

BENZIE CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-24

This handbook belongs to:

Betsie Valley Elementary

17936 Cadillac Hwy.
Thompsonville, MI 49683
Ph# (231)378-4161
Fax# (231)378-2538

Homestead Hills Elementary

8858 Henry Rd
Benzonia, MI 49616
Ph#
Fax#

Lake Ann Elementary

19375 Bronson Lake Rd
Interlochen, MI 49643
Ph#: 231.275.7730
Fax #: 231.275.7735

DISTRICT PHONE NUMBERS

Central Office Accounting 882.9653
Central Office Executive Assistant 882.9653
Director of Food Services 882.4497
Director of Operations 882.7825
Director of Transportation 882.5072
Northwest Education Services (formerly TBAISD) 922.6200
Sheriff's Department 882.4484
Family Independence Agency 882.4443
Central Wellness Network 877.398.2013
District Health Department 882.4406
Head Start Program 325.3549

Office Hours: 8:20 – 4:20 Teacher Hours: 8:40 – 4:10 Student Hours: 8:50 – 4:00

****All buildings open for students at 8:45 am.**

INTRODUCTION

We welcome you and your child(ren) to Benzie Central Elementary Schools. We believe that every child has the right to a safe, supportive school environment where each individual's values, beliefs, background, and identity are respected. The district is committed to engaging with every student to maximize both his/her academic and social learning. This engagement is grounded in supportive practices and universal norms including:

- Care - we embrace a ferocious unwillingness to accept student failure.
- Support - we practice systematic supports that address the social, cultural, and academic needs of each student.
- Safety - we develop and communicate expectations that are clear, firm and consistently enforced.
- Membership - we pursue ways to ensure our students are intellectually immersed, socially connected, and emotionally centered.

Table of Contents

District Mission Statement	3	<u>General Discipline Policy</u>	
School Calendar Link	3	Major and Minor incidents	12
School Day	3	Discipline & Restorative Practices	13
		Peer-to-peer Conflict	13
Enrollment	3	Bullying	13
School of choice			
		<u>Transportation Services</u>	
Attendance Policy	4	Transportation to and from school	14
Absences		Bus Riding Rules	15
Tardiness		Bus Discipline Procedures	16
Truancy			
		<u>Academic Services</u>	
<u>General School Policies</u>		Assessments	16
After School Activities	6	Curriculum	16
Building Rules	6	Review of Instructional materials	17
Celebrations	6	Special Education Services	17
Class Placement	6	Title 1 Reading and Math	17
Dress Policy	6	Student Records	18
Electronic Devices	7		
Emergency Closing of School	7	<u>Additional Services</u>	
Fire, Lockdown and Tornado Drills	7	Breakfast Program	18
Head Lice Policy	7	Hot Lunch Program	18
Health & Wellness Procedures	7	Parent-Teacher Conferences	19
Internet Use Policy	9	Parent-Teacher Organizations	19
Illness During School	9		
Medications	9	Current School Board Members	19
Medical Limitation Statement	10		
Notice of Discriminations	10	<u>Permission Slips</u>	
Pets	10	Please review these forms with your child	
Permission Slips	10	and then <u>sign and return</u> the five permission	
School Supplies	10	forms to your child's school asap. Thank you.	
Search and Seizure	11		
Sexual Harassment Policy	11	Field Trip Permission Slip	20
Snow Days and Delays	11	Learning Agreement	21
Volunteers and Visitors	11	Internet Registration Contract	22
Weapons Policy	11	Photo Release Permission Slip	23

DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Benzie Central School community is to provide a safe learning environment that motivates all students to reach their highest potential by providing the necessary skills to become lifelong learners and leaders in a changing society.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The 2023-2024 school calendar is posted on the school website at [this link](#).

SCHOOL DAY

- **K – 5 Students: 8:50 - 4:00. Students may be dropped off at school at 8:45 am**
- **Half Day Dismissal is at 11:50**

Before and after school hours, our staff is busy preparing for and following up from the school day and are not available to supervise students.

ENROLLMENT

To enroll your child(ren), you may visit benzieschools.net to download the enrollment forms or follow the links below. Forms are also available at the school office. Please call the office and the building secretary will help you start the enrollment process.

[Betsie Valley Elementary](#)

Homestead Hills

[Lake Ann Elementary](#)

When enrolling a student please be prepared to provide the following documents:

1. Student's birth certificate (certified copy with the notary seal)
2. Proof of residency (driver's license along with one of the following: gas bill, electric bill, mortgage statement, etc., that contains the physical address of the residence.
3. Copy of most current Immunization records. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the student may not be allowed in school. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law.
4. Court documentation stating guardianship, parental custody orders, any parental no contact orders, etc. if applicable.

School of Choice

If your child(ren) is a school of choice student, a school of choice form will need to be filled out on the Benzie Central Homepage with this [link](#).

The Superintendent will then review the form and share it with your local school district.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Student success in school begins by having good attendance. We value students being active participants which allows for the growth and maintenance of positive relationships.

Absences

All absences must be verified by calling the school office the morning of the absence.

Excused absences include:

- medical appointments
- student physical or mental illness (A doctor's note is mandatory to excuse absences after 3 consecutive days. Failure to do so will result in the student's absences being unexcused)
- death, funeral, serious illness of the student's family member
- family vacation, wedding, or graduation
- court
- observance of religious holidays of the student's own faith

Please note: Students absent from school due to illness or suspension may not attend any after school activities or sport practice/games on the day they are absent.

