



Benton Middle School Staff

Middle School Bobcat Blurb

Benton Middle School

Welcome to the first edition of the 2011-12 school year MS Bobcat Blurb.

The intent of this document is to increase communication between home and school.

I'm going to start with a few things that I hope you know about already, but if you don't — here's some great information to learn:

1. **Voicelink Number:**

830-2164

This is a toll-free number that you can call to get updated information on what is happening in school. When accessing the Benton Voicelink from either a cell phone or long distance, please know that the prefix is 515 and the number is 515-830-2164.

2. **PowerSchool** can be used

to check on your child's grades and progress. Emails can be sent automatically every Sunday night to let you know your child's progress. If you don't know or have forgotten your password or need to give us an updated email address, please call Melisa @ 319-228-8701 ext. 356 for help.

3. **Benton Communications Team** (BCT) meets four

times/year. We'd love to have more parents and community members be part of this group. Our first meeting of the year is on Wednesday, Oct. 5 @ 7:00p.m. in the MS/HS Media Center. You can find more information about the BCT on the Benton webpage.

4. **Iowa School Alerts** is a great way to get information about school related activities via your email and/or cell

phone. To sign up go to: <https://schoolalerts.iowa.gov/>

5. **School Reach** is a service that we can blast out messages to your phone numbers — please be sure that we have your current information in our Power School system. please call Melisa @ 319-228-8701 ext. 356 for help.

6. Our first conferences are Sept. 21 from 3:00—8:00 p.m. Please plan on attending with or without your child. If you have questions before then, you are welcome and encouraged to please call or email your child's teacher.

7. Contact us anytime you have questions or comments. Open communication will help increase your child's learning experience here at Benton.

Jo Prusha

MS Principal

Middle School Parent Ideas To Think About from Larry Carlson

Dear Parent(s),

We know that it can be both rewarding and challenging to have a teenage child. We have put some ideas together to help you ease the transition from elementary to the middle school. If you have any other thoughts to share, please feel free to contact a staff member.

Your child will tell you the truth, but it may only be 50, 75 or 90 percent of the truth. Keep asking them questions and listen closely to what they are saying.

"I don't know" is not always an acceptable answer and may mean "I don't want to talk about it." Again, you may have to come back to the issue a little later, but keep visiting and asking questions.

Saying "No" to your child is ok and they will be fine no matter what they tell you. If you are not comfortable with what your child wants to do, "No" is acceptable.

Your child may be upset that you said "No" or for other reasons with you making parental decisions. They will get over it in a few minutes, hours or days. They will respect you for being a parent as they mature.

There is homework given each day. They may tell you that they don't have homework, see the first bullet.

There are expectations for your child regarding their dress attire, cell phone use, behavior and technology use. Please see the handbook for the policies and any clarifications.

<http://www.benton.k12.ia.us/Middle%20School/MS%20Handbook%2011-12.pdf>

The internet is a great tool for finding information, entertainment and communicating. Please visit with your child about your expectations of social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc) and using those sites responsibly. Inappropriate use of those websites from home could lead to distractions in the learning environment at school.

These are some issues we have encountered at the middle school level. We are trying to help you have some dialogue with your child to be proactive to these issues instead of reactive.

Upcoming Dates

September 2, 2011	Picture day at the MS/HS
September 5, 2011	No School (Labor Day)
September 7, 2011	1:00 Dismiss
September 16, 2011	Homecoming
September 21, 2011	No School (PD) 7-12 Conferences 3-8p.m.
October 5, 2011	1:00 Dismiss (
October 19, 2011	No School (PD)

Special points of interest:

- MS Lesson plans and our MS Handbook can be accessed at the Benton Community Web page: www.benton.k12.ia.us Follow the links to the Middle School Tab to find out more information.
- Thanks for all your efforts in your child's education. If you have suggestions about what you'd like to know more about, please send me an email, note or call and I'll try to include that information in our next MS Blurb: jprusha@benton.k12.ia.us 319-228-8701 ext. 351