



VOLUNTEER & VISITOR POLICY

SECTION 1. BEN FRANKLIN ACADEMY

MISSION

The mission of Ben Franklin Academy is to develop young adults with character like America's founding Renaissance man, Benjamin Franklin: well-read, scientifically curious, and civically engaged.

VISION

Our students will excel academically through a challenging, sequenced curriculum that emphasizes math, science, and literacy. We will be a data driven institution, focusing on individual students. Our students, teachers, parents, staff, and leaders will be held accountable for the success of our school. Finally, we recognize that an education is incomplete without fostering the arts, sports, nature, and character.

PURPOSE

The formation of Ben Franklin Academy (the "Academy") is the result of the community's tremendous grassroots effort. The Academy believes that the performance of each student will also be a shared responsibility of students, teachers, parents, staff, and community leaders. Accordingly, a strong family involvement program will be implemented. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the Academy's volunteer requirements, visitor policies, and relevant emergency procedures.

SECTION 2. VOLUNTEERING AT THE ACADEMY

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENT

The Academy's students' families are accountable for the success of the school. Thus, the Academy requires each family with student(s) in kindergarten through eighth grade to satisfy a volunteer requirement. Families are required to volunteer 30 combined approved volunteer hours per family each school year. Families with a single parent shall volunteer 15 approved volunteer hours each school year. If a divorced or separated parent is part of the Parent Voting Group for board election purposes, that parent shall be required to volunteer 15 approved volunteer hours regardless of the other parents' obligation.

The Principal, at his sole discretion, may restrict an individual's service or a family's service obligation, including, but not limited to, the scope, time, duration, activity, or quantity of volunteer hours.

STUDENT FAMILY

For purposes of this policy, a “family” shall include parents, stepparents, a parent’s domestic partner,¹ grandparents, and legal guardians.

VOLUNTEER CALENDAR

The volunteer school year shall coincide with the Academy’s fiscal year. Volunteer hours accrue from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

A Volunteer Coordinator shall coordinate with the Principal or his designee(s) to establish a database of approved volunteer opportunities. The Volunteer Coordinator shall work with parents to provide appropriate, approved volunteer opportunities that will be listed on the Academy’s website.

APPROVED HOURS

The Principal or his designee(s) must approve all volunteer opportunities. Approved volunteer hours must directly benefit the Academy, such as work in and out of the classroom, work on the Academy facilities, work on or with the Academy’s committees (such as the PTO, the PAB, or the SAC), or any other service deemed beneficial to the school.

A family may also earn volunteer hours for watching the child or children of a different Academy family during the time they are volunteering for the Academy.

A volunteer may not be compensated by a third party for volunteer service, unless the volunteer is being paid as part of a company’s pro bono or service policy.

Volunteer hours shall not be rounded up. A volunteer hour consists of a full sixty minutes of service.

BUYING VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteer hours shall not be sold or exchanged by the school or any individual. A proxy shall not be used. The sole exception shall be at the Academy’s annual silent auction where up to four 10-hour coupons may be auctioned. These coupons can be used to deduct 10 hours from a family’s annual volunteer requirement.

REPORTING VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteers must report all volunteer hours. Volunteers can report volunteer hours at the front office or online through the Academy’s volunteer management system. Verification that the reported hours were completed may be required. All volunteer hours must be reported or logged within 48 hours of completion; otherwise it will be assumed that the volunteer did not perform his or her service.

¹ For purposes of this policy, a “Domestic Partner” is defined as it is defined in the Colorado Revised Statutes section 24-50-603(6.5) (2011).

SECTION 2. VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to promote a safe environment, it is essential for all volunteers to adhere to a professional code of ethics. In addition, prior to beginning the first volunteer assignment each school year, each volunteer is required to read and sign the Academy's Volunteer Code of Conduct Agreement, provide a signed copy to the front office or Volunteer Coordinator, and follow the rules defined in the Volunteer and Visitor Policy. The Code of Conduct and the Volunteer and Visitor Policy will be available on the Academy's website as well as in the Academy's front office.

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct or the Volunteer and Visitor Policy may result in a revocation of volunteer privileges.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

In order to promote a safe environment at the Academy, all volunteers must adhere to the following:

Confidentiality

Volunteers may have access to grades, records, and personal information. Any information pertaining to a student must remain in the classroom.