Tardiness

Our staff plans for instruction to begin when students arrive. Many important topics and lessons begin the moment students arrive at school. Therefore, students arriving late miss important instructional time.

- Students are tardy when they arrive less than one hour after school begins.
- Students are considered ½ day absent if they arrive more than one hour after school begins.
- Students are considered ½ day absent if they leave school more than one hour before school dismissal.

Our school-wide systems of care, support, safety and membership operate best when students attend for the entire school day.

Truancy

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to see that their child attends school regularly and on time. By law, "every parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of a child from age six to the child's eighteenth birthday, shall send that child to the public schools during the entire school year." MCL 380.1599 Please click on the following link to view policies. <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Organization/2367>

When a student has 5 unexcused absences in any term or semester, the building principal or administrative staff will provide written notice to the parent/guardian detailing the truancy process. A CAP (Corrective Action Plan) meeting will be scheduled with the school principal and the parent/guardian to aid in the student attending school.

When a student is absent more than 10 days and the parent/guardian fails to follow the Corrective Action Plan, the principal or administrative staff will file the truancy with the School Liaison Officer. The officer will take further action permitted and required by law through the Prosecutor's Office.

The school will inform parent(s)/guardian(s) when their child is not in school. The school will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to address educational problems including truancy. The

school will accurately document absences and respond appropriately and immediately by offering support to students. An effort will be made by the school to resolve issues contributing to the student's attendance problem.

By law (Michigan Compulsory Attendance Law (MCL 380.1147, 380.1278a, 380.1278b, 380.1284, 380.1284b, 380.1561, 380.1599. MCL 388.1701) (2010), Benzie Central Elementary Schools must act in cases of continued absences to investigate explanations of a doubtful nature. A claim of continued or repeated illness justifies the District's request for a statement from the family doctor. If absences occur consecutively with medical notes, these absences will be consolidated into one absence. Absences in excess of 5 days/semester and 10 tardies without a valid excuse (proper documentation is needed) are considered excessive, and is an alert to examine the youth's attendance for possible truancy issues.

The Principal/ School Attendance Personnel, school counselor/Youth Intervention Specialist will hold a Truancy Action Meeting with the parent(s) to resolve truancy issues. The parent(s) are responsible for attending the Corrective Action Plan. If the absences continue following the meeting, the Principal/SAP may bring it to the attention of the Benzie County Truancy Coordinator/Prosecutor's Office for further review. Truancy situations with elementary school students will be handled through the Benzie County Prosecutor's Office against the parent.

1. If a problem exists, the Principal/SAP will send a certified letter to the parent or guardian of the child, indicating there is an attendance problem and that a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the absences. Each parent or guardian must receive their own copy of the letter.
2. A meeting must be held with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), the principal/SAP and other appropriate school officials. A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) regarding attendance should be reached and signed. Consequences will be discussed in the event truancy remains a problem. The CAP will include the requirement that the youth will resume regular and consecutive school attendance. DHS will be contacted and their office will contact the parent to begin "prevention" services.
3. The Principal/SAP will give the child's teacher a copy of the letter sent to the parents and the CAP so attendance can be monitored and reported to the Principal/SAP.
4. If the child misses two times in the next 30 days or 3 more times, the Principal/SAP may contact law enforcement. The Principal/SAP will also send a second letter to the parent(s)/guardian.
5. If the parent fails to comply after letter #2 and a visit from law enforcement, the Principal/SAP may file a complaint with law enforcement, who will then petition the Benzie County Prosecutor's Office. The Prosecutor will review the complaint. The Prosecutor could file misdemeanor truancy charges against the parent or guardian, and if found guilty, the Benzie County Family Court/19th Judicial Court may recommend the parent(s) or guardian(s) participate in parenting class and/or other recommended services or impose a jail sentence or fine.

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Written permission or a phone call from a parent is required whenever you wish to change the way your child leaves school. Please notify the school office as early as possible to make arrangements for your child(ren) to go to a child care provider, friend, or relatives house, attend Kids Club or SEEDS, or attend a scheduled after-school activity. Without your authorization, we will expect your child(ren) to return home on the bus after school.

BUILDING RULES

All Elementary buildings have their own unique way of guiding students to a better understanding of how to resolve conflicts and nurture successful interpersonal relationships. These skills help our students prepare to be successful adults within the community. In general, three guiding principles summarize our building rules:

1. **Be Responsible**
2. **Be Respectful**
3. **Be Safe**

CELEBRATIONS

School/room parties are permitted for various holidays and to celebrate class goals and successes. *If COVID-19 restrictions are again adopted, homemade birthday treats and other homemade classroom treats will not be permitted but pre-packaged, store bought treats will be allowed. At this time, no such restrictions are in place and homemade treats are generally permitted in classrooms.*

Students going to after school parties (birthdays, sleep over, etc.) will arrange alternative transportation from school (Bus transportation will not be provided).

