



PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO BEN FRANKLIN ACADEMY!

On behalf of the Ben Franklin Academy Charter School, welcome! We are committed to providing a high quality education and care to all students. The Ben Franklin Academy (BFA) handbook is designed to help students and parents become a part of the BFA community and to integrate into our culture of academic excellence and caring. We are all responsible for knowing the contents of the handbook and for working hard to find our place at BFA. Although this handbook does not cover every situation or question, it is designed to be your guide through the most common situations.

General Expectation

At Ben Franklin Academy Charter School, we believe that communication is paramount to the success of our students, and we believe that parents are essential in the communication process. Therefore, we ask that all members of the school community adhere to the following guidelines:

- Keep up-to-date with our communication
 - Check the school website (www.bfacademy.org) at least weekly for updated information
 - Check Gradelink (www.gradelink.com) frequently to stay apprised of your student's grades
 - Read BFA emails and communication updates
 - Check your student's planner daily
 - Check class websites at least weekly

 - Treat our faculty and staff with respect – This includes school events, emails, telephone conversations, and in the classrooms during and outside of school hours. Our students are held to a high standard in this regard and they truly need to see this modeled by all adults in their lives.

 - Respect our learning community – Enrolling your student at BFA indicates your commitment to supporting and respecting the rules outlined in this handbook. Cooperative relationships provide the win-win support that all of our students need to be able to focus on their education.
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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

This Student-Parent Handbook outlines various policies of Ben Franklin Academy (BFA). This document is not meant to cover every aspect of BFA in specific detail. Instead, this document outlines the basic expectations, policies and day-to-day practices. Please be mindful that these policies were created with the best interest of the school as a whole in mind. A charter school is a school of choice; by enrolling your child at BFA you have chosen to abide by this handbook and BFA's policies. Please review this document thoroughly. This document may be modified throughout the year as necessary. As such, please check BFA's website (www.bfacademy.org) for the latest version.

THE THIRTEEN VIRTUES

- Temperance – Control is the key to improvement. Keep your words, actions, and temper in control.
- Silence – There is a time and place to speak up and a time to listen. You learn more by listening than speaking.
- Order – All things have their place. Keep your work area in order; keep your day in order.
- Resolution – Keep your word. When you have a task, get it done. Turn in your homework on time and be prepared.
- Frugality – Be frugal. Do not waste the school's resources. Respect what you have been given. Reduce, reuse, and recycle.
- Industry – Keep on task. There is a time for work and a time for play – do both with a good attitude.
- Sincerity – Be kind. Say kind words and treat others as you want to be treated. Encourage each other to succeed.
- Justice – Be respectful. Give everyone a chance to work or play. Give others a chance to express themselves. Share. Remember that others are counting on you, so live up to your duty.
- Moderation – Keep yourself in balance. Focus both on accomplishing things in which you excel and those you do not. Try new things.
- Cleanliness – Keep yourself and your work area clean. Keep your uniform clean. Keep your school clean. Keep your words clean.

BEN FRANKLIN

ACADEMY

- Tranquility – Keep yourself from reacting poorly to others. People are not perfect and the world is not fair. Learn to deal with both despite imperfections. Be patient.
- Purity – Be pure in thought and deed. White lies, a little gossip, and small, mean words are painful and say more about you than about others. What you think about others is how you will treat them. Develop good thoughts and feelings toward all.
- Humility – Be mindful of others before yourself. Treat them as you want to be treated. Think about how you can help others before being asked. Let others speak when it is their turn.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The Ben Franklin Academy (BFA) Board of Directors (Board) works for the students, parents and patrons of BFA in promoting the vision and mission of the school. As a governing board, BFA's Board sets policies and has oversight over financial matters of the school while focusing on the long-term strategic direction of the school.

BFA's Board is comprised of seven individuals, committed to the success of BFA's students. Brief biographies of BFA's directors can be found below. If you are interested in learning about the composition, regulations and limitations that govern the Board, please download the Bylaws of Ben Franklin Academy.

The BFA Board holds its regular meetings on the second Tuesday of the month beginning at 5:30 p.m. at BFA. Specific dates are listed on the BFA website calendar. Agendas are posted 24 hours before a Board meeting and minutes are posted after approval at the following Board meeting. All are welcome to attend.

SECTION 2. STUDENT, PARENT AND TEACHER RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT RIGHTS

As a student you have the right to:

1. attend a safe, orderly and caring school.
2. receive daily instruction that is competent, well-planned and geared to increase student achievement.
3. be treated with respect by all staff, students and school personnel.
4. receive the extra support needed to help you excel at your individual level.
5. receive ongoing assessment of progress.
6. receive academic and personal guidance as needed.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a student you have the responsibility to:

1. learn and live the Thirteen Virtues.
2. abide by all rules of behavior and to demonstrate your personal best in all areas.
3. attend school on a regular and timely basis.
4. make BFA a better place.
5. treat all students, staff, and teachers with respect.
6. take home your daily academic planner, homework and correspondence as required by your teacher.
7. follow BFA's policies, procedures and rules.
8. make up work missed.

PARENT RIGHTS

As a parent you have the right to:

1. be informed of your child's progress on a regular basis.
2. be involved in your child's education.
3. have your child attend a safe, orderly and caring school.
4. be properly informed of all ongoing school issues by obtaining information from BFA's website(www.bfacademy.org).

