director) . This shall be interpreted to mean that a student will attend all classes unless excused by a school administrator (illness, staying home to rest, or "sleeping in" are examples of unexcused absences for extracurricular participation).
- Students not attending classes on a Friday prior to a Saturday performance, contest, or game must be cleared by site administration prior to participation in the Saturday performance, contest, or game.

CODE OF CONDUCT, GUIDES, AND EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

EARS UP, BUNNIES

Bunnies are prepared to succeed in college, career, and civic life.



	Schoolwide	Classroom	Hallway	Restroom	
E	Excellent Bunnies bring their best.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for your actions. Take pride in yourself and your community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be on time for class. Be prepared. Bring your fully charged school-issued iPad. Clean your area before you leave. Practice academic integrity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go directly to your destination. Follow the schoolwide pass policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean up after yourself. Only use facilities for their intended purpose.
A	Active Bunnies are motivated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend all assigned classes. Participate in school opportunities. Use LEAD wisely. Use Infinite Campus to monitor your academics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for help when you need it. Listen carefully. Participate in all classroom activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize learning when asking for passes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use restrooms quickly. Return to class promptly.
R	Respectful Every Bunny matters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate calmly and kindly. Take care of school property. Honor personal space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow classroom procedures. Use iPads for academic tasks only. Put away personal electronic devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize learning distractions. Respond to adults calmly and kindly when approached. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give others privacy.
S	Safe Bunnies are safe at school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report safety concerns. Keep hands & feet to yourself. Stay in your assigned area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use classroom materials safely. Remain in your seat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your pass visible. Walk and talk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash hands thoroughly. One person per stall.

Carrying Objects and School Deliveries

Objects that have no school-related purpose (balls of any kind, blankets, stuffed animals, balloon bouquets, flower bouquets, etc) will result in the object being confiscated until the end of the school day. Repeated acts could result in a parent/ guardian being required to pick up the object or be viewed as insubordination. Any balloon or flower bouquets delivered to the school will be kept in the main office until the end of the day, but such deliveries are strongly discouraged. Students will be notified in such cases that they have a delivery to pick up at the end of the day. Students are not allowed to have food delivered to the school during school hours. Food will be denied delivery or discarded.

Code of Conduct

The rules governing student behavior at Benson High School have their roots in the simple code of courteous and considerate behavior toward one another. Our goal is to help develop self-discipline and a strong sense of responsibility and respect for self and others. All rules in the white and buff pages apply to all areas of the school and grounds, including adjacent property such as Gallagher Park. Standards of conduct which staff members expect of all students:

1. Always follow the directions of any staff member. Defiance and disrespect to any staff member will result in disciplinary action.
2. All students should have their student ID during school hours. Always give your full name when asked. Students who refuse to give their name at the request of a staff member will receive disciplinary consequences.
3. Always report to the office when directed.
4. Attend all assigned classes unless officially excused. Students must be where they are assigned at all times. All students are expected to remain in class. Any student that walks out of class because of a security call will be referred to administration. Students in this situation are expected to wait for security escort.

5. Do not bring large amounts of money or any personal items of great value to school. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. Do not expect staff to conduct searches for lost or stolen personal items.
6. No selling candy, snacks, etc. on school grounds.
7. Students must remain in authorized areas only. Unauthorized areas include the gym or locker room at any times other than a student's class block, closed hallways before or after school, during lunchtime, any classroom where the student does not have a class, and the outside grounds or parking lot during the school day.
8. The building opens at 7:10 a.m. Students are not allowed inside until 7:10 a.m. Please plan rides accordingly.
9. Students may access the cafeteria, library, or Commons ONLY until 7:30 a.m. All other areas of the building including stairwells are closed until 7:30 a.m. Students may go to their lockers and begin reporting to class at 7:30 a.m.
10. Students must exit the building at dismissal. All students remaining must be under the direct supervision of an adult by 3:15 p.m. We understand that students may have to wait for a ride home. Students are allowed to wait inside in a designated area if the temperature is below 35 degrees or if it is raining. Regardless of the weather, all students must exit the building no later than 5 p.m. Students are to remain quiet and respectful if waiting inside. Students that act inappropriately must exit the building.
11. Although rare, fights and altercations can be extremely disruptive. Students are expected to avoid these situations. Students who contribute to the disruption by running to the fight, recording the fight, blocking adult access to the combatants, cheering or encouraging the behavior, or in any other way adding to the disruption will face disciplinary consequences that may include out-of-school suspension.
12. During a student's lunch hour, all students are to report to the cafeteria or the library (if open). Those are the only two options during lunch unless specific teacher permission is obtained. No food shall leave the cafeteria.
13. Students are not permitted to order food from outside sources (Doordash, GrubHub, UberEats, etc.). Deliveries will be turned away and not accepted by security.

