



Benjamin Franklin™
CHARTER SCHOOL

Est. 1995

Elementary Family Handbook
2021-2022



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

It is our hope that each child at Benjamin Franklin Charter School will become a student of our school's namesake, Benjamin Franklin. From time to time, students have an opportunity to share with others interesting facts about this most remarkable man. Just a few facts surrounding his life are included below:

He was born in Boston, Massachusetts on January 17, 1706.

He attended school for only two years until the age of ten.

He continued his studies on his own and learned five foreign languages.

He served as an apprentice to his older brother and learned the art of printing.

He published the Pennsylvania Gazette.

He married Deborah Read in 1730, and they had three children.

He was the only man to sign the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Peace with Great Britain, and the Constitution of the United States.

He was the oldest delegate to the Constitutional Convention.

He published Poor Richard's Almanac.

He was one of the first men to experiment with electricity and invented the lightning rod.

He died April 17, 1790, and was buried in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Can you find out more about Benjamin Franklin?

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MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNING BOARD

We would like to welcome all of the students and parents to another successful year. Our program is the result of many hours of hard work and high expectations. With the help of parents, students, faculty, and staff, working in partnership with each other, we believe that this program has no bounds and will continue to improve each year.

We appreciate the confidence that you have shown in the program by enrolling your children. We are dedicated to providing the best possible educational experience for every child who attends our schools and to expand the program to meet the growing demand of the many parents who wish to participate in this type of program.

***The Benjamin Franklin Charter School
Governing Board***

PRINCIPALS' MESSAGE

This handbook is designed to inform parents about Benjamin Franklin Charter School. If after reading it, you have questions, please feel free to contact us at any time: Crismon - Mr. Ball at (480) 987-0722, Gilbert - Mrs. Hawks at (480) 632-0722, and Power - Mrs. Jensen at (480) 677-8400.

Communications between home and school are vital to the success of the school. Every nine weeks parents will receive a report card. Twice a year parents are scheduled for parent-teacher conferences. In addition, you are encouraged to make an appointment with your child's teacher whenever you have a question or concern about your child's progress.

Participation in the Franklin Parent Organization (FPO), allows you to share your ideas, time, and talents in an effective manner. Your help will strengthen the school and its ability to educate your children.

Kevin Ball, Principal - Crismon
Jennifer Hawks, Principal - Gilbert
Paula Jensen, Principal - Power

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of Benjamin Franklin Charter School is to emphasize the teaching of basic skills and information. Its purposes are to

- train the intellect,
- teach skills,
- instill a sense of pride in and respect for self, others, and country,
- equip students with the necessary skills to become decision makers and problem solvers,
- prepare students for the world by challenging them to compete for achievement in the classroom, and
- develop an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance of all students regardless of physical appearance and culture.

HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION

Benjamin Franklin Charter School was one of Arizona's first charter schools. What is a charter school? A charter school is a public school that receives its operating authorization and funding from the State Board of Education, the State Board for Charter Schools, or any school district that chooses to charter a school under the charter school law

passed in 1994. The “Charter” is a contract with the chartering body that allows a private entity to operate a “public” charter school in accordance with a specific program outlined in the charter.

Benjamin Franklin Charter School applied for and was granted its charter by the State Board for Charter Schools on June 12, 1995, for the Mesa campus. The Crismon campus received its original charter from the Ganado Unified School District on May 13, 1996. A year later in May of 1997, Benjamin Franklin Charter School added the Gilbert campus and consolidated its three campuses under the original charter, making the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools its sponsor for all sites. In the fall of 2006, Benjamin Franklin Charter School added a fourth campus to the Franklin family with the opening of its Power campus. In the fall of 2013, Benjamin Franklin Charter School opened its first high school, combining it with the existing junior high, to create a 7-12 college preparatory secondary school.

The philosophy, curriculum, and strong parental involvement that define the Benjamin Franklin Charter School are based on many years of experience with similar programs that resulted from the “Back-to-Basics” movement during the 1970’s. In the same spirit of parental involvement that gave birth to those earlier programs, Benjamin Franklin Charter School is the result of parents getting involved in their children’s education by taking advantage of the new charter school law to form parent operated and governed schools.

Our charter allows us to operate multiple campuses throughout the state to address current and future parent demand for the program. The decision to add grades and/or sites is governed by the availability of facilities, parent interest, and funding. We will continue to grow and accommodate student demand to the best of our abilities. On behalf of the parents and students who have had the opportunity to experience this program, we are grateful to the teachers, administrators, and staff who make the program possible.

SCHOOL POLICIES

The Parent Organization

The Franklin Parent Organization (FPO) is a very important element of Benjamin Franklin Charter School. All parents may participate in the parent organization. In lieu of constant fundraising, parents are asked to contribute a voluntary activity fee of \$20.00 annually per family. These funds supplement extra-curricular activities as well as projects that benefit our students and teachers.

All parents of Benjamin Franklin Charter School students are invited and encouraged to attend FPO monthly meetings. Meeting dates will be published in the school newsletter. Please feel free to contact your campus office at any time with questions, ideas, or concerns.

Registration

To register your child in Benjamin Franklin Charter School for the first time, you will need a certified copy of the child’s birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity and age and proof of Arizona residency.