Dependability

Be reliable. The teachers/staff have planned activities for you and the students. If you are unable to attend, please be considerate of those depending on you and arrange for a replacement and call the office. All volunteer work at the school and in the classroom must be scheduled in advance. It is never appropriate to drop-in to volunteer.

Communication

Your volunteer work should be a learning experience for you. When you have questions about policies and procedures ask the appropriate staff member for clarification.

Support

As a volunteer you will be in a support position. Your role is to support the classroom teacher and administration at all times. The administration, teachers and staff are responsible for the education and safety of the students at the Academy and they have asked for your help in achieving their objectives.

Consistency

Be consistent with the Academy's and the teachers' rules for behavior and the policies for the school. Always remember that the teacher is the authority in the classroom and must be supported by all the volunteers. Never assume responsibility of discipline of students. If you witness inappropriate behavior or other infraction of school rules, please report it to a teacher/staff member as defined by the Discipline Policy.

Respect for Learning Process

Do not use your time at the school for an informal parent/teacher conference. This can be disruptive to the learning process for all the students. Please make arrangements to

discuss your child's progress with the teacher at a different time. While in the classroom, please be as discreet as possible and do not interrupt the teacher.

Role Model

You are a role model for the students when you volunteer. Please act accordingly and dress appropriately (see the Employee Dress Policy for guidelines).

Siblings

In order to give your full attention to your volunteer responsibilities, please do not bring your young children with you. Please make other arrangements for younger children when you volunteer at the school.

Building Access

Please do not enter areas at the Academy designated as "Staff Only" unless given explicit permission to do so. The Staff Lounge is a place for the staff to be able to freely collaborate on their curriculum delivery including the needs and performance of specific students. It is inappropriate for volunteers to overhear or be involved in discussions involving specific students.

Representation

As a volunteer, you are not an authorized agent of the Academy. In the course of your volunteer work, at no time may you imply or state that you are an approved agent of the Academy. You may not make commitments on behalf of the Academy, unless given express written authorization, direction and terms by the Board of Directors.

FIELD TRIP SUPERVISION

In addition to these policies, please refer to the Field Trip Policy for additional guidelines regarding volunteering on a field trip.

SECTION 3. VISITORS

A "visitor" is defined as any person seeking to enter the school building who is not an employee of Ben Franklin Academy, a member of the Board of Directors, or a student currently enrolled in the Academy. All volunteers at the Academy are visitors.

ALL VISITORS MUST CHECK IN AND OUT

All visitors shall report to the front office when arriving or leaving the school premises. Notices will be displayed at the front office indicating that all visitors are required to register with the front office and obtain authorization in order to remain on the school premises. All visitors are required to wear appropriate school-issued identification when on school premises.

Any visitor without proper identification will be directed to the front office.

VISITORS MAY BE GIVEN RESTRICTED ACCESS

Access to particular classrooms or other instructional areas of the school may be restricted at the discretion of the Principal.

Because classrooms and other instructional areas are particularly vulnerable to disruption, visitors to one of those areas must carefully follow the instructions of the staff in charge of that area; failure to follow such instructions may result in the revocation of visiting privileges.

RIGHT TO DENY ACCESS

The Principal, or his designee, has the authority to deny visiting privileges to any individual if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the students and/or employees. Any such individual shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately; failure to leave the school premises upon direction may result in the involvement of law enforcement authorities.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Subject to this policy, both custodial and non-custodial parents of a student have the right to visit their child's classroom unless the Academy receives a court order restricting such contact.

SECTION 4. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

EMERGENCIES

Visitors should report emergencies or dangerous situations of any kind immediately to a staff member. In the case of a medical emergency, the visitor should first call 911. The Academy has specific procedural guidelines for emergencies. Please see the Ben Franklin Academy Emergency and School Safety Handbook.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

A single visitor shall never be alone with a student or a group of students. If a visitor is working one-on-one with a student, it must always be within an area where at least one other adult is present or in an open area (or with the door open). This policy helps to protect the students, as well as adult volunteers, and will help ensure that the Academy will always be a safe environment for the students.

POLICY HISTORY:

Revised: approved by the board 8/30/11

Original: approved by the board 4/5/2011