



Student Handbook

DEAR STUDENTS AND PARENTS,

Every day when you enter the doors of Buffalo Community Middle School, you become a welcomed partner of an educational family. As a member of this family you will be expected to take responsibility for your decisions and actions, to treat others with respect, and have a positive attitude. You have the basic right to a safe, respectful environment in which to grow and learn successfully. Staff at Buffalo Community Middle School further believes that our success will be enhanced by the active involvement and cooperation of home, school, and community.

Sincerely,



Matt Lubben, Principal

**Buffalo Community Middle School
DAILY SCHEDULE**

Prime Time: 7:45 – 8:02

1st hour: 8:07 - 9:00

2nd hour: 9:05 - 9:58

3rd hour: 10:03 - 10:56

4th hour: 11:01 - 12:24

8th grade lunch is from 10:56 – 11:22, 4th hour at 11:27 – 12:24

7th grade 4th hour starts at 11:01 – 11:27, lunch from 11:27 – 11:53, 4th hour continues from 11:58 – 12:24

6th grade 4th hour starts at 11:01 – 11:58, lunch 11:58 – 12:24

5th hour: 12:29 - 1:22

6th hour: 1:27 - 2:20

TWO HOUR LATE START

Prime Time does not meet on late start days

1st hour: 9:45 - 10:18

2nd hour: 10:23 - 10:56

4th hour: 11:01 - 12:24

8th Grade Lunch 10:56 - 11:22

7th Grade Lunch 11:27 - 11:53

6th Grade Lunch 11:58 - 12:24

3rd hour: 12:29 - 1:04

5th hour: 1:09 - 1:42

6th hour: 1:47 - 2:20

“An annual review of the school’s discipline policy was conducted as a part of the process of assembling this year’s handbook.”

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

•STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Counseling and Social Work Services – You may make an appointment with the school counselor or social worker by going to the support services hallway. The counselors are available to talk over problems you might be having with your school work, students, teachers, family, etc. Our counselors are Ashley Kamphenkel (682-8217) for 8th grade students and Penny Thalacker (682-8219) for 6th and 7th grade students.

Health & Nursing Services - The health office is directed by a licensed school nurse and staffed by a health aide. Students who become ill during the school day are to report to the health office. The health aide will assist students in determining what they should do. Students who need to take medications during the school day are to bring medications to the health office. Parental permission is required to use any medication at school and a physician’s order is necessary for any prescription medications. The health office will hold over the counter medications (such as Tylenol or ibuprofen) as it may not be kept in your locker. Forms for medication use during school may be picked up from the health office. For the safety of our students, staff and the general public who use our buildings, the district does not allow the use of latex balloons in any capacity, in any school building, at any time of the day. However, Mylar (Foil) balloons are allowed. If students have special health needs such as diabetes, seizures, asthma or ADD, please feel free to contact the school nurse with questions or concerns. Our health aide, Mary Piekarski’s number is 763-682-8208 and Stephanie Gleason, the school nurse’s number is 763-682-8211.

Special Education - Trained staff are available to provide students who have learning and physical handicaps with help and support.

Police Resource Officer – Mark Brown, our School Resource Officer at Buffalo Community Middle School is available to students, staff, and parents. He can be reached at 763-682-8240.