Please refrain from sending flower and/or balloon bouquets to school. Bouquets will not be allowed on school buses. Students who cannot attend classroom parties for disciplinary or religious reasons will be given an alternative activity in another location of the building.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Teachers provide a great deal of information, such as where the student left off academically, what special needs he/she may have, and any information that they feel vital in the placement of this student. Much time and consideration is given to the placement of each student to help ensure that he/she may acquire the needed skills and progress to the fullest. We appreciate your cooperation and trust regarding your child(ren)'s assignment, and do not recommend that you make special teacher requests. Your understanding in this matter is appreciated. Due to staff changes throughout the summer, class lists will be posted at each elementary school prior to the start of school.

DRESS POLICY

To protect the rights of all students and to ensure they receive care, support, safety, and membership within the school community, Benzie Central School has created policies to govern dress code expectations. Please refer to [Policy 5204 - Student Appearance and Dress Code](#).

To minimize the disruption to the educational process, some excluded examples might include but not be limited to:

1. short shorts

2. spaghetti straps
3. bare midriffs
4. bare feet
5. controversial slogans or ones that promote alcohol, tobacco products, drugs, or violence
6. makeup and cologne
7. items that present a safety hazard

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Wireless communication devices, including but not limited to MP3 players, tablets, and phones-are not permitted during the school day. Electronic devices and any other items that interfere with the class will be placed in a secure location in the office by the teacher, the principal, or any other staff member. Parents may make arrangements to pick up the item from the office. Parents and students will assume all responsibility for lost/damaged/stolen electronics.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL WHILE IN SESSION

There will be times that school will have to close early because of an emergency situation (mainly weather). When closing school early is necessary, immediate notification will go out using our automated phone notification. Parents should have a plan ready for child(ren) in the event an early closing of school is necessary. It is very important for your child(ren) to know where he/she is to go in the event of an early school closing.

FIRE, LOCKDOWN AND TORNADO DRILLS

Our schools comply with all fire and safety (including lockdown) laws and will conduct fire drills and lockdown drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building. Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the state.

HEAD LICE POLICY

Head lice are a common problem in schools. Children play in close proximity to one another and often have cubbies or lockers where clothing and backpacks can touch. Lice are a nuisance, but not a health hazard. Students who are displaying signs of head lice, such as excessive scratching of the head, may be sent to the office to be checked. A thorough examination of the hair and scalp will be done to check for the presence of live lice or nits.

If nits or lice are found, parents will be notified as soon as possible and encouraged to pick up their child for immediate treatment or, if they are not able, to have their child remain in school that day. When the parent brings the child back to school, they will be checked for the presence of lice. If it is confirmed that the child is free of any live lice or viable nits (nits within ¼ inch of the scalp) the student may then return to the classroom and again ride the bus as usual. Regular, at home, checks for lice or nits is the best way to prevent the spread of lice.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROCEDURES

To protect themselves and others, children should be kept at home for at least twenty-four hours (or until he/she is completely recovered) if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Severe sore throat

- Temperature above 100.4 degrees (PLEASE wait 24 hours after fever breaks before sending back to school – based on health department guidelines to prevent the spread of flu and other illness)
- Earache/discharge (For head lice policy see page 7 of the Elementary Student Handbook)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Skin rash
- Swollen glands
- Diarrhea
- Inflamed eye/discharge
- Sores on the skin such as impetigo, scabies, or ringworm

A 24-hour period DOES NOT mean that the child returns the next day. Example: If a child leaves sick on a Monday, then he/she cannot return to school until a full 24-hour symptom free period has been completed. This means they cannot return until Wednesday.

***for COVID-19 information please visit the Benzie Central Schools Website

If your child is sick, but you feel he/she can come to school as long as he/she stays inside, please reconsider: a student well enough to attend school will be considered well enough to participate in outside play.

Parent Notification of Accident/Emergency/Incident Policies Illness:

Parents will be notified by phone of illness as soon as staff is aware of symptoms. If parents do not answer when staff calls, staff will begin calling numbers on the emergency contact list until someone is available to come get the ill child.

If a **major injury** occurs, including but not limited to significant head injuries, bleeding not contained by a bandage, rising bump or bruise on body, seizure, fainting, etc. you will be notified immediately, and staff will take medical measures necessary to maintain the health and safety of your child until you arrive. This may include 911 services, CPR, and/or First Aid procedures that staff is trained to administer.

If a **minor injury** occurs, including but not limited to a scratch, a bump without bruising, bleeding contained by a bandage, you will be notified by phone, text, email, or a note home. Discretion is left to the staff based on the specific circumstance.

For your child's sake, please keep the school updated on any change in emergency contact numbers and/or physical illness or conditions

ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL AND PARTICIPATION

When students come to school they should expect to participate in any and all activities provided for them.

- In the case of medical or religious reasons or when your child(ren) must miss recess, physical education, or some other activity, a note signed by the parent will be sufficient for one day.
- In case of any illness longer than one day in which the child attends school but cannot participate in the activity, a doctor's recommendation will be required.
- Students who become ill during school should tell their teacher and then report to the office where their condition can be evaluated. If there is reason for the student to go home, the office will inform the parent and the student will be released from school.

COVID-19 Expectations

- [Return to Benzie Plan](#)
- [Betsie Valley Elementary – Return to Benzie Plan](#)

INTERNET USE, SOCIAL MEDIA, RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

Benzie Central Schools is a one to one computing school, meaning that the district provides an electronic device to each student for their use within the school year. There are several documents that cover the intended use, expectations, and responsibilities of any family that decides to accept the use of school devices. For more information, please refer to the [Acceptable Use Agreement](#).