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a parent you have the responsibility to:

1. check your child's academic planner, review interim reports and report cards.
2. provide educational support by ensuring your child attends school daily, is on time and prepared to learn by having the necessary materials.
3. support school rules and work cooperatively with the school, avoiding confrontational and adversarial resolution of grievances.
4. be familiar with and follow school procedures found on BFA's website (www.bfacademy.org).
5. review BFA's proactive discipline plan with your child.
6. complete volunteer commitment.

TEACHER RIGHTS

As a teacher you have the right to:

1. work in a safe, caring and orderly environment, conducive to teaching and learning.
2. receive support required to provide optimum learning in the classroom.
3. work with students who make an honest effort to learn.
4. receive support from parents in the teaching and learning process.
5. have distractions from educational tasks kept to a minimum.
6. be treated with respect by all students, parents and school personnel.
7. correct inappropriate behavior to maximize the learning environment.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

As a teacher you have the responsibility to:

1. come to school dressed appropriately, for a professional environment, prepared to teach all students.
2. provide well-planned instruction.
3. make every effort to address the needs, concerns and problems of each student.
4. provide assessments, data and feedback to students and parents.
5. read and know BFA's policies and procedures, including the Student Discipline Policy.
6. treat all students, parents, and school personnel with respect.
7. inform parents of behavior changes in students that may potentially affect their academic success.

BEN FRANKLIN ACADEMY

SECTION 3. ACADEMIC CALENDAR

BEN FRANKLIN ACADEMY ~ 2015-16 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR **Approved Calendar**

KEY:	JULY 2015	AUGUST 2015																																																																																												
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SECTION 4: SCHOOL OPERATIONS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: 2270 Plaza Drive, Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

Main phone number: 720.383.4519

Email: info@bfacademy.org

Attendance phone number: 720.432.9239

Attendance email: attendance@bfacademy.org

OFFICE HOURS

The office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The office will close daily from 3:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. to assist with carpool. The school office is closed on all holidays listed on the school calendar and during weather-related school closures.

SCHOOL HOURS

Regular School hours: 8:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Morning Kindergarten: 8:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Afternoon Kindergarten: 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

Please notify the school office of any change in contact information in writing immediately. Changes can include phone numbers, address, email, and emergency contacts.

MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

Messages for students must be called into the school office and only should be urgent. Parents are not allowed to call directly into the student's classroom to speak with their student. Messages received after 1:30 p.m. may not be delivered before the end of the school day.

EARLY STUDENT PICK-UP

Early pick-up of students must be completed before 3:00 p.m. Parents must sign out their student in the office. The student will be paged to come to the office for dismissal. For the safety and security of all students, parents must wait in the office for their child. No dismissals will occur through the front office after 3:00 p.m. All parents will be directed to the carpool line to pick up their student after 3:00 p.m.

LATE STUDENT PICK-UP

The afternoon carpool is from 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and all parents are expected to pick up their children during this time. Students not picked up by the end of the afternoon carpool will be sent to BASE and parents will be charged at the current BASE tuition rate. Students must be picked up from BASE by 6:00 p.m.

BEN FRANKLIN

ACADEMY

WEATHER RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURES AND DELAYS

BFA will follow Douglas County School District (“DCSD”) for school closures and delays. Closure information can be found at the district website or any local news source. Please use your discretion regarding late starts to ensure the safety of your family. Please call the office if your child will be tardy or absent on these days.

VISITORS/GUESTS

Visitors must come to the office to register with a valid driver’s license and receive a visitor’s pass to visit classes or be in the building.

CLASSROOM VISITS BY PARENTS

Parents are welcome to visit the school, however, drop-in or unannounced visitors to the classroom can be disruptive. Classroom visits must be coordinated with the classroom teacher.

Classroom visits during the first 2-3 weeks of school are discouraged. These weeks are an important relationship building time for teachers and students.

LOCKERS

BFA provides locks and lockers for students in grades 6-8. Lockers are school property and do not belong to individual students. Students will be held responsible for any excessive damage to their lockers. BFA has the authority to search lockers when deemed necessary. All non-school locks will be cut off.

Lockers must be kept closed when not in use to maintain the integrity of the fire corridors and to avoid careless accidents. Items outside of lockers or on the floor may be removed and disposed of.

It is the student’s responsibility to keep lockers secured. Locker combinations are not to be given to anyone else. BFA cannot be held responsible for valuables that are taken and/or damaged from lockers.

GUM/CANDY

Neither gum nor candy is permitted on the bus, playground or in school. Candy may be consumed during approved classroom parties or other approved events.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Display of affection is not appropriate or permitted at BFA. Students are not allowed to hold hands, hug, kiss or demonstrate other similar acts of affection. In certain circumstances involving sorrow or extreme joy, hugging is natural and acceptable.

LOST AND FOUND

Found items are kept in BFA’s lost and found. Items that can be identified with the child’s name will be returned. Parents are encouraged to label child’s belongings and to check lost and found for missing items. All unclaimed items will be donated or thrown away during the winter break, spring break and end of year.

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

These transportation procedures will be modified throughout the year to seek the most efficient and effective procedures possible. Please check BFA's website for the more current transportation procedure.

Arrival Procedures

The building doors will be open from 7:45 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. There will be no supervision prior to 7:45 a.m. Students arriving between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. will be sent to the gym (K-4) or the commons (5-8).