• STUDENT HOURS

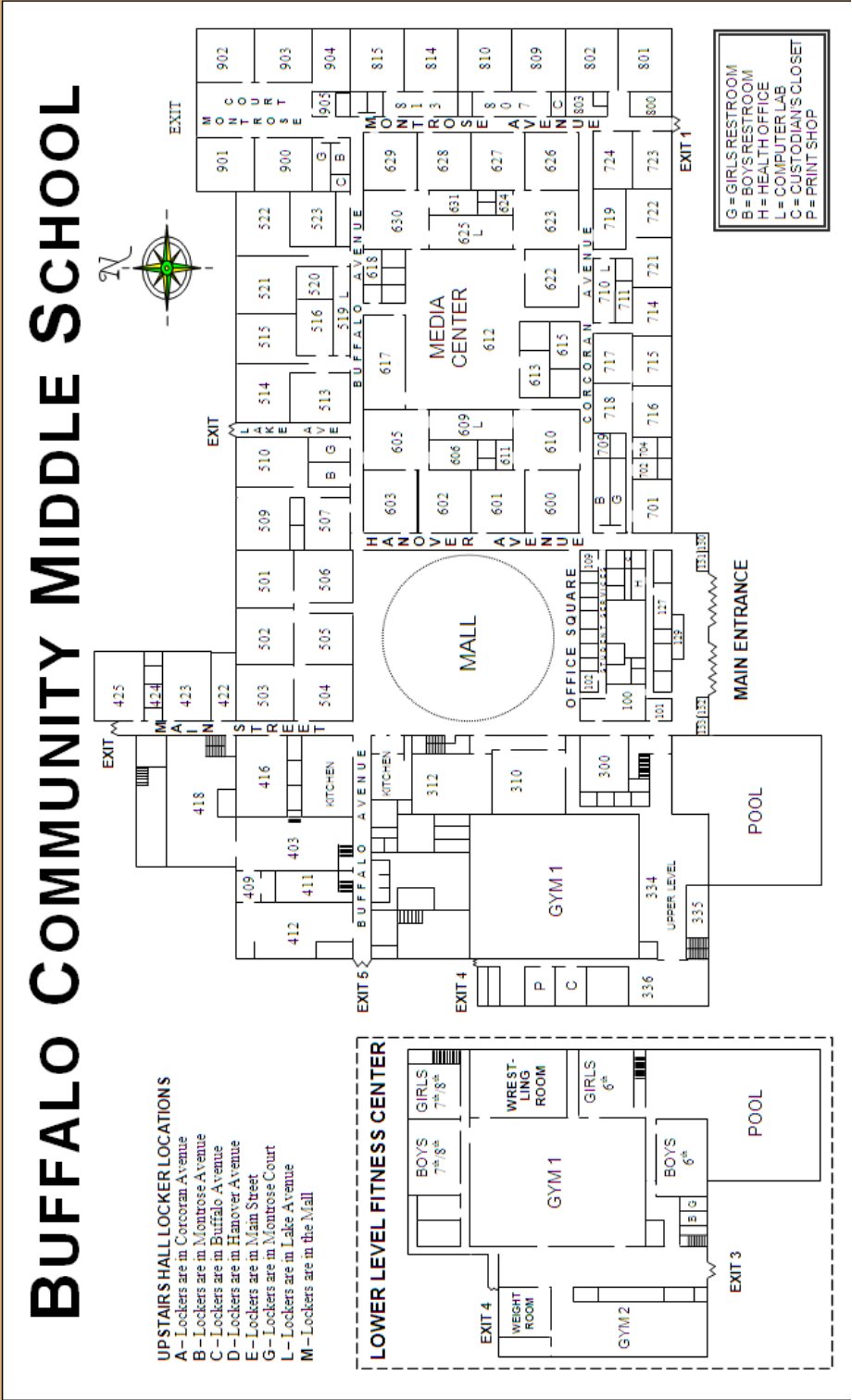
If you arrive before 7:20 am, you should wait in the mall area until you hear the bell. If you are here after 2:35 pm, you must be in a supervised area or activity.

• ACADEMIC TEAMS

Every sixth and seventh grade student is a member of a team. Each team is a smaller community within the larger school. Most team classes are in a common area, and your schedule is flexible depending on the plans made by the team teachers. 8th Grade students are not teamed.

• MEDIA CENTER

You are always welcome in the Media Center – before classes begin, with your class, or with a pass from your teacher. The Media Center is a place to look for materials, read or work quietly. Please follow instructions given by Ms. Bauernschmitt and the Media Center paraprofessionals. You may check out books for 3 weeks and magazines for 1 week. A charge will be assessed for books lost or not returned.