At the school, we have a network firewall to keep children in the appropriate places, and keep inappropriate things out. We also can check browsing histories and sign in information should problems arise.

When students are not at school, whether learning remotely or simply using a home computer or phone, parents have the responsibility to monitor their child's online behavior and keep them safe. By letting your child know that you are watching their online behavior, they will be more careful about what they post online. Here are five helpful suggestions:

1. **Become familiar** with what your children are doing online and monitor their activities.
2. **Speak to your child regularly** about what they watch and read online. Having one conversation is not enough. Talk to them about the latest trends so they know that you are aware about what is happening in the online world.
3. **Set internet rules, or make a contract**, that explains the expectations that you want your child to follow. A contract also works as a reminder for your child to follow the rules that have been agreed by both parents and children.
4. **Monitor** what your child is doing online. Different age groups may require a different set of monitoring levels but there are certain things that can stay the same regardless of your child's age. For instance, all computers should be located in a central area of the house and no mobile phones allowed in the bedroom beyond a certain hour of the night. Parents can even do a spot check on their child's devices.
5. **Check** your child's devices' browsing history to make sure they are doing what they say they are doing. Check their work to make sure they did the classwork they were assigned.

MEDICATIONS

Medications may be given at school when:

- The school receives written permission from the student's parent/guardian **and** written instructions of his/her doctor. This includes non-prescription medications.
- The teacher receives written permission from the student's parent/guardian granting permission for the student to have cough drops during school day. This note will grant permission for the child to take cough drops for that day only. Teachers may revoke this privilege if the privilege has been abused.
- All other medications will be kept in the office.
- Medication of any kind is to be brought to school by the parent or a responsible adult.
- Each elementary school has two (2) epinephrine auto-injectors ("EpiPens") and have trained at least two (2) staff members on their proper use, in accordance with Sections 1178 and 1179 of the revised school code.

***CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CARRY MEDICINE
ON THE BUS!**

***The exception to this would be students who are
prescribed emergency medication.***

MEDICAL LIMITATION STATEMENT

We need to know which school activities, if any, your child(ren) cannot participate in during the course of the school year. A written statement by your doctor will be necessary to excuse your child(ren) from participating in any school activity.

NOTICE OF DISCRIMINATION

The Benzie Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, height, weight, religion, marital status, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Superintendent of Schools or Director of Finance

9300 Homestead Road
Benzonia, MI 49616
231.882.9653

PETS

Pets can be wonderful teachers in classrooms and in homes. Unfortunately, many people who love pets also have allergies. Animals must not be brought to school on the bus. The teacher and the principal may grant permission to bring a pet to school before the pet is brought to school.

PERMISSION SLIPS

Benzie Central Elementary Schools provide many activities that require students to be taken off school property. When we need to take your child(ren) off school grounds we need your permission. Your permission is necessary because it tells us you know what is happening and that you understand whatever risks may occur. Children who do not have parental permission will not participate in the activity and will remain at the school under the direct supervision of a qualified staff member. Near the end of this handbook you will find a universal permission slip that when signed, grants your child permission to go on all class/school field trips.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

No charges or deposit fees will be required for the use of textbooks, workbooks, and other school supplies. Pencils and paper will be issued to students on a reasonable basis without charge. However, students (family) will be held responsible for the care and return of all textbooks, library books, and workbooks. Normal wear and tear of school materials is expected. Replacement or payment will be required when the student has shown negligence by damage or loss of books owned by the school. Fees will be prorated according to the purchase price. Damage to other school property will result in fees that will cover the cost of repair or replacement. **Please refer to the Internet Use section and link (page 9 of this document) for more detailed information regarding student/parent responsibilities and the use of school issued Chromebooks.**

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

To maintain order and discipline in the school and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student lockers and desks under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. Student lockers and desks are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school district; however, students assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. School authorities for any reason may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers and desks at any time without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. Locks are not to be used on students' lockers. Students are not to bring valuables or toys to school.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The District will not tolerate sexual harassment and other forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment (e.g., race, age, disability) at school. It will take appropriate actions to deal with any complaints. The complete District policy is available to all students and parents. A detailed explanation of the Board policy can be found on the school website.

SNOW DAYS and DELAYS

The decision to cancel classes is made as soon as possible. We will announce all closings over TV 9 & 10 and 7 & 4. We will also use a phone messaging system to call homes in the event of school delays or closures. TV stations are notified immediately and they post information on their websites. Closures are also posted at www.benzieschools.net and on the district's Facebook page.

Occasionally school is delayed because of weather. Watch the same sources for these notifications. Talk with your child(ren) and develop a plan of action for these situations. No breakfast will be served when there is a delay of school of two or more hours.

VOLUNTEERS and VISITORS

Benzie Central Elementary Schools welcome parents or other adults to assist in classrooms to help in a variety of ways (reading with children, art activities, room parties, special projects, field trips etc.). If you have a desire to help in the classroom, contact your child(ren)'s teacher(s) and complete a volunteer form prior to your work in the classroom. State law requires annual background checks and approvals before adults are permitted to volunteer in the school. Forms are available in each school or by following this [link](#).

On the day you volunteer, and to ensure that learning interruptions are minimal, please check in the office and make arrangements with your child's teacher before going to your child's classroom.