All students arriving before 7:45 a.m. will be sent to BASE and parents will be charged at the current BASE tuition rate.

Dismissal Procedures

BFA is a closed campus. Students are expected to remain on school grounds at all times unless special permission is granted. Parents must check students in and out of the office if they leave for any reason throughout the day. School dismisses at 3:30 p.m. Students who are not picked up by 4:00 p.m. will be sent to BASE and parents will be charged at the current BASE tuition rate. Students must be picked up from BASE by 6:00 p.m.

Hours

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Morning carpool drop-off: | 7:45 a.m. – 8:10 a.m. |
| Afternoon carpool pick-up: | 3:30 p.m. – 3:55 p.m. |
| Morning kindergarten pick-up: | 11:15 a.m. – 11:25 a.m. |
| Afternoon kindergarten drop-off: | 12:20 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. |

Parking Lot Procedures

The Traffic Policy and Traffic Procedures can be found at the BFA website. All parents shall abide by the parking lot procedures. Parents must understand that drop off and pick up at a charter school is often organized chaos. Please pay attention, follow the policy, and follow any direction provided by staff. The chaos associated with pick up and drop off can only be mitigated if everyone cooperates and is patient. But, most importantly, please be patient and remember your kids are watching how you behave. Please see BFA's Traffic and Parking Management Policy for additional details.

SCHOOL LUNCH

Lunch will be provided by DCSD.

The lunch menu (including ingredients and allergy information) can be found at <http://dcsd.nutrislice.com/>.

STUDENT FEES

For the academic year 2015-2016, the fees are \$125 per child for preschool, \$116 per child for half-day kindergarten, \$166 per child for full-day kindergarten through 5th grade and \$176 per child 6th through 8th grade. These fees are classroom fees and the majority of the funds will go directly to a classroom budget for classroom supplies.

BEN FRANKLIN ACADEMY

You will not be asked to provide school supplies for your child's classroom. Student fees are non-refundable. These fees do not include field trips.

All textbooks and electronic devices are the property of BFA and are on loan to students for their use during the school year. Students are responsible for the proper care of textbooks and electronic devices, and must maintain them in good condition. Students should not highlight or write in textbooks. At the end of the year or unit of study, students must return the exact numbered copy they were issued to get credit for turning in the book. Excessive damage will be noted at this time and students may be charged for damages beyond typical wear and tear.

Students/parents will be responsible for the replacement cost of textbooks or electronic devices that are damaged beyond repair or not returned for any reason. If a textbook or electronic devices is lost during the school year, a duplicate item will not be issued until the cost of replacing the lost item is paid. All replacement textbooks or electronic devices will be purchased by BFA.

Failure to pay these fees may result in withholding report cards, transcripts, and web portal privileges, denying participation in graduation/end-of-year party activities and loss of library privileges for the student. Any outstanding fees for lost/damaged textbooks or electronic devices at the end of an academic year will automatically be added to a student's registration fees the following year. If a student graduates or ends his/her enrollment, but has siblings at BFA, these fees will be added to the oldest student's account for billing purposes.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND INVITATIONS

Students are permitted to bring in small treats to celebrate their birthdays. Please ask your student's teacher before bringing in treats to check for allergies and to determine the appropriate number. Treats must be brought for the entire class or not at all.

Invitations for birthday parties can be delivered at school only if every student in the class is invited or if only all the boys or girls in a class are invited. No exceptions.

DRESS CODE

Students are required to arrive at school properly and neatly attired. Uniforms are mandatory and should be worn as the manufacturer intended. Uniforms must be purchased from Educational Outfitters (www.educationaloutfitters.com). The acceptable school uniform can be found by reviewing the Ben Franklin Academy Uniform Standards for all students. Clothing which is oversized, undersized, excessively baggy, tight, or revealing is not acceptable. Uniforms are required to be in good repair. Under no circumstances may students write on, cut up, defame or add to their uniform.

BFA's Uniform Policy can be found on the BFA website.

SAFETY

Drills

BFA will hold emergency drills as proscribed by Colorado Law. Students are expected to comply with all instructions during these drills.

Crisis and Emergency Response Plan

The administration and staff of BFA have taken significant steps to ensure the safety and well being of your child(ren) at school. The school has created a School Crisis and Emergency Plan in accordance with DCSD. This plan takes into consideration a variety of situations that could potentially arise in our school or our neighborhood and plans have been created should an emergency or crisis arise.

In the event of an emergency situation, parents may be contacted via email and phone.

Please avoid coming to the school until you've been instructed to do so. It is possible that, during a crisis in the neighborhood, you may not be able to enter the school building if it compromises the safety of the children during a lockdown.

Please DO NOT call the school directly during an emergency as this ties up phone lines and prevents important inbound or outbound calls with emergency personnel.

Communications

The BFA website - www.bfacademy.org - shall be up to date on all school matters and will be the primary communication tool. This website as well as email communication shall be the primary mode of communication between the BFA and parents.

A school newsletter shall be emailed weekly to registered users. These newsletters shall include information about assemblies, special events, etc.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Regular communication is critical in the educational process. Email is the primary form of communication between teachers and parents. If a parent meeting is necessary or a parent wishes to come visit with a teacher, such meetings should occur after the school day so that teachers are not interrupted as they prepare for their day. When sending an email message for a teacher, please understand that a teacher's daily schedule may limit the time available to return calls. Every effort will be made to respond within 24 hours.

