BENTON CONSOLIDATED HIGH SCHOOL
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2026-27 New Student Handbook Policies

New Policies

Use of Artificial Intelligence

“Artificial intelligence” or “AI” is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator. Students may use AI as authorized in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.

Social Suspension

Students with chronic absenteeism and excessive disciplinary problems may be placed on the social suspension list. The social suspension list is used to determine whether a student is eligible to attend and participate in all extracurricular events including field trips, school dances, and any other school events. All absences not documented by a doctor’s note, appointment site note, and/or nurse’s note will count towards being placed on the social suspension list. Additionally, all days spent in ISS or ISD due to disciplinary action, and all days spent in OSS count towards being placed on the social suspension list. The social suspension list does not carry over from semester to semester.

The social suspension list will be created at the end of the day each Friday of the school year, and will reset when the semester ends. Students that are on the list due to absences, excused or unexcused, behavior and/or academics will have opportunities to be removed from it.

The following criteria will be used to determine which students will be on the Social Suspension list at any given time:

1. A student currently has 2 or more failing grades.
2. A student has 10 days or more of absences in the current semester (mental health days count). Any absences, regardless of length, during a school day will be considered a full day absence as it pertains to being placed on the social suspension list.

3. A student has 10 or more tardies.
4. A student has 1 or more OSS.
5. A student has 3 or more days of ISS or ISD.
6. A student has 5 or more detentions.

Criteria for being removed from the Social Suspension List:

1. Bring grades up to passing. (Can have 1 failing grade)
2. Must go 2 consecutive weeks without being absent. (Their next absence will place them back on the list.)
3. Must go 2 consecutive weeks without receiving a tardy. (Their next tardy will place them back on the list.)
4. A student that has received an OSS must meet weekly with a counselor or an administrator when the student returns to school. They will serve a minimum of 2 weeks on the social suspension list.
5. A student who has 3 or more days of ISS or ISD must go 2 consecutive weeks without receiving another ISS or ISD. (The next ISS or ISD that they receive will place them back on the list.)
6. A student who has 5 or more detentions must go 2 consecutive weeks without receiving detention. (The next detention that they receive will place them back on the list.)

There will be continued communication with the student and parent/guardian as absences accumulate.

- Conference with student after 3 absences.
- Conference with student after 6 absences, and contact parent/guardian.
- Conference with student after 9 absences, and contact parent/guardian.

Students placed on the social suspension list will not be allowed on campus outside of regular school hours (7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the regular schedule and 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the early dismissal schedule) unless they are attending a tutoring session. Students on social suspension cannot attend or participate in any field trips, practices, extracurricular events, dances, games, or athletic events while on suspension.

Administration reserves the right to have final determination if extenuating circumstances exist.

Revision of Current Policies

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from BCHS, unless otherwise exempted, each student is responsible for:

1. Completing all State mandated graduation requirements listed below.
2. Completing all District graduation requirements that are in addition to State graduation requirements which includes 28 credits for graduation and for participation in graduation ceremonies.
3. Completing all courses as provided in the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/27-605.
4. Passing an examination on patriotism, principles of representative government, and proper use and display of the American flag.
5. Participating in the State assessment required for graduation.
6. Filing one of the following: (1) a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with the U.S. Dept. of Education, (2) an application for State financial aid, or (3) an Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) waiver form indicating that the student understands what these aid opportunities are and has chosen not to file an application. If the student is not at least 18 years of age or legally emancipated, the student's parent/guardian must file one of these documents on the student's behalf.

District Graduation Requirements

English/Communications: 4.5 Credits

English	4.0	
Oral Communications	0.5	
Social Science:		**2.5 Credits**
Early American History/ W. Cultures	0.5	
Intro to Social Science	1.0	
American History		1.0
Math:		**3.0 Credits**
(Must be enrolled 9th, 10th, 11th grades)		
Algebra I		1.0
Geometry		1.0
Math Elective	1.0	
Science:		**2.0 Credits**
Life Science		1.0
Physical Science		1.0
Consumer Education:	**0.5 Credits**	
Consumer Ec	0.5	
or		
Business Orientation		1.0
Physical Ed./Health/Drivers Ed.:	**3.0 Credits**	
Health	0.5	
Drivers Education		0.5
*Physical Education	2.0	

*Athletic P.E., Fall Marching Band, and/or Medical P.E. can meet the two-year requirement.

Additional Electives Needed	**12.5 Credits**
Total Requirements	**28 Credits**

The following classes are weighted:

Honors English II	College Algebra & Trigonometry
AP English III	Calculus
AP English IV	Physics
English 1101	Chemistry II

The above requirements do not apply to students with disabilities whose course of study is determined by an Individualized Education Program or students who are exempted from participation in certain courses in accordance with State law.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Graduation Requirement

As a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, the parent or guardian of each student or, if a student is at least 18 years of age or legally emancipated, the student must comply with either of the following:

(1) File a FAFSA with the United States Department of Education or, if applicable, an application for State financial aid.