WEAPONS POLICY

Any object that is used to threaten or harm another person can be considered a weapon. There are school policies and state laws that deal with weapons at school. The District will not tolerate the use of weapons at school. It will take appropriate actions to deal with any threat to the safety of the students or staff.

GENERAL DISCIPLINE POLICY

By nature of their role as teacher and guide, school employees have the authority and responsibility to guide students as they learn and practice the expectations of behavior in school. Employees are expected to instruct and provide correction for students whose behavior interferes with their learning or the learning of others. Corporal punishment (paddling) at Benzie Central Elementary Schools is prohibited and will not be used as a form of discipline.

All Benzie Central Elementary Schools focus on implementing Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) within the school setting. The goal of these supports is to be proactive and provide systems that support students in making positive behavior choices. Examples of PBS may include: classroom instruction focused on social skills (ex. Self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making).

Even with the use of Positive Behavior Supports, sometimes students exhibit behaviors that interfere with learning. These behaviors may be tracked or referred for intervention.

Unexpected student behavior may be tracked and/or reported to parents to help determine the best way to support student's social emotional growth and membership within the school community. Unexpected student behavior is classified in two broad categories: Minor and Major incidents.

Minor Incidents	Major Incidents
<p>Inappropriate Language</p> <p>Physical Contact: Getting in someone else's space, stepping on backs of shoes, touching others while standing in line, using other materials (backpack, etc.) to touch someone</p> <p>Disruptive/Blurting: Talking without permission, interrupting or making noises after being given one warning</p> <p>Property Misuse: Abusing any school property (computers, text books, desks, etc.), abusing theirs or another student's property, etc.</p> <p>Disrespect: Doing anything to disrespect an adult or another student (same situation occurring more than once becomes a major incident)</p> <p>Other: tattling, off-task, bringing toys or electronics (when not checked in appropriately), dress code violations, etc.</p>	<p>Abusive Language: Putting down others or criticizing others using words or phrases that hurt another person's feelings</p> <p>Fighting/Physical Aggression: Pushing, kicking, punching, shoving, slapping, etc.</p> <p>Overt Defiance: Refusing to comply with an adult direction</p> <p>Harassment: Intentionally annoying or pestering another student to cause a reaction</p> <p>Bullying: When a person willfully and repeatedly exercises power or control over another with hostile or malicious intent</p> <p>Lying/Cheating/Stealing</p> <p>Destruction of School Property</p> <p>Other Majors</p>

The primary purpose of all discipline policies and restorative practices are to help resolve conflicts involving students who have behaviors that interfere with their learning or the learning of others.

Discipline and restorative practices

We discipline by creating an environment of structures, expectations, and practices that make it more likely that students will engage in responsible, respectful, and safe behaviors to solve problems, meet their needs, and manage their wants.

The environment we create includes the following restorative practices:

- Clear expectations are communicated regularly and throughout the school.
- Fair and equitable practices that permit people with differing opinions and experiences to be heard, their ideas valued, and their feelings respected.
- A framework of follow up actions designed to involve all parties in the problem solving, resolution, and repairing any harm done.

The purpose of restorative practices is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships.

Peer-to-Peer conflict

Peer conflict refers to mutual disagreement or hostility between peers or peer groups. It is characterized by but not limited to:

1. Conflict between people of equal or similar power
2. The conflict occurs occasionally
3. The conflict is unplanned
4. The conflict does not involve violence or result in serious harm
5. Students involved in peer conflict do not seek power or attention
6. Those involved usually have comparable emotional reactions
7. Those involved demonstrate some remorse
8. Those involved in peer to peer conflict actively try to resolve the problem

It is not bullying when two kids with no **perceived power imbalance** fight, have an argument, or disagree. Conflict resolution or peer mediation may be appropriate for these situations.

Bullying

Conflict is considered bullying when:

1. There is a perceived power imbalance
2. One person (or a group of people) willfully and repeatedly exercising power or control over another
3. There is perceived hostile or malicious intent (i.e., repeated oppression, physical and/or psychological, of a less powerful individual by a more powerful individual or group).
4. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three either in person or virtually.

To ensure that every student is provided with the care, support, safety, and membership they deserve within the school community, Benzie Central School has formulated detailed policies to describe and address peer conflict, bullying, and the school response to each. For a detailed explanation of this policy, please refer to the [district policy 5207](#).

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Bus Services - All Students enrolled at Benzie Central Elementary Schools will be offered bus pick up and drop off.

- Parents or guardians of students will ensure that their child understands and follows the rules and regulations for riding the school bus.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for their student's safety from the time the student leaves home up to the time the student boards the bus in the morning and as soon as the student gets off the bus in the afternoon.
- For safety reasons, all students enrolled in Kindergarten and Preschool must be accompanied to and from the bus stop by a designated adult or sibling. Other authorization may be designated by the parent or guardian but must be received in writing. By law, parents or guardians are not permitted to board a school bus (MCL 257.1859).

•

Walkers - All students enrolled at Benzie Central Elementary Schools have the option of walking to school. In the event parents wish for their child(ren) to walk to school, we request a note be sent to school to be placed on file in the office notifying us of your wishes. Students will only be permitted to walk home if a safe route has been verified and they are in upper elementary or with an upper elementary sibling. This will help to eliminate confusion at bus dismissal time.

Bicycles - Students may be permitted to ride a bike to school during the fall and spring with the written permission of their parent or guardian.