SECTION 5: STUDENT ATTENDANCE

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

State law requires school attendance by every child between the ages of seven (7) and sixteen (16) years. Attendance in class is an integral part of the successful educational process. Students are required to be in attendance every day school is in session during each academic school year. Parents, guardians and legal custodians of students between the ages of seven (7) and sixteen (16) are obligated by state law to ensure the child's attendance.

The courts may issue orders against the child, child's parent, or both compelling the child to attend school or the parent take reasonable steps to assure the child's attendance. The order may require the parent, child, or both to follow an appropriate treatment plan that addresses problems affecting the child's school attendance and that ensures an opportunity for the child to obtain a quality education.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

All absences and tardies must be called in to the attendance line at 720.432.9239 or emailed to attendance@bfacadmy.org by 8:30 a.m. Extended or planned absences should be reported in advance to the office. If you have not contacted the main office by 8:30 a.m., the main office will contact you to ensure the safety of your child(ren).

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences are those resulting from temporary or extended illness, injury or physical, mental or emotional disability; family emergencies; planned absences approved by the administration; or absences which occur when a student is in custody of a court of law enforcement authority.

If a student is absent due to illness for more than three (3) consecutive days, a note from a medical doctor stating the medical reason for the absence may be required for that absence to be excused by the school.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Unexcused absences are absences (with or without prior knowledge and approval of the parents) that are not acceptable to the administration. An absence is classified as unexcused if a parent/guardian fails to properly notify the school of the absence. Unexcused absences also include those resulting from out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.

ABSENCES DUE TO PLANNED TRIPS OR VACATIONS

If an absence of three (3) or more days is planned, parents/guardians must provide written notification to the front office at least one (1) week prior to the first day of the planned absence. Failure to provide written notification for this type of absence will forfeit the opportunity to make up the missed work for credit. Make-up work will not be provided prior to the planned absence. It will be provided once the student returns to school and must be completed in the timeframe identified below.

TARDINESS

Tardiness to school is a failure to appear on time in the first class of the day and is considered a form of absence. All tardies are recorded daily, and chronic tardiness to school will result in a warning letter and, eventually, a parent/guardian meeting with administration.

The front doors of the school are locked at 8:10 a.m. and students will be tardy if they are not in the building. After 8:10 a.m., students will be required to enter through the front office where they will receive a tardy slip. Students will also be considered tardy if they are not in their classroom, settled in and ready to learn by 8:15 a.m.

MISSED/MAKE UP CLASSWORK AND HOMEWORK

Students are expected to make up any classwork and homework missed during absences. Students will be given two (2) days for each absence to complete and turn in missing assignments. The two (2) days begin the day the student returns to school. A homework plan may be developed by the teacher for any absence of five (5) or more consecutive days.

If the absence occurs near the end of a grading period, all work must be turned in within five (5) school days of the end of the grading period in order to receive credit. The student's report card may be delayed for up to two (2) weeks in order for make-up work to be graded. For the third trimester, all work must be handed in by the last day of school and there may be a delay in the report card.

Missed work during an unexcused absence still must be completed by the student. However, the student will not receive credit for the work, thus negatively affecting the academic standing of that student.

HABITUALLY TRUANT STUDENTS

Habitually truant students are those who have four (4) or more unexcused absences with a one (1) month period or ten (10) or more unexcused absences during one (1) school year. Once a student is deemed habitually truant, the school administration shall notify the student's parent/guardian in writing. In cooperation, the parent/guardian, teacher and school administration will develop a plan to prevent any further unexcused absences. As a last resort, court action may be initiated by the school administration when necessary to enforce attendance requirements. If students have ten (10) unexcused consecutive absences, without any communication with the school, the student may be withdrawn from school.

BFA tracks attendance and tardies closely. Each time a student has five (5) absences or seven (7) tardies within a single trimester, either excused or unexcused, administration will send home a letter informing the parent/guardian of the situation. If there are an additional five (5) absences or five (5) tardies in the same trimester, either excused or unexcused, another letter will be sent home requesting a conference with the parent/guardian, the assistant principal and the classroom teacher.

EARLY DISMISSAL

We must know the whereabouts of our students at all times. Students who must leave school during regularly scheduled hours must bring a note from the parent/guardian stating the time the student needs to be excused. The note must indicate if someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up the student.

Students who leave 1.5 hours before dismissal are considered as being absent one half day. Students must be in attendance for the entire school day to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activities at any time on that given day.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

To withdraw a student prior to the end of the school year, a withdrawal form must be filled out. This form will give BFA the information needed to forward the student's records.

SECTION 6: HEALTH SERVICES

HEALTH INFORMATION

Dispensing Medication

Medication can be dispensed at the school only if the Medication Form is completed and signed by a doctor. This form will be kept in the health office. All medication must be prescribed by a doctor and sent into school in its originally labeled container. This includes over the counter medications. All student medications will be stored in the health office. In rare circumstances and in consultation with the school nurse and the principal, students may be allowed special medication privileges.