Any other inappropriate behaviors not specified in the white or buff pages of the handbook will be handled on an individual basis with disciplinary action determined by the appropriate administrator. All rules and regulations are enforced at all school- related activities regardless of where they are held. They are also in effect in all buses and vans. Repeated violations may result in an out-of-school suspension.

Fundraising Activities

Selling candy or food during the school day for personal profit or for an outside organization is prohibited. Only sponsors of approved Benson High Organizations may initiate fundraising by submitting a fundraising application to the Activities Director. Please refer to the District's Nutrition Services for Smart Snack Guidelines.

Guidelines for Appropriate Dress In School

School is a place for serious work and study. Certain types of fashion and dress are not appropriate for school. All students are expected to dress appropriately. It is important that students develop appropriate habits of dress for school that will prepare them for the world of work. What is considered appropriate dress for school is at the discretion of Benson High School staff and administration. **Students who dress inappropriately must change or will be sent home to retrieve appropriate clothing.**

- Clothing must not distract or disrupt the learning atmosphere within the school. Clothing which advertises and/or displays graphics of alcohol, drugs, gambling, or sexual content are prohibited. Provocative clothing and sagging pants are not acceptable.
- Overcoats and jackets should not be worn during the school day if at all possible. These items should be kept in a student's locker during the day.
- Sunglasses and blankets are not allowed.
- Sleeveless muscle shirts and fishnet or see-through shirts are not acceptable. Spaghetti straps and tube

tops are not allowed.

- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- Midriff, back, both shoulders and cleavage must be covered. Shirts should cover entire mid-section of the body.
- Undergarments cannot be visible and must be covered.
- Any clothing that draws undue attention to a student and which is disruptive to the school environment is not acceptable. This includes clothing that might be associated with gangs and excessive display of cleavage.
- Face paint is not allowed. Students must remove face paint while at school.
- Masks that cover the entire face cannot be worn. Face must be visible.

The Board of Education has determined that studded jewelry such as bracelets and necklaces could be used as weapons. The same is true of heavier chains such as chains attached to wallets, dog chokers, and similar items. Chains over six inches are prohibited. These items will be treated as weapons if worn or brought to school. The result could be expulsion, so please do not bring these items to school.

Guidelines for Attendance at Homecoming Dance/Prom

Prom and Homecoming dances are time-honored traditions at Benson High School and are meant to celebrate school spirit and enhance students' high school experiences. The Homecoming dance is meant to be enjoyed by all BHS students and Prom is designed for juniors and seniors. There are behavioral and attendance expectations that must be met in order to be able to attend these student functions. The following behaviors will exclude students from participating in the Homecoming dance and prom. The following guidelines also pertain to guests.

- Students suspended during the first semester for fighting (less or more serious), may not attend the BHS Homecoming dance that school year.
- Students suspended during the first semester for drug/alcohol/controlled substance-related behaviors may not attend the BHS Homecoming dance that school year.
- Students must meet one of the following criteria to attend:
 - Current grades of Cs or higher in all semester courses (as of the Friday one week prior to the dance).

OR

- Student must not be considered chronically absent (fewer than 5 absences for the school year, as of the Friday one week prior to the dance).
- Students suspended during the second semester of school for fighting (less or more serious) may not attend BHS Prom that school year.
- Students suspended during the second semester of school for drug/alcohol/controlled substance related behaviors may not attend BHS Prom that school year.
- Students must meet one of the following criteria to attend:
 - Current grades of Cs or higher in all semester courses (as of the Friday one week prior to the dance).

OR

- Student must not be considered chronically absent (fewer than 20 absences for the school year, as of the Friday one week prior to the dance).

Hall Passes

Only official hall passes that include name, time, date, and a staff signature will be honored. Student passes are used when a student needs to be excused from class to go elsewhere in the building.

Students should not be in the halls during class time without a valid pass signed by a teacher or an administrator. Passes should be visible at all times.

Any staff member may ask to see a hall pass. Failure to cooperate will result in disciplinary action.

NO STUDENT will be given a pass during the first ten minutes and last ten minutes of each class block.

No passes will be issued during 4th block.

Hands-Off Policy

There is no such thing as..." Playing, Messing Around, or Play Fighting."