• **RACIAL/RELIGIOUS/SEXUAL HARASSMENT & HAZING**

It is the policy of Independent School District 877 to maintain a learning and working environment that is free of Racial/Religious/Sexual Harassment & Violence. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of School District 877 to harass a student or employee through conduct or communication of a racial/religious sexual nature or hazing nature. The school district will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal—verbal or written. The school district will discipline any student or employee who violates this policy. Students are requested to complete a “Student Concern Report Form” to provide documentation of any Racial/Religious/Sexual Harassment & Hazing. These forms are available from a principal or the front office.

• **RELEASE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

In accordance with the Minnesota Data Practices Act, Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools may release the following information without permission unless the district has been notified that it should not be released:

- Student’s name, address and telephone number
- Student’s gender and date and place of birth
- Major Field of study
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Dates of attendance and grade levels completed
- Degrees and awards received
- Most recent previous educational agency or institution attended
- Photographs for school district publications and local newspaper
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*Parents or students ages 18 or older who do not want this information released must notify the district in writing by October 1, 2012.

*Throughout the year, photographs are taken in classrooms and at school activities. Some of these may be published in district publications or submitted to local newspapers. Parents may request that their children’s photographs and identifying names not be published. This request must be made in writing to the District Communications Coordinator.

• **FOOD SELECTIONS**

The school cafeteria is a vital part of the health program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced lunch is offered for \$2.55. A breakfast program will be available from 7:00 am until 7:40 am at a cost of \$1.75. Money needs to be deposited in the lunch ticket box before 9:30 am to be available that day. Free and reduced lunches are available after filling out a qualifying application. Parents can call our food service at 763-682-8233 for lunch account information or sign up for PAMS (www.paypams.com), a web based system to keep track of all lunch accounts. A clean-up bell will ring one minute before the end of breakfast and lunch. When you hear this bell, please take pride in our building by picking up your garbage and returning all trays and utensils to the dishwashing carts neatly stacked.

• **LOCKERS**

8th graders will be allowed to choose their locker location. 6th and 7th grade students will be assigned lockers. Please do not switch lockers or give your locker combination to another student. Hall lockers and physical education lockers are “on loan” to students for the school year and remain the property of the District 877. Students will be responsible for any damage incurred to lockers during the school year. School locks can be purchased in the front office for \$5.00. For security reasons, all lockers must have a school lock on them. It is the individual student’s responsibility to keep his/her locker clean and neat inside and out. Students are advised not to keep money or other valuables in their lockers. The school will not be responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen property. Students are expected to keep hallway and physical education lockers locked at all times. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers when building administrators deems such action necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff.

• **STUDENT RECORDS POLICY**

District 877 shall permit the parents of a student to inspect and review the educational records of the student, except those that are made confidential by state or federal law. District 877 will comply with the request as soon as possible or within five days of the date of the request, excluding Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays. If we can’t comply within five days, the parent will be notified and an additional five days will be permitted.

• **VISITORS**

Any visitors who come to the school during the school day must sign in and wear an identification badge. We ask that all visitors follow these procedures so that we can ensure the safety of our students. Students are not to bring other student guests during the school day. Requests for visitations due to extenuating circumstances must be cleared by administration at least one week in advance.

• **BUS POLICIES**

Each fall, the school sends out a transportation policy that explains the bus rules. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right and failure to follow the rules will mean loss of bus riding privileges. Due to budget restrictions, there will be no after school activity buses again this year. It is also the expectation that all students will ride his or her own bus to and from school. It is district policy that students may not ride to school or home on another student’s bus.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

• ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All BCMS students are expected to adhere to the fundamental values of academic integrity, which include honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Scholastic dishonesty is defined as cheating on assignments or tests, plagiarizing, altering, fabricating, forging, or acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly homework, tests or grades.

• PRIME TIME

At the beginning of each school day, all BCMS students meet in their Prime Time groups. These groups include sixth, seventh, and eighth graders together with an advisor, who will remain with the group all three years. This time will be spent learning about our school and one another, developing relationships, promoting reading, and having an adult who is there to answer any questions for you.