Ill Students

Please do not send your child to school if your child has vomited or experiences and diarrhea in the last 24 hours, your child has a contagious illness or condition, your child has had a fever of 100 degrees or higher in the last 24 hours, or if your child has any contagious illness (i.e. chicken pox, pink eye, strep, measles, upper respiratory infection or impetigo). Your child will be sent home if they vomit, have diarrhea, have a fever of over 100 degrees, or other symptoms that interfere with the learning environment.

When a student becomes ill at school:

- (1) The parents will be notified that their child must be picked up.
- (2) If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person listed on the emergency card will be called.
- (3) In case of a more serious injury or illness, “911” will be called for medical assistance and the parents notified immediately. Emergency personnel will determine if the child should be transported to the closest hospital.

Emergency Contact Information

Please be sure to keep your emergency contact information up to date in case we need to contact them to pick your child up.

Immunizations

The following immunizations are required by the State of Colorado for kindergarteners for the 2015-2016 school year. More information is available at the DCSD website (<https://www.dcsdk12.org/health-services/immunizations##>).

Incoming kindergartners through 5th graders:

DtaP/DT (Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) = 5 doses

IPV/OPV (Polio) = 4 doses

HepB (Hepatitis) = 3 doses

MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) = 2 doses

Varicella (Chickenpox) = 2 doses

Incoming 6th graders:

Tdap (Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) = 1 dose

SECTION 7: ACADEMIC PROGRAM

CORE KNOWLEDGE

BFA will provide a rigorous educational program, challenging all students at their own level. The Core Knowledge Sequence – with an emphasis on math, science, and literacy – combined with programming for music, art, physical education, and principle-based character education constitute the backbone of the Academy’s academic program. Students exposed to the Core Knowledge Sequence have shown significant gains on standardized tests in reading comprehension, vocabulary, science, mathematics concepts, and social studies. BFA’s academic program will fully align with the Colorado Academic Standards. A brief overview of the BFA’s principal curricula is set forth below.

SAXON MATH

Saxon Math will be implemented as BFA’s primary mathematics program. This program’s innovative, instructional approach breaks complex concepts into simpler increments, recognizing that smaller pieces of information are easier to learn and teach. Through a spiraling approach, new concepts are introduced while previously taught concepts are continually reviewed. Research shows that the Saxon approach has produced significantly higher levels of student learning than those found in programs with a chapter-based approach.

SCIENCE

Students, beginning in kindergarten, will have daily science exposure. BFA’s science curriculum, as supplemented by *Scott Foresman Science (K-5)* and *Prentice Hall Science Explorer (6-8)*, will increase students’ scientific literacy and expose them to the scientific method: teaching them to ask questions, hypothesize, make observations, collect and analyze data using various tools, draw conclusions, and communicate their results. BFA intends to provide its students with increased opportunities for inquiry-based learning through BFA’s hands-on labs staffed by a full time science specialist.

LITERACY

Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) is a comprehensive, preschool through fifth grade program for teaching reading, writing, listening, and speaking while also building students’ vocabulary and knowledge across essential domains in literature, global and American history, and the sciences. In the early grades, CKLA focuses on oral language development through carefully sequenced read-alouds as well as systematic instruction in reading and writing skills. In later grades, CKLA continues to advance students’ knowledge and vocabulary through read-alouds and in-depth discussions while also immersing students in complex texts and advanced writing assignments that draw on the academic content they’ve been engaged in since preschool.

BFA will emphasize literacy by supplementing the CK Sequence in language arts and literature with *Step Up to Writing* and *6+1 Traits (K-8)*, *Accelerated Reader (K-8)* and *Saxon Writing and Grammar (6-8)*. Further, BFA’s civics department will use *Pearson Learning Core Knowledge History and Geography (K-6)*.

SOCIAL STUDIES

BFA utilizes Pearson Learning Core Knowledge History and Geography in Kindergarten through sixth grades to teach key history and geography topics at each consecutive level. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a research-based program founded on the premise that a grade-by-grade core or common learning is necessary to ensure a sound and complete elementary education in Social Studies. Teachers in 7th and 8th grade create a Social Studies curriculum based on the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

For its principle-based character education, BFA will use *Core Virtues*, as aligned with Benjamin Franklin's Thirteen Virtues.

TECHNOLOGY

BFA will also create a dynamic learning environment by integrating technology into its curricula. BFA will provide opportunities for students to access information, organize data, create, and problem-solve using a variety of age-appropriate technologies that may include iPods, iPads, Chrome Books, mobile technology labs and two technology labs. Classrooms have whiteboards and document readers that enable teachers to display information from computers, creating a dynamic learning environment for students through the technology's interactive nature, vivid images, and video and audio capabilities. Research shows that students engaged in technology-rich environments show significant gains and achievements in all subject areas, improved attitudes toward learning, and increased self-esteem.

ASSESSMENTS

As a data-driven institution, BFA will conduct annual Family and Staff Satisfaction Surveys as well as collect, review, and analyze data from the Partnership of Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), Colorado Measures of Academic Progress (CMAS), North West Evaluation Assessment Measures of Academic Success ("NWEA MAP"), Accelerated Reader/STAR Early Literacy ("STAR"), and teacher observations, in addition to any new State assessments, to make decisions about the progress and direction of each student. Notably, these standardized tests will not only assess individual student achievement but also score how the BFA is performing relative to State standards and other schools' programming.