Violations of the Hands-Off Policy include:

- Slapping
- Punching
- Wrestling
- Striking or Throwing Objects
- Flicking or Popping with Fingers, Rubber bands, Balloons, or other such objects
- Use of Karate or other types of Martial Arts
- Pushing
- Shoving
- Hair Pulling
- Pinching
- Kicking
- Any Verbal Act (e.g. Name Calling, Teasing, Taunting, etc.) which by its very nature tends to initiate/escalate a situation.

Fighting will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate out of school suspension. Compliance with the Student Code of Conduct is expected of all students.

Lockers and Personal Possessions

- All lockers are the property of the Omaha Public Schools and may be searched at any time an administrator feels it necessary.
- Lockers will be issued at the request of a student.
- All students have access to a hall locker for the protection of their personal belongings. The locker is safe and secure only if the door is completely closed and the dial spun or cleared. The lock combination must be kept in confidence. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen items. Students are not to change lockers after assignments have been made, share their combination with anyone or keep their belongings in another student's locker.
- Students enrolled in Physical Education classes will be issued their own individual lockers in the locker room. Students will be expected to store their backpacks/book bags in their PE lockers. These items are not allowed in the gym or weight room.

Lunch

All Omaha Public Schools maintain a "closed campus" policy for lunch. **Students may not leave the building. Students may not have food delivered to the building.** Students may not cut or save places in the lunch line. Food and beverage must be consumed in the cafeteria. All other classrooms, floors, stairways, hallways are off limits during the lunch block. Students may be excused to the library after eating lunch.

School Territory Defined

School district and Benson High School rules will be enforced in school, on school grounds, and areas adjacent to school property. School jurisdiction will be defined as Gallagher Parking Lot and area visible from the lot up to the school softball field. Incidents which occur near school boundaries and which disrupt the school's learning environment or threaten the safety of others may also be subject to school disciplinary action.



Student Success Center

The Student Success Center (SSC) is an in-school suspension room where students are assigned to learn behaviors that will help them be successful both socially and academically in school. Students will have a limited time to work on their classroom assignments. Students removed from SSC for misconduct face an out-of-school suspension.

Students may be assigned to the Student Success Center for a number of different Code of Conduct violations including,

but not limited to the following:

- Continued, excessive tardiness to class
- Failure to serve suspension after school (SAS)
- Continued classroom disruption
- Continued truancy/skipping class
- Disrespectful behavior
- Excessive vulgarity/profanity
- Refusal to identify self
- Continued dress code violations
- Insubordination

Technology and Communication

Computers, Student Laptops, iPads, 1:1

It is important that all Benson High students have access to their classes' online software as many teachers use this on a daily basis. Each student will be issued a device to use for the school year and must turn in the OPS Parent and Student Device Contract to do so. Students may also purchase an optional insurance plan that covers accidental damage or theft, which is \$20.00/year. Students are expected to follow the Code of Conduct with all aspects of the device. Misappropriation of the device could lead to limiting access or removal of the device. In case of damage or loss of the OPS device without insurance, students will be issued fines for the total cost of the device. **Students may not bring devices from home and must use the OPS assigned device.**

Parent/Guardian Communication

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to sign up for access to the online Parent Portal offered by Omaha Public Schools if they have not already done so. This access will be available wherever an Internet connection is located
- Parental monitoring of assignments, grades, and attendance is strongly encouraged. If there is any question about your child's academic progress, the parent is strongly encouraged to call or e-mail the teacher. All teachers' telephone numbers and e-mail addresses can be found on the Benson website.
- If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the communication with a teacher, the parent/guardian is strongly encouraged to call the child's administrator. There is no such thing as too much communication when working to encourage, monitor and improve a student's academic progress. Students, parents, and Benson staff members all share in the responsibility of keeping lines of communication open and productive.

Phone and Listening Device Expectations

We want students fully engaged in learning. Cell phones and listening devices are a distraction to the learning environment. Cell phones are not allowed during class at Benson High School.

Student Class Expectations regarding Cell Phones

- Follow directions of teacher to put the phone/listening devices away.
- Participate in activities and work time.
- Phones and listening devices remain stored or out of sight in the classroom during the entire block, even when leaving with a pass.
- Phones can be safely and securely stored in the teacher Phone Hotel.
- Teachers will remind students at the beginning of every class of the cell phone policy.

- If a phone or listening device is out, the teacher will ask the student to put the phone in the phone hotel.
- If the student refuses to put the cell phone in the phone hotel, teacher completes the form survey to inform an administrator. An administrator will come to the classroom.
- Student has one more chance to put the phone in the phone hotel by the administrator.
- If a student refuses to give up the cell phone, parent will be notified, student can give the cell phone to the administrator for the remainder of the day. If a student refuses that request, student will be suspended for the remainder of the day.