- The parent/guardian will provide a dated note stating that the student may ride a bicycle to school on what days and until what date.
- During severe weather the student will not be permit to ride home.
- Parents and students will assume all responsibility for lost/damaged/stolen bicycles.
- Bikes will be locked during school hours.
- The student retains the privilege to ride a bike to school unless:
 - He/she does not ride in a safe manner.
 - He/she does not obey the traffic supervisor (i.e., principal).
 - A student not wearing a helmet to or from school.

Parents - Parents always have the option of dropping off and picking up their children at school. We ask that the parents use extreme caution when doing so because of the high volume of children going in or coming out of the school depending on the time of the day. It is necessary for drivers to be on alert. It is expected that parents will observe all school traffic flow and parking rules.

- Parents must communicate with the office who can and cannot pick up their children at school.
- Please communicate with your child(ren) the adults with whom they are allowed to leave school.

Benzie Central School Bus Rules

1. Students will follow directions of the bus manager/driver.
2. Students should be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives, waiting in a safe place, clear of traffic and 12 feet from where the bus stops.
3. Students will wait in an orderly line and avoid playing.
4. Students will cross the roadway in front of the bus after the bus has stopped, the stop arm is out with red lights on, and they have looked in both directions for traffic; left, right, left.
5. Students will signal the bus driver with a waving motion if they dropped something and wait for the bus driver to give a signal before picking up object.
6. Students will go directly to assigned seat when entering the bus. Keep the aisles and exits clear.
7. Students will remain properly seated, back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat, and keep hands to themselves.
8. Students will not eat, drink, chew gum, or bring tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substances on the bus.
9. Students will not carry animals, glass objects, nuisance items, hazardous materials, or weapons onto the bus. Students may carry only objects that can be held in their laps.
10. Students will refrain from using loud voices, profanity, and/or obscene gestures, and respect the rights and safety of others.
11. Students will not extend head, arms, or objects out of the bus windows.
12. Students will be totally silent at railroad crossings.
13. Students will stay seated until time to get off the bus. The open door is the signal to get up from the bus seat. Students must always cross in front of the bus and look both ways, left, right, left again.
14. Students are expected to ride the bus to which they have been assigned and to get off at their assigned bus stop. Only in the event of an emergency, as determined by the principal or their representative, will a student be allowed to ride a different bus. Notification of this emergency must be sent to the school in a written note signed by the parent/guardian. The school administrator may provide a bus pass granting permission.
15. Students will keep their bus clean and in good, safe condition.
16. Students are allowed to "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD), but shall be prohibited from using such device during the operation of the school bus in a manner that interferes with the communication equipment or the bus driver's operation of the school bus. The bus driver may allow wearing of headphones with an audio system on a case-by-case basis as long as it is in accord with the local school rules.
17. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.
18. Cell phones will not be permitted if they create a distraction for the driver. Pictures are not allowed to be taken on a school bus.

BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The safety of all students is our primary responsibility. Students who make riding the bus unsafe for other students will have consequences that may include a referral and/or short bus suspension. Previous bus problems will remain in student files. Students who cause problems on the bus will be disciplined at the appropriate step on the bus discipline policy. Use of the video camera may also be used.

Students who repeatedly break bus rules will eventually lose bus privileges. The following steps will be followed on each bus:

1. Drivers will address any misbehavior or rule violation by a student at the driver level.
2. The driver will document problems and the solutions tried.
3. The driver will give three incidents of misbehavior or rule violations to the Driver Supervisor and parents will be notified.
4. If problems continue, the student will receive a one (1) day bus suspension.
5. If problems continue, three (3) day bus suspension will be issued.
6. If problems continue, a five (5) day bus suspension will be issued. Parents, student involved, bus driver, and bus driver supervisor will meet before bus riding privileges are reinstated. The building principal may be asked to attend this meeting.

Fighting – If a student engages with an open hand slap, it will be an automatic one (1) day bus suspension. If the student engages in a fight with a clenched fist it will be an automatic three (3) day bus suspension.

Exposure – If a student exposes any part of their anatomy in an inappropriate manner (i.e., flashing, etc.) it will be an automatic ten (10) day bus suspension with the possibility of law enforcement being contacted depending on age and intent.

Infractions of school rules will be handled through the school discipline policy cooperatively between the transportation department and the building principal. When a student abuses bus rules and bus privileges are denied, parents are expected to provide transportation on those days. When bus privileges are denied and the student is not in school the absences are unexcused.

ACADEMIC SERVICES

ASSESSMENTS

Benzie Central Elementary Schools provides students with a balanced system of assessments. Reading and math screeners and computer adaptive assessments are utilized at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year in order to provide indicators of student progress, provide proper feedback to students and families, and to support the adjustment of teaching and learning practices. The Michigan Statewide Assessment at the end of the school year compares student performance to the state standards.

CURRICULUM

Benzie Central elementary schools follow curriculum guidelines that are aligned with the Michigan State Standards. Our teachers see themselves as learners and teachers of learners and are continually seeking ways to improve their practice. All academic, behavioral, social, and emotional curriculums and practices include these important qualities:

1. Understanding and application of principles of positive behavior supports.
2. Development and implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports that are responsive to students' needs.