Recognizing that the success of its students is directly related to the effectiveness of its Board, administrators, faculty, and staff in implementing the BFA's vision and mission, the Academy has developed a professional development plan to provide all of its professionals with opportunities for continuous growth and improvement of their skills, which will, in turn, further strengthen the BFA's programs and improve student achievement. BFA will use technology, such as Alpine Achievement, to conduct and analyze assessments thus enabling teachers to effectively differentiate instruction for each student and quickly identify students who are falling behind, as well as allowing administrators to determine the training needs of the Academy's faculty. Continuing evaluations, including the student assessments identified above, Family and Staff Satisfaction Survey results, and needs assessments, are integral to the BFA's professional development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Initially, the BFA's professional development plan for administrators, faculty and staff focuses on its mission and vision, CK Sequence and supplemental curriculum, assessments, differentiated instruction, flexible ability groupings, character education and general policies and resources. Research suggests that when professional development is focused on academic content and curriculum that is aligned with standards-based reform, teaching practice and student achievement is likely to improve. Throughout the year, staff also will participate in scheduled, structured and purposeful weekly team meetings, and may visit and observe faculty at nearby successful charter schools. While subsequent training activities will review and reinforce prior topics, quarterly needs assessments and evaluations will be conducted to ensure that the BFA is providing adequate resources to support its academic program as well as to determine the effectiveness of the training activities as they relate to increasing student achievement. Pre- and post-assessments in writing, reading, math, and science will be used to gauge whether students are benefiting from teacher development opportunities.

GRADE SCALE

Grades shall be distributed in accordance with the BFA's Grading Policy.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be distributed at the end of each trimester. BFA will provide traditional letter grade report cards as set forth in the Grading Policy.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral and essential part of BFA's academic program. As such, BFA has adopted a Homework Policy, which can be found at <http://bfacademy.org/policies>. Teachers, parents, and students are responsible for reading and complying with the Homework Policy, as amended from time to time.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conference sessions will be scheduled twice a year during the first and third trimesters. Parents will be notified via email regarding the schedule for parent-teacher conferences. A confirmation email will be sent to you to confirm your conference time for each child.

FIELD TRIPS

A field trip can be a valuable extension of the classroom experience. Only field trips that have a specific goal clearly related to the curriculum and a significant educational value will be considered. The principal must give approval and sanction arrangements for all field trips.

For more information please refer to the Field Trip Policy.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

Response to Intervention is a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems.

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With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities.

Through this process, ongoing data collection is used to recognize students with learning disabilities much earlier than in the past. This allows students to be provided with the help they need before further learning disabilities develop.

INTERNET USE

Ben Franklin Academy is pleased to offer students access to our computer network and the Internet. The intended purpose of BFA's network and access to the Internet is to promote educational research and enhance learning. Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases and countless other educational resources. While BFA's intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. Students accessing inappropriate sites/material will be subject to disciplinary action.

MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE

The goal at BFA is to ensure that mobile technology is properly used for educational purposes and is not a distraction for students, teachers, staff and administration.

Please review BFA's Mobile Electronic Use Policy on BFA's website.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to be honest and to display a high standard of integrity in the preparation and presentation of work for credit in all classes.

SECTION 8: BFA RULES

The word discipline comes from disciple, which means “one who learns”. BFA’s discipline plan is a three-pillared process set on a foundation of best practices in education and relationships. The first pillar is prevention through the use of restorative practices and the establishment of clear rules and procedures. The second pillar is equity through fair and consistent responses to harmful and unacceptable behavior. The third pillar is restoration through empathy and forgiveness. The educational foundation that these pillars stand upon is curriculum, instruction and assessment practices that are engaging, rigorous, and individualized.

CODE OF CONDUCT

BFA’s code of conduct is based on the premise that all students are capable of behaving in the school setting. Each student has the right to the school environment as a means of self-improvement and intellectual growth. It is, therefore, expected that all students will conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the BFA’s function as an educational facility.

Discipline is an interaction with the student, both from BFA personnel as well as parents. Students must learn that there are consequences for their actions or inactions. Rules are established to serve a reasonable purpose, be practical and within the child’s capability and be consistent and clearly defined. Our goal is to help each student learn self-control, self-direction and responsibility for their behavior.

Discipline is only as effective as the support we get from the parents. Please discuss any discipline referral that is sent home with your child and use it as a learning opportunity for your child and to reinforce the BFA’s code of conduct.

RECESS AND PLAYGROUND RULES

Recess

Outdoor recess will be held every day unless it is raining or snowing heavily, or below 20 degrees. Students should come prepared with appropriate outerwear for the variable Colorado weather. If students wear snow boots to school, they need to bring shoes that conform to the dress code to wear in the classroom.

Playground

- ✓ The playground equipment is to be used the way it was intended.
- ✓ Students must wear appropriate shoes at all times on the playground.
- ✓ Fighting/wrestling of any kind is prohibited.
- ✓ Toy guns or weapons of any kind are not allowed on the school grounds.
- ✓ Students may not throw snow, rocks, or sand.
- ✓ Students must stay in the playground boundaries.
- ✓ Students may not go outside of playground boundaries to retrieve a piece of equipment. Students must notify the playground supervisor.

- ✓ Students are not to participate in overly aggressive, tackle games of any kind.
- ✓ A pass is required in order to go back inside during recess.

Students are encouraged to work through their own disagreements during recess but should consult with the playground supervisor when necessary.