During classes, **phones and listening devices** must be on silent and stored for the entire block.

- NOT in a student's hand
- NOT on the table/desk
- NOT under a person's leg
- MUST be out of site
- When students are given a pass during class, they are not permitted to bring their phones with them.

Technology and Email

- Students will be instructed in proper use as well as ethics and safety for use of OPS technology. All rules, policies and procedures outlined by the Omaha Public Schools will be strictly enforced to ensure that all students have safe, reliable access to the schools' technology.
- All students will be issued a school email account through Office365. Careful attention will be paid to appropriate use of email as a professional means of communication. All rules, policies and procedures outlined by the Omaha Public Schools in their "Behavior Rules for Students Using School Computers and Networks" will be enforced for use both inside and outside of school.

TITLE 1 Policies

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.
 - The student handbook
 - Curriculum Night
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - Standardized Tests results
 - Progress reports & report card
- 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.

Title I School Parent Involvement Policy

Benson High School intends to follow the parental policy guidelines that meet the ESEA/NCLB requirements which are distributed to parents and are made available to the community.

1. Parents are involved in the planning, review, and improvements of the school's Parental Involvement Policy through:
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - District Activities
 - Monthly and regularly scheduled parent meetings
2. Annual meetings are held to inform parents of the school's participation in the Title I program and Compact Review.

3. Parent meetings are held at different times throughout the day and week, including but not limited to:
 - Family Engagement Nights
 - Parent Teacher Conferences
 - Parent Meetings during the school day and evenings
 - Academy Open House
4. Title I funds may be used to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent involvement activities:
 - Scheduled Parent meetings
 - Materials to support parent needs to improve knowledge of support needed in reading and math programs
5. Parents are involved in the planning, review, and improvements to the school's Title I program via the Climate Survey; Title I Parent Satisfaction survey, annual parent meetings, scheduled parent meetings, and school newsletters.
6. The parents are involved in the joint development of the School Wide plan through feedback and collaboration on the School Improvement Plan for 2020-2021 and in the Fall 2021 Title I School Compact Review meeting.
7. Parents and guardians receive timely information about the Title I program through the following ways:
 - School Newsletters
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - Title I School Compact
 - School / District website
 - School Messenger (email, auto-dialer, text messages)
8. Parents and guardians receive a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments and how to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
 - School newsletters
 - MAP / Pre-ACT assessment reports
 - AP Parent meetings / Academy Parent Meetings / Title I Parent Meetings / Parent Teacher Conferences
 - Title I School Compact
 - School / District website
9. The school will provide assistance to parents with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
 - Newsletters / Bunny News
 - Informational Meetings at Fall and Spring Parent Teacher Conferences
 - Monthly and regularly scheduled parent meetings
10. The school provides parents with opportunities for scheduled meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children.
 - Parent Teacher Conferences
 - Academy Open House and Academy Nights
 - Scheduled parent meetings - Family Engagement Nights
11. A school-parent compact was jointly developed with parents; it outlines how parents, the entire school staff and students share in the responsibility for improved student achievement.
 - Newsletters
 - School wide policy and procedures
 - School Improvement Plan
 - Title I school compact
 - District Action Plan
12. The school provides materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement.
 - Scheduled Parent Meetings
 - Opportunities to give feedback on the School Improvement Plan
 - Opportunities to be members of Career Academy Advisory Boards
 - Annual Title I school compact review

Transportation

Buses and Vans

The Omaha Public Schools provides transportation to Benson for students who qualify. All buses and vans leave promptly at 3:15 p.m. Students are expected to board buses and vans promptly at dismissal. Buses and vans will not be held for students who fail to board by 3:15 pm. Transportation to school is a privilege, not a right. All rules and regulations of the Omaha Public Schools and Benson High School apply to students on buses and vans. All students must respect the driver and other riders to ensure a safe ride for all students. Students who fail to meet all expectations and follow all rules may be denied transportation.

Late Bus

Students that receive transportation may sign up for the late bus that picks students up from Benson at 5:15 or 6:00. Students must sign up for the late bus by the end of the lunch block (1:30). The sign-up sheet is a QR code in the cafeteria.