3. Practical application of the practices of mentoring and advocating.
4. Proactive planning to respond to and support students related to crisis and trauma.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

It is our goal for all students to build confidence and a willingness to invest themselves in the learning process. Student engagement and parent support are important objectives. Some subject matters, particularly health and sex education, can raise questions that deserve to be answered. If a parent has concerns or questions relating to instructional materials, they are encouraged to contact the building principal to arrange for a time to discuss the materials or observe a classroom in session. Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to restrictions and limits.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Northwest Education Services offers several special education services for students in the Benzie Central School District. Supports provided are determined by the students Individualized Education Plan (IEP). They also are a part of our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.

NWES provides the following support services:

- School Psychologist
- Teacher Consultant
- School Social Worker
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Speech/Language Pathologist
- Autism Consultant
- Hearing Impaired Consultant
- Visually Impaired Consultant
- Behavior Consultant
- Assistive Technology Consultant

For more information on these services, please contact your child's building principal.

TITLE I READING AND MATH

The Title I Program is a federally funded program that offers support of classroom objectives in the areas of math and reading for students in grades kindergarten through five. Children qualify for this support by teacher recommendation, test scores, and classroom performance. Parents have the right to request information regarding the qualifications/certifications of their child's teacher.

STUDENT RECORDS

Transfer from sending school

Your child(ren)'s records will be transferred from school office to school office via the postal service. When you enroll at your new school, you will sign authorization for Benzie Central Schools to send for your child(ren)'s records from their previous school.

Release to other schools

If you are leaving our school for another school district, you will not be able to personally take your child(ren)'s records with you. When you enroll at your new school, you will sign authorization for that school district to send for your child(ren)'s records from Benzie Central Schools.

Right of access and privacy of records

Parents or guardians of a student under eighteen (18) years of age, or a student eighteen (18) years or older may have access to the records, files and data at the District relating to the student and have the following rights:

1. The right to examine the student's records.
2. The right to have the administration hear evidence that any part of the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates a student's privacy or other rights; to have the record changed if the administration agrees with the applicants' evidence; and to insert an explanation in the record if the administration disagrees.
3. The right to have records which personally refer to a student kept confidential except by consent of the parent or guardian of a student under eighteen years of age or a student eighteen years of age or older or when being used by school personnel for school business. Some official agencies may also have access to records.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Benzie Central Elementary Schools offer a breakfast program after the buses arrive in the morning. Breakfast includes items such as French toast, eggs, hot and cold cereal, muffins, and fruit juices. Benzie Central Elementary Schools ALL offer a Universal Breakfast. There is no charge to the student's account for breakfast.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Benzie elementary schools offer students wholesome choices for nutritious hot lunch. Every effort is made by Chartwell to make this meal attractive and tasty.

- Hot lunch is available to students on all full days of school.
- Milk is available for those wishing to carry their lunch.

Families are asked to fill out an application as soon as school opens in the fall.

- Students who received free/reduced lunches during the previous school year will continue to receive the same benefit for the first 30 school days of the new school year to permit time for the completion of an application for the current school year.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in October. This is an opportunity for parents to come in and review their child(ren)'s progress in school with their teacher. Please plan to attend. Over the past few years we have come to expect 100% attendance by parents at these scheduled conferences. Bring any questions, comments, and concerns to share with your child's teacher. Remember that conferences can be held at any time. Call or write to your child(ren)'s teacher if you have a concern. Don't let a little problem become a big one. Remember that education takes teamwork. The ultimate goal is for your child(ren) to have a successful educational experience at Benzie Central Elementary Schools.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS

Each of the Benzie Central Elementary Schools has a parent-teacher organization. Parents are cordially invited to become members of this group. This is one means of becoming better acquainted with the school and the teachers of your children. Each parent teacher organization offers a variety of stimulating programs for students periodically throughout the school year and informative discussion topics for the adults at the monthly meetings.

Please note that all evening activities that are sponsored by the school Parent Organization will require attendance of an adult chaperone unless otherwise noted.

2023 BENZIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board member emails can be found following [this link](#).

Brian Childs, President

Jason Barnard, Vic-President

Chris Noffsinger, Secretary

Scott Gray, Treasurer

Matt Smith, Trustee

Lori Cota Hill, Trustee

Shannon Gillson, Trustee

All Benzie Central Board of Education Policies (Thrun) are on the district's website at www.benzieschools.net

Effective July 1, 1996, current School Board policy eliminates the use of ALL tobacco products, at any time, in school buildings and on all school grounds and/or leased property.

**BENZIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIELD TRIP PERMISSION SLIP**

Dear Parents,

All elementary schools offer one single field trip permission slip for the entire school year. This permission slip will allow students to go on field trips that fall during regular school hours during the school year. Staff members will continue to keep families informed about field trips and when chaperones will be needed. Overnight field trips and trips that extend the school day will still need a separate signed permission slip.

Thank you!
Principals,

Sharyl Corey, Steve Graetz, Rachel Anderson

Betsie Valley, Homestead Hills, Lake Ann

Please check the school your child attends:

_____ Betsie Valley

_____ Crystal Lake

_____ Lake Ann

_____ has my permission to go
on field trips during the (*Student's Name*)

school day. In case of an accident or serious illness, a school employee can reach me at:

Phone number: _____ or _____

In case of an accident or serious illness and I cannot be reached, I give my permission for school employees to call 911 or contact a physician or hospital and take whatever action is necessary.