DISCIPLINE

BFA's discipline policy is detailed in the Discipline Policy.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT

Harassment or Bullying is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion. Behavior on or off school property which is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or school personnel including intimidation, hazing, bullying, or threatening will not be tolerated. Bullying, which is a form of harassment, where a person willingly subjects another person to an intentional, unwanted and unprovoked hurtful, verbal, electronic expression, written and/or physical action(s) or gestures which result in the victim feeling oppressed or threatened. This form of harassment has the purpose of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance and/or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Examples or types of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

Physical Bullying – punching, shoving, poking, choking, hair pulling, beating, biting, tripping and pinching.

Verbal Bullying – such as hurtful name-calling, teasing, spreading rumors or gossip; or threats directed orally or in writing.

Emotional Bullying – rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rate/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, color, creed, religion, sex, disability, perceived sexual orientation, academic performance, social status.

Sexual Bullying – inappropriate or obscene language or gestures, touching, grabbing, pinching, or exposing private body parts.

Cyber-Bullying – tormenting, threatening, taunting, ranking, degrading, harassing, humiliating, or otherwise targeting a student or staff member using the Internet, including social networking sites and e-mail, interactive and digital technologies, or mobile phones or inviting others to join in these acts.

Bullying cannot be investigated by the school until school personnel are made aware of such acts. If a student or staff is victim of any form of bullying, the incident must be reported to staff or administration and/or file complaints. All complaints will be promptly and appropriately addressed.

Rachel's Challenge

Rachel's Challenge includes a series of student empowering, educator motivating programs and strategies called the Awaken the Learner Five-step School Improvement Process that equips students and adults to create and sustain safe, caring and supportive learning environments essential for academic achievement.

Elementary School

The purpose of the elementary programs is to encourage elementary school students to live a life of purpose, do simple acts of kindness and create a KC (Kindness and Compassion) Club to make their school a better place. There are multiple resources for teachers to sustain the impact of Rachel's stories in grades K-5 throughout the school year.

Middle School

Rachel's Story for middle schools can include an assembly, student FOR Club training, an evening community event and a variety of optional support components. There is also an intensive smaller group-training day, Chain Reaction. These programs have components that can be combined in different combinations to meet the local needs.

SECTION 9: VOLUNTEERING

COMMITMENT

Parents are responsible for completing the family volunteer hour commitment of 30 approved hours per year. Ten of these hours must be spent working either as a carpool or lunch volunteer. As noted in the Volunteer and Visitor Policy, single parents need to perform half their commitment. There will be multiple opportunities throughout the year to get involved. Siblings are not allowed to be with the parent/guardian during the volunteer time. These tasks can include such things as:

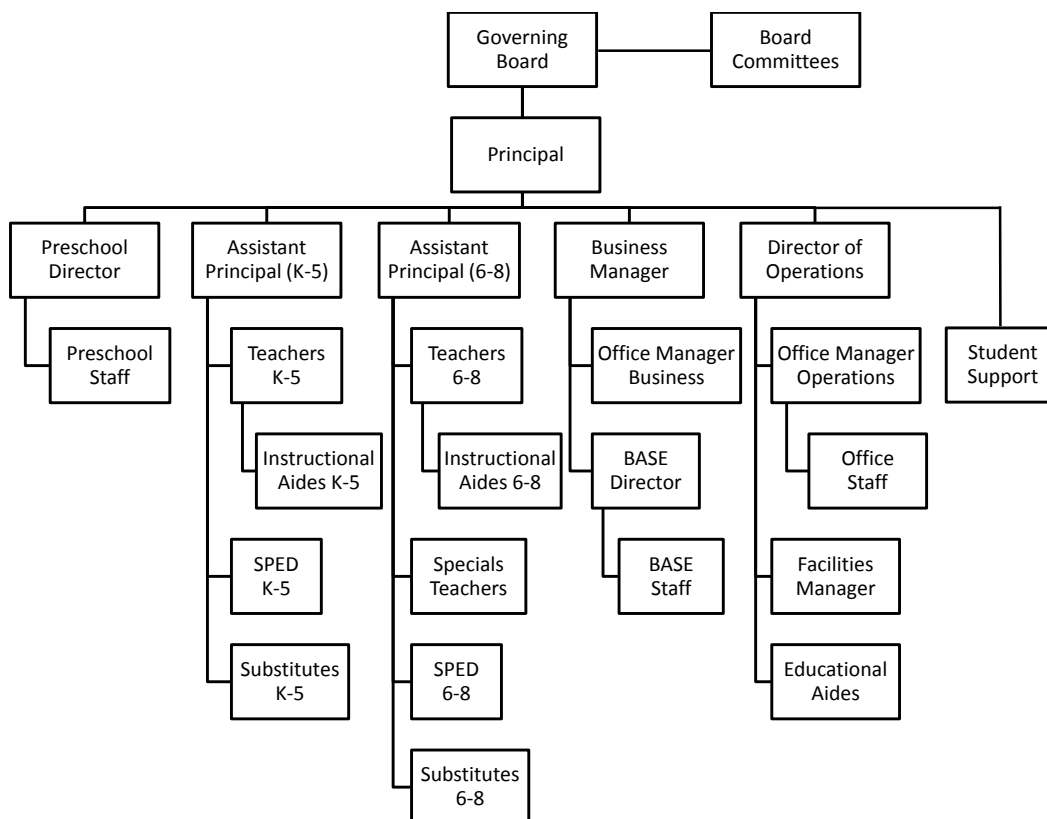
- Planning and organizing various events and activities including field days, art shows, science fairs, and musical programs.
- Assisting students with Accelerated Reader testing.
- Helping with classroom projects throughout the year, including many at-home projects that must be returned to school in the designated timeframe.
- Assisting the school's Facilities Manager with various building maintenance related projects such as snow shoveling, painting, and more.
- Supporting the library/media room and assisting the school's Library/Media Specialist.
- Work with any of the school's committees or the parent-teacher organization.
- Provide for and support after school programs.
- BFA's Volunteer Policy can be seen on BFA's website.