For the upcoming school year, a child must be 5 years old before September 1, to enroll in kindergarten. For early-entry into kindergarten, please see the front office for details.

To enter first grade, a child must be 6 years old before that date.

The school maintains health records on each child. An immunization record **must** be completed and in our files **before a child can attend school.**

Daily Schedule K – 6th Grade

CAMPUS / GRADE LEVEL	FLAG CEREMONY	ALL SCHOOL INSTRUCTION / CLASSES BEGIN	CLASSES END
CRISMON FULL DAY KINDER 1 ST – 6 TH	8:15 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
AM KINDERGARTEN	8:15 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	11: 15 a.m.
PM KINDERGARTEN	12:15 p.m.	12:15 pm.	3:00 p.m.
GILBERT FULL DAY KINDER 1 ST – 6 TH	8:15 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
AM KINDERGARTEN	8:15 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	11: 15 a.m.
POWER FULL DAY KINDER 1 ST – 6 TH	8:15 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
AM KINDERGARTEN	8:15 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	11: 15 a.m.

Minimal supervision is provided for 1/2 hour before and 1/2 hour after school. Parents are expected to pick up their children immediately after school.

Before and After School Care

Extended before and after school care is available at all campus locations from 6:00am-6:00pm weekdays excluding recognized holidays. Contact the front office for details.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Benjamin Franklin Charter School students have an opportunity to participate in a wide variety of programs. Band and orchestra are before and after school programs available to 4th, 5th and 6th grade students. Students in 4th - 6th grades also have the opportunity to run for Student Council. A variety of other clubs and extracurricular opportunities are offered throughout the year. These activities are site-specific and will be communicated by individual campuses.

Attendance

If your child is ill or if there is an emergency, please call the school before **9 A.M.** to report the absence.

If your child arrives late or leaves early, parents must sign them in or out from the office.

Missing school, whether late or absent, is disruptive to the learning process. It has a negative impact on all of the student's classmates, not just the individual student. Students should be in their seat ready to work no later than 8:30 a.m. If students come to school after that time, they must first report to the office to have their name removed from the absence list. We have established the following plan to help control tardiness:

- After the 7th absence or tardy, a letter from the principal will be sent to parents reminding them of the importance of attendance.
- After the 11th absence or tardy, parents and an administrator will meet in a conference to discuss a plan for student success.

Make-up Work

If a student experiences an absence from school, the teacher may provide make-up work upon parent or student request. Make-up work will be placed in the front office for parent pick-up by the end of the school day. Students are given two days for each day of absence to complete missed work.

Note: If a student is out of school due to COVID-related issues, then the teacher is to work with the student to offer a reasonable amount of additional time to complete make-up work, if needed.

Perfect Attendance Awards

100th Day Celebration

This campus level celebration is intended to recognize the students and staff that have been present each day for the first 100 days of the school year. This recognition is in no way affiliated with the **End of the Year Perfect Attendance Award**.

End of the Year Perfect Attendance

Students must be at school on time each day for the entire school year to receive the End-of-the-Year Perfect Attendance Certificate. Any tardies, early releases, or partial day absences will cause a BFCS student to forfeit the End-of-the-Year Perfect Attendance Certificate.

Transportation

Because Benjamin Franklin Charter School is a school of choice with no specific school boundaries, parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school, using the designated drive-through lanes for drop-off and pick-up points. Some campus locations offer limited transportation options. Contact the campus office for details.

A bicycle rack is available for students who ride bicycles to school. To prevent bicycle thefts, parents should make sure children have and use bicycle locks.

For the children's safety, we recommend that students in second grade and under **not** ride bicycles to school. In past years, the more serious bicycle accidents involving students generally involved younger students. **WALKING BICYCLES WHILE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS IS MANDATORY.**

Health Services

Either a nurse or a health assistant is on duty when students are on campus. If at any time your family is faced with an unusual health situation which could affect your child's performance in school, please notify the school nurse.

We require all parents to complete an Emergency Medical Referral form for each of their children each year. Tell us how to contact you or another responsible, agreeable adult if your child becomes ill or is injured at school. List health problems, including allergies to food, medicine, and insect stings. Please let us know if your address, home phone, business phone, or emergency phone number changes during the school year.

Like you, we want to do what is best for your child. If we cannot reach you in an emergency, we will call paramedics who may decide an ambulance should be called. The cost of this service is the **parent's** responsibility.

School personnel are often asked to administer medication to students. When it is necessary for the student to take medication during school hours, school personnel may cooperate if the following conditions are met:

1. Whether a prescription drug or an over-the-counter drug, the medication must come in its original container. The pharmaceutical label must be on the container of any prescription drug.
2. The parent must provide written direction to the school that the medication be administered.
3. For students on campus, all medication must be kept in the health office. **When necessary, the nurse or health assistant will make provisions for and monitor students carrying their asthma inhalers.**

Generally, health-service staff administers any necessary medication with exceptions made for such things as field trips or community-based education.

Excused P.E. Activities

If your child's P.E. activities must be restricted, a doctor's statement is required; otherwise, all students are to participate in physical education.

Insurance

The school does not offer insurance for students' medical or dental costs if they are injured during school activities. Parents are responsible for their children's insurance.

Lunch Program (Opt.)

Lunches may be purchased by the week or day of, depending on the campus location. Students bringing their lunches may also purchase milk or water. Parents should make sure