_____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

**BENZIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS LEARNING AGREEMENT
PARENT / STUDENT / TEACHER / PRINCIPAL CONTRACT**

Parent / Guardian Agreement

To help my child succeed, I will:

- see that my child is punctual and attends school regularly.
- support the school discipline policy and support school staff.
- encourage and support learning outside the school environment.
- read and review all information my child brings home from school.
- support the completion of homework.
- attend parent/teacher conferences for my child.
- monitor my child's schoolwork and progress.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Student Agreement

To reach my potential, I will:

- be respectful, responsible, and safe.
- attend school regularly and be punctual.
- return my assignments on time.
- follow the school and classroom rules.
- come to school each day prepared and ready for learning.
- always do my best and believe I can learn.

Student's Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Teacher Agreement

To help my students reach their potential, I will:

- provide a safe and caring learning environment where students can be responsible for learning.
- provide an enriching and challenging curriculum.
- provide appropriate and meaningful assignments for students.
- foster a home to school connection.

Teacher's Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Principal Agreement

To help students reach their potential, I will:

- provide a positive and safe environment for learning.
- provide an environment that allows for communication among teacher, parent, and student.
- support school functions.
- provide the materials necessary for the classroom. *Principal's Signature:*

_____ *Date:* _____

**BENZIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS
INTERNET REGISTRATION CONTRACT**

In exchange for the use of the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection, I, _____, agree to abide by the contents of the Benzie Central Schools Internet Policy and the following Internet Registration Contract:

1. That the use of the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection is a privilege, which may be revoked by staff or faculty at any time for abusive and/or inappropriate conduct. Such conduct would include, but not be limited to, the placing of unlawful information or graphics on the system, and the use of obscene, abusive, or otherwise objectionable language in either public or, upon the registration of complaint, private messages or other systems that are accessed through the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection. The staff and faculty of the Benzie Central Schools will be the sole arbiter of what constitutes obscene, abusive, or objectionable language or conduct.
2. That the use of the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection is a privilege which may be revoked by the administration of the system at any time for conduct that embarrasses, harms or in any way detracts from the good name and reputation of the Benzie Central Schools and/or its faculty and staff, or any organizations, groups and institutions with which the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection is affiliated. The faculty and staff of the Benzie Central Schools will be the sole arbiter of what constitutes this unacceptable conduct.
3. That the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection reserves the right to review any materials stored in any files and will edit or remove any material which the faculty or staff, at its sole discretion, believes may be unlawful, obscene, abusive or otherwise objectionable.
4. That all information services and features contained on the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection are intended for the educational use of the students, faculty, and staff, and any commercial and/or unauthorized use of these materials and/or services is strictly forbidden.
5. That the use of email services is allowed and encouraged as an educational activity, however the use of chatrooms or similar conversational services is allowed ONLY under supervision of a faculty or staff person.
6. That in consideration for the privilege of using the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection and in consideration for having access to the information contained within, I hereby release the Benzie Central Schools, its faculty and staff, and all organizations, groups and institutions with which the Benzie Central Schools Internet Connection is affiliated, for any and all claims of any nature arising from use, or inability to use, said internet connection.
7. If a student fails to responsibly abide by the necessary code of conduct, the student elects the standard choices for irresponsible actions. As necessary, administration may need to limit the usage of computers by destructive and/or irresponsible students in order to ensure a quality computer system for the responsible student. This may involve limiting a student to the use of only one room of computers or one computer, or limiting a student to the computer only with adult supervision. In severe cases, a student may be assigned detention, or forfeit computer privileges for a set period of time. First offense options may include two weeks off computers, second offense options may include nine weeks off computers and a third offense may be a loss of computer privileges for the remainder of the school year. First offenses of a serious nature can automatically move to the second or third offense at the discretion of the building principal.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Signature of Student

Daytime Telephone -

Evening Telephone Date

Permission to Publish Student Photographs and/or Work

We recognize the value of audio-visual and other types of electronic communication in providing our child with an effective education. We recognize that our child and/or his/her schoolwork products may be photographed or videotaped as part of an educational program produced by the District or coalition of districts. We further recognize that photographs or videotapes may be used in media presentations that are made available to other educational institutions or through a cable television station or network. In addition, photographs may be used on the District web site, may be published in teacher web pages, or may be distributed to local print media sources. We understand that our child's image, name, work product, school and grade may be revealed in the presentation(s) but that no other information about our child or his/her schoolwork will be revealed without prior consent. If you do NOT want to allow your child's name, likeness or work to be published as part of District publication activities, please circle (NO) below, sign the form, and return it to the District by October 1.

NO, please refrain from using my child's picture and/or school work in District publications including newsletters, web sites, newspapers, and videos.

Student(s) Name: _____

Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

To see examples of work that is already published on the World Wide Web, visit our district's web site at www.benzieschools.net

Benzie Central Schools Publishing Guidelines:

- Published documents will not include a child's phone number, street address, box number or names of other family members.
- Documents will not include any information which indicates the physical location of a student at a given time other than attendance at a particular school or participation in school activities.
- Documents must conform to school board policies and established school guidelines.
- Documents must be approved by a referring teacher and a member of the technology team before publication.

It is the policy of this District that no student shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or citizenship status, creed or ancestry, age, gender, disability, height, weight, or other protected characteristics. 7540 F4