• STUDENT GRADE REPORTS

Parents and students will have access to mid-term progress reports and term report cards through the Infinite Campus portal. Parents must request a paper copy of report cards if they so desire. Please contact Kim Dingmann with requests (682-8207).

• INCOMPLETE GRADES

Students must complete all coursework before the end of the term. In the event that an extenuating situation exists which may require additional time for completing coursework, a student must complete the required coursework on a timeline set by the instructor or the grade will change to an F by mid-term of the following quarter.

• GRADING SYSTEM

Buffalo Community Middle School’s grading system is based on the following 12-point system:

(A+) = 12	(B) = 8	(C-) = 4
(A) = 11	(B-) = 7	(D+) = 3
(A-) = 10	(C+) = 6	(D) = 2
(B+) = 9	(C) = 5	(D-) = 1
		(F) = 0

Students will be recognized for scholastic achievement by a published honor roll. To be included on the “A” honor roll, students must achieve a grade point average of 10.00 or above. To be included on the “B” honor roll students must achieve a grade point average (GPA) from 7.000 to 9.999. Students in the 8th grade Geometry class will receive one high school credit upon successful completion of the course.

• EXPULSION

Expulsion as defined by Minnesota State Law (MSA 127.26 - 127.40): “Expulsion” means an action taken by a school board to prohibit an enrolled pupil from further attendance for a period that shall not extend beyond one calendar year. Students will be recommended to the Board of Education of Independent School District #877 for expulsion from school for severe or persistent violation of school policy.

• SCHOOL SAFETY

All doors are to remain locked during normal school hours with the exception of the south side of the building by the office. Students are asked to help us by not opening any back doors for any reason during the day. All district employees have identification badges to wear during student contact hours. Any visitor, parent, or worker should register in the office and wear a visitor’s badge. If you see anyone without a badge, please tell the nearest adult. If you hear any information that could result in harm to any person or property, report that information to the nearest adult. Video cameras are used throughout the hallways to ensure student safety. We have regularly scheduled fire drills, severe weather drills, and lockdown drills each year. Please participate and cooperate as if they are real so we can be prepared for these situations if they occur.

• DANGEROUS WEAPONS POLICY

It is the policy of the Independent School District 877 to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from threats or harmful influence of any person(s) or group(s) that exhibit and promote violence and disruptive behaviors. The Board of Education is committed to promoting healthy human relationships, working and learning environments that are physically and psychologically safe. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil or staff member to possess a firearm or a dangerous weapon when in the school building, or school grounds, on the school bus or on any school-related activity. District personnel or students shall not bring or store a “dangerous weapon” on school property. This policy does not apply to firearm safety, color guard or marksmanship courses or approved activities that may be conducted on school property.

• COMPUTER/INTERNET USAGE

During the first weeks of school all students will receive copies of the Buffalo Community Middle School computer and Internet usage policy. Students will sign a sheet saying that they know, understand and will abide by these policies. Computers at Buffalo Community Middle School are to be used for schoolwork and all printing must be related to school projects. Any electronic device that you bring to BCMS will be under the same guidelines.

• **APPROPRIATE CLOTHING / ACCESSORIES**

Clothing acceptable for school does not jeopardize anyone’s health or safety, does not disrupt the teaching/learning process, does not create school disorder, and is not immodest in any respect. Parents are asked to be observant of what their child wears to school and to assist in selecting appropriate clothing. No short shorts or skirts and low cut blouses or tops will be allowed. There will be no midriffs or undergarments showing. Students are asked to respectfully remove their headwear upon arriving at their locker. Students may not wear clothing or accessories which display words or images advertising directly or indirectly, alcohol, tobacco, drugs or related products or which promote the use of these products or which are profane, obscene, or sexually suggestive. During physical education swim units, female students are required to wear a one-piece swimsuit or cover up a two-piece suit with a tank top or t-shirt. Students wearing improper attire will be required to correct it at school if possible or be required to call home for a change of clothes.