(2) File a waiver indicating that the parent or guardian or, if applicable, the student understands what the FAFSA and application for State financial aid are and has chosen not to file an application.

Upon request, the school will provide a student and his or her parent or guardian any support or assistance necessary to comply with this requirement.

A school district must award a high school diploma to a student who is unable to meet this requirement due to extenuating circumstances, as determined by the school district, if (i) the student has met all other graduation requirements, and (ii)

the principal attests that the school district has made a good faith effort to assist the student or, if applicable, his or her parent or guardian in filing an application or a waiver.

Certificate of High School Completion

A student with a disability who has an Individualized Education Program prescribing special education, transition planning, transition services, or related services beyond the student's 4 years of high school, qualifies for a certificate of completion after the student has completed 4 years of high school. The student is encouraged to participate in the graduation ceremony of his or her high school graduation class.

Disruptive Electronic Devices

Students are not allowed to use or appear to use any electronic devices on BCHS property from the bell to start 1st period until the bell to dismiss at the end of the school day. A telephone is available in the reception office for reasonable, legitimate educational purposes. The regulations extend to after school detention as well as locker/dressing rooms in use for extra-curricular purposes at any time.

- 1st offense – Confiscation of device and After School Detention (2 days). The student or parent must come to the Main Office and retrieve the confiscated item between 3:00pm – 4:00pm.
- 2nd offense – Confiscation of device, one (1) In School Detentions and 15 days of social suspension. The student's parent/guardian will be notified of the infraction and subsequent discipline. The student or parent must come to the Main Office and retrieve the confiscated item between 3:00pm – 4:00pm.
- 3rd offense – Confiscation of device, two (2) In School Detentions and 30 days of social suspension. The student's parent/guardian will be notified of the infraction and subsequent discipline. The student or parent must come to the Main Office and retrieve the confiscated item between 3:00pm – 4:00pm.
- Any further violation of this policy will lead to further disciplinary action up to and including the barring of the student possessing their phone at school.

BCHS does not assume costs or financial responsibility for any confiscated items.

Dissemination of Written Materials

Students have the right to prepare materials for distribution to other students concerning the school. If students wish to distribute materials they must see administrative personnel before doing so. Students failing to comply will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the policies established by the Board of Education.

Plagiarism Policy

It is the aim of the Benton Consolidated High School to provide a sound educational program and to encourage independence and maturity in student's work. Plagiarism shows a lack of these two qualities. Plagiarism is literally theft: representing someone else's work as one's own; copying someone else's words and/or ideas into a report to essay without giving credit to the Originator, or even having someone write the report or essay (perhaps for money). Students can avoid plagiarism by stating sources. If the plagiarism can be proved, i.e. if the source of the quoted (but not Documented) material is located and if comparison of the material with the Student's paper substantiates the teacher's allegations, the following sequence will be considered:

1. For the first offense, the student will receive a zero on the report or Essay and the student's semester grades will be lowered by 5%. A conference with the student and the parents is mandatory.
2. For the second and subsequent offenses, the student will receive an "F" (failing grade) for the semester for that class, and the parents will again be contacted.

Grades, Make-Up Policies, Incompletes, and Absences

As indicated above, it is the student's responsibility, upon returning to school after an absence, to check with his or her teachers about make-up work. Students are expected to make up work within a reasonable time set by each teacher. If the student has prolonged absences beyond five days, the parent/guardian needs to contact the school nurse to discuss the students' situation. Special consideration may be granted if there is justification.

1. Excused Absences - Students are allowed to make up the work, but are expected to initiate contact with the teacher and to follow through with the make-up work. When students return to their missed class they will have a minimum of 48 hours to complete their missing assignments.
2. Unexcused Absences - No Make-up privileges.

Students who are absent from school are encouraged to keep in contact with classmates concerning assignments and course work. If a student has difficulty in gathering assignments during a prolonged absence, the office should be contacted. An "Incomplete" for a semester grade report must be made up within two weeks. After this period, a failing grade for the incomplete work will be recorded.

Academic Eligibility

1. Eligibility periods begin on Monday and go through the following Sunday. Grades will be checked on Friday on a weekly basis and are cumulative. A student must be passing seven classes each eligibility period.

2. Ineligible students will not participate in practices or in interscholastic competition. Student/athletes **will not** be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities if they are failing **more than one** class. Students experiencing difficulties maintaining their academic eligibility are strongly encouraged to participate in before and after-school tutoring opportunities that are available.

Special Note: *Classes that meet every day or constitute more than 25% of the student's regular school day shall count as a single class as they relate to extra-curricular eligibility.*