Please contact volunteer@bfacademy.org for more information.

SECTION 10: SCHOOL COMMUNITY

GOVERNANCE

BFA will be organized in accordance with the following organizational chart.



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors will operate as a policy-setting board in accordance with the Founding Board’s bylaws. Board members shall be elected in accordance with the Board Election Policy. The BFA’s Board of Directors shall:

- Establish and maintain the mission and vision of BFA.
- Implement policies that are consistent with the mission, vision, and goals of BFA.
- Hire and evaluate the Principal.
- Provide financial and legal oversight to ensure that the BFA’s integrity is maintained.

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ACADEMY

- Be responsible for final accountability for the BFA's academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to the terms of the contract.
- Organize subcommittees that report to the board of directors.
- Recruit and orient new Board members and assess Board performance.

Principal

The Principal will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school. The Principal reports to the Board and is responsible for: hiring and evaluating the Assistant Principals, Business Manager, Director of Operations, teachers, preschool, and other staff; directing grant and fundraising efforts; assisting the Board with its long-term strategic plan; and overseeing and managing the development of the annual school budget. The principal, or designee manages all disciplinary matters for students and staff. The principal sets the tone for the school and is responsible for achieving the school goals, following the vision, and achieving the mission.

Assistant Principal

The Assistant Principal reports to the Principal and is responsible for the development of the educational program and staff professional development plan, as well as the data collection and analysis of student assessments. The Assistant Principal shall also work with teachers and groups of teachers in developing and refining the BFA's curriculum.

Director of Operations

The Director of operations reports to the Principal and is responsible for the safety, risk, carpool, facility management and overall office management of BFA.

Business Manager

The Business Manager reports to the Principal and is responsible for providing financial management. The Business Manager shall work with the finance committee to ensure the financial success of the school. The business manager is also responsible for reporting to the district, to the state, and shall work within the school budget.

Preschool Director

The Preschool Director runs and operates the preschool. The Preschool Director reports to the Principal.

Office Manager

The office manager reports to the Director of operations and shall ensure that all staff has the needed resources to successfully do their job. The Office Manager shall manage BFA's documents, records and supplies. The office manager shall manage the office and the office staff.

Community Events Committee (CEC)

The mission of the Community Events Committee is to help build a BFA community that promotes interaction between students, staff, administration, parents and the surrounding community with emphasis on community service and outreach. The Committee also connects parents and students with the BFA internal and external community by focusing on outreach, service and information. Our Committee members are knowledgeable and supportive of school policy, events/activities related to the school and committed to the overall Mission and Vision of BFA.

Email: cec@bfacademy.org.

School Accountability Committee (SAC)

The SAC is tasked with informing, encouraging, and providing opportunities for parent and community members to be involved in the planning and evaluation of the school's instructional program and quality improvement processes. The SAC reports to the principal and participates in the District Accountability Committee. The state of Colorado requires each school to have a School Accountability Committee consisting of parents, teachers, and community members charged with advising the administration on the improvement of the school. SAC also serves as a sounding board for community concerns. All meetings are open to the public and publicized beforehand. We encourage parents and other community members to attend.

Email: sac@bfacademy.org.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM):

The STEM Committee reports to the board on science matters and is a resource to the staff on Science Expos, Science Fairs, and other extracurricular science activities. Along with advising on the latest science curriculum, the STEM committee is responsible for bringing in speakers and sponsoring clubs for students after school, as well as participating in our science fairs and science expo. STEM seeks qualified scientists and “techies” for this committee.

Email: stem@bfacademy.org.

Grant Writing Committee

The Grant Committee reports to the board on potential grant opportunities, drafting grant applications, and ensuring compliance with received grants.

Email: grants@bfacademy.org.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is an organization for parents separate and distinct from BFA. But the PTO shall work closely with BFA for fundraising events. The objectives of the PTO are as follows: 1) Build a strong school spirit by working to enhance the quality of our student's education; 2) Support the school administration by serving as a volunteer resource; 3) Promote communication with the BFA community; 4) raising funds. Every parent is a member of the PTO. The PTO has a board, elected each year by parent vote, which oversees the activities of the PTO. The PTO plays a major role in fund raising and organizing parent volunteers in the classroom.

Email: pto@bfacademy.org.

SECTION 11: POLICIES

All other policies of Ben Franklin Academy are incorporated herein by reference. The most up to date version of BFA's policies can be found on BFA's website.

In particular, the Conflict Resolution Policy should be referred to in all situations when an individual has a conflict with a teacher, staff, or administrator at BFA. The most up to date version of this policy can be found at <http://www.bfacademy.org/policies>.