• **STUDENT TOBACCO USE POLICY**

Buffalo Community Middle School is a tobacco free school. Student use and/or possession of tobacco in any form will not be permitted on or adjacent to or within sight of any district property, on district property, on district school buses or loading or unloading areas or at any school event, home or away. Minnesota State Law prohibits anyone under 18 to possess/use tobacco. In addition to receiving school consequences, violators will be referred to the School Resource Officer.

• **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

The possession or use of drugs or alcohol is a serious violation of state laws and punishable by fines and/or imprisonment. Violators will be reported to the proper authorities and/or social agencies. Students who are under the influence of chemicals while at school, or who consume, sell, give away or have possession of drugs, paraphernalia, or alcohol on school property or at school sponsored activities may be suspended or expelled from school. Illegal substances and related items will be confiscated. All over-the-counter drugs must be kept in the Health Office. Before a suspended student can be readmitted to school, a conference consisting of parents, student and the principal will be arranged to determine the best course of action for the student and the school. If exclusion or expulsion is recommended, it will follow state law. In addition, principals may send a student home if the principal suspects (via smell, action, and/or appearance) that a student has used drugs/alcohol. Our goal is to handle the situation in a manner that is in the best interest of the student, the student body and staff.

• **SUSPENSION**

Occasionally it becomes necessary to suspend a student from school. In this event, the Minnesota State Law (MSA 121A.46-127.40) will govern all procedures: Students may be suspended from school for any of the following:

- 1. Willful violation of any school regulation.
- 2. Willful conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the right of others to an education (this includes test cheating, harassment, threats of physical or mental harm, and/or offensive language).
- 3. Willful conduct which endangers persons or property (fighting, vandalism, stealing).
- 4. Other violations included in the District School Discipline Policy.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

• **PRESIDENTIAL ACADEMIC AWARD**

Buffalo Community Middle School recognizes superior academic achievement. Students with a cumulative 11.0 grade point average for the first three quarters will receive a Presidential Academic Award Certificate.

• **STUDENT OF THE WEEK**

Each week, teams and departments name two “Student of the Week”. Students receive a certificate from their teacher(s) describing positive contributions the student has made to Buffalo Community Middle School. Once a quarter, students and parents are invited to a morning breakfast and recognition ceremony.

• **8TH GRADE STUDENT OF DISTINCTION**

Each month, our teachers collectively vote in an eighth grade Student of Distinction. This student leader is selected based on the attitude, character, respect, compassion, service, courage, and integrity exhibited throughout their middle school experience. At the end of the school year, a poster of selected students will be posted in our mall area for posterity.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

• **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The administration and faculty of Buffalo Community Middle School believe that regular school attendance is a significant and valuable component of a student’s education. Regular attendance is directly correlated to successful academic achievement. Moreover, consistent school attendance is one means by which a student develops responsibility and self-discipline. For these reasons, student absence from school should be limited to those instances in which it is unavoidable. Each student, his or her parent or guardian, and the school share an obligation to encourage and ensure the student’s continuous school attendance. The school may request medical verification for excessive absences. This philosophy is reflected and implemented in the Attendance Policy of Buffalo Community Middle School.

• **WHAT TO DO IF ABSENT: CALL THE ATTENDANCE HOTLINE: 763-682-8242**

If a student is gone from school for any reason, parents or guardians need to call the absence in to the attendance hotline listed above, or send a note to school with their son or daughter as to why they missed. A student will be considered absent when the student is missing from school for any day or part of the day. When medical absences from school reach ten or more, a letter requesting medical verification may be sent home. From that point on, all additional absences will require medical verification to be considered excused.

• **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

Before or on the morning of a student’s absence, the student’s parents or guardian is requested to call the attendance clerk’s voice mail at 682-8242. This number may be accessed 24 hours a day. Students and parents should be aware that if the school does not receive verification to excuse the absence within two days of the absence, the absence may become a truancy.