Parking Permits

- Starting with the 2024 – 2025 school year, Benson students that drive to school will be required to obtain a parking permit to park in the parking lot between Benson and Monroe.
- The south parking lot is strictly for staff and may not be utilized by students.
- In order to obtain a parking permit for the north parking lot a student must show proof of insurance, vehicle registration and a valid driver's license. The student must present these items to the school officials before a permit is issued.
- If a student's parking permit is not hanging from their rear-view mirror where it is visible from the outside of the vehicle and the car is parked in the Benson North Parking lot, the student could be charged a \$10.00 fine and will be required to move their vehicle. Students who continually violate the parking rules and regulations may also have their vehicle towed at the owner's expense (the cost is in excess of \$100.00) and/or face disciplinary action.

Student Parking

- Parking is strictly limited to the student parking area (north lot and Gallagher). The south and east lots are solely for staff.
- To facilitate identification, automobiles are to be parked front end in first, one car per stall.
- All students must be licensed and covered by insurance. The school is not responsible for the automobile or its contents.
- There is to be no loitering in the parking lot (north lot and Gallagher). **The parking lot is off limits during the school day.**
- There will be no speeding, over 5 miles per hour, or any form of reckless driving on the school grounds. Violators may be ticketed or banned from the lot.
- Student vehicles may be subject to search if there are reasonable grounds to believe that drugs, alcohol, stolen property or other contraband might be present in that vehicle.
- Parking regulations are strictly enforced. It is considered a privilege to park on school grounds. Suspension of parking privileges, tickets, towing of vehicles and/or suspension from school may occur when violations of these regulations occur.
- All parking regulations also apply to the Gallagher Park lot.
- Students ARE NOT ALLOWED to park in visitor parking stalls.

Omaha Public Schools 2024-2025 Calendar



Next Level Learning – May 29–July 3

Please check with your child(ren)'s school regarding dates of specific school related activities.

Juneteenth - No School For Next Level Learning Students - June 19

Independence Day July 4

STAGGERED SCHOOL START - indicated by asterisk*

- **August *14** – Kindergarten, and Entry Level Grades at Middle and High School
- **August *15** – First Day of School for All Other K-12 Students
- **August *21** – First Day of School for Pre-K Students

Labor Day – No School For All Students September 2

Two Hour Late Start For All Students September 24

No School For All Students October 4

HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCES ARE THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 7

No School For High School Students – October 10 & 11

First Quarter Ends – October 11

Second Quarter Begins – October 14

MIDDLE SCHOOL CONFERENCES ARE THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 14

No School For Middle School Students – October 17 & 18

HIGH SCHOOL – PreACT Day for 10th Grade October 22

No School for 9, 11, 12th Grade High School Students

ELEMENTARY CONFERENCES ARE THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 21

No School For Elementary Students – October 24 & 25

Two Hour Late Start For All Students October 29

No School For All Students November 5

Thanksgiving Recess – No School For All Students November 25-29

Second Quarter Ends – December 2

No School For All Students December 2

Winter Recess – No School For All Students December 23-January 2

No School For All Students January 2

Third Quarter Begins – January 6

Martin Luther King Day – No School For All Students January 20

Two Hour Late Start For All Students. January 28

No School For All Students February 14

Presidents' Day – No School For All Students February 17

ELEMENTARY CONFERENCES ARE THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 24

No School For Elementary Students – February 27 & 28

HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCES ARE THE WEEK OF MARCH 3

No School for High School Students – March 6 & 7

Third Quarter Ends – March 7

Fourth Quarter Begins – March 10

MIDDLE SCHOOL CONFERENCES ARE THE WEEK OF MARCH 10

No School For Middle School Students – March 13 & 14

Spring Recess - No School For All Students March 17-21

No School For All Students March 28

Two Hour Late Start For All Students. April 1

No School For All Students April 18

No School For All Students April 21

Last student day – Fourth Quarter Ends May 21

Memorial Day May 26

Elementary – 8:50 a.m. to 4:05 p.m.

Middle School – 7:40 a.m. to 3:05 p.m.

High School – 7:40 a.m. to 3:05 p.m.

Note: At Kennedy, Lewis & Clark, Wakonda, Wilson, and Alternative Programs – Check with the school regarding start & end of school day times.

June 2024

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December 2024

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July 2024

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January 2025

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August 2024

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March 2025

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October 2024

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April 2025

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November 2024

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May 2025

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Omaha Public Schools District Student Handbook

NOT UPDATED....

Senior High • 2024-25

GENERIC INFO

FOR NOW

*Every student.
Every day.
Prepared for
success.*



Omaha Public Schools

Student Code of Conduct

**NOT UPDATED....
GENERIC INFO**

2024-25 School Year

FOR NOW

*Every student.
Every day.
Prepared for
success.*

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Students

We ask that you take time to
sit down together and read
through these guidelines.

Please note the behaviors that may
result in an administrative response.