• **STUDENT ABSENCES**

The school reserves the right to excuse a student from school. Valid excuses for absence/tardies may include: illness, medical or dental appointments, death of a family member or close relative, religious reasons, official school field trips, co-curricular events, suspension, a significant family event, and other absences/tardies at the discretion of the building administration. Those absences/tardies, which are not listed under Excused Absences/Tardies and are not excused by administration, shall be considered unexcused, such as missing the bus or oversleeping.

• **MAKE-UP WORK**

Students who are absent because of activities, vacations, and other scheduled or prearranged activities must notify the office in advance before their absence or the absence may be considered unexcused/truant. Advanced notification forms are available in the office. Homework must be completed in advance of the absence or other arrangements must be made with your teachers. When a student returns to class from an unanticipated absence, the teacher will provide make-up work and a clearly defined due date for that make-up work.

• **TARDINESS**

We believe that being on time is a very important life skill and vital to academic success. Students are expected to be in class when the class begins. Students who are tardy at the start of the school day should report to the front desk and sign in.

Classroom Tardies

- 1. Warning
- 2. Teacher call home to parent
- 3. Detention assigned at the discretion of the teacher (i.e. with teacher after school, Thursday Afternoon detention, staying in at lunch, etc.)
- 4. Referral to administration

• **TRUANCY**

Definition: When a student is absent from any class without parental request and administrative approval, the absence is considered a truancy. Absences that are not excused within two days are truanies. Remember, the attendance telephone line is accessible 24 hours a day. It is the parent and student’s responsibility to make sure his or her absences are verified. Minnesota law defines a student as “continuing truant” after only three class periods without a valid excuse on three different days. At this point a letter will be sent out to parents stating the school’s concern. A child becomes a “habitual truant” in the eyes of the law when he or she is absent without a valid excuse for one or more class periods of seven school days. At this point a truancy petition will be filed with the county, and parents will be required to provide a doctor’s excuse for any future absences. A doctor’s note may also be required for excessive excused absences.

EXPECTED BEHAVIORS AND REQUIREMENTS

• **BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

All BCMS students are expected to respect the others in our school community. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior in the school, in the classroom, and at all school activities. Good behavior is necessary to provide a successful educational environment. The following guidelines will help ensure that the educational program can function to the best advantage for all students and staff.

- 1. Be present in classes daily.
- 2. Be in class on time.
- 3. Be prepared for class.
- 4. Be attentive and participate in classroom activities.
- 5. Make an effort to be successful.
- 6. Show respect for teachers, other students, and school property by not engaging in activities that disturb the class or school environment.
- 7. Skateboards, roller blades, and roller shoes are not to be used on school property.
- 8. Take care of school property. Help keep classrooms and our school neat and clean.
- 9. Keep personal property in your possession or in your assigned locked locker.
- 10. Students will have opportunities to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Any person may elect not to and students must respect another person’s right to make that choice.
- 11. Ethical use of electronic equipment & technology is expected.
- 12. Backpacks are not allowed in all areas of the building. Students will place them in their lockers when they arrive, and leave them in their lockers until time to leave. Students are encouraged to work on organization and plan locker stops so that carrying a backpack is not necessary.
- 13. Pictures and video taken by non-school personnel on school grounds or during school sponsored activities is not allowed without written consent.
- 14. All bikes must be locked on bike racks, which are located on the East side of the building. For safety reasons, bikes and skateboards are not to be used in the bus loading area.

• **BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS**

Various intervention strategies will be used when infractions of school rules occur including consequences such as detentions, suspension, or in severe cases, expulsion. Parent conferences are necessary for re-admittance following a student suspension. Our school resource officer may talk to students about any school rule infraction.

• **PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PED’s)**

Cellular phones and PED’s are allowed in the classroom during the school day from 7:45 am – 2:20 pm with approval by a teacher for instructional reasons. This includes the use of ear buds and headphones. If you choose to bring a cell phone or PED to school, the school is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft. Students using electronic equipment during the day without teacher permission may lose possession of the item and parents may be asked to pick the item up in the front office. If students wish to contact a parent or guardian during the school day, phones are available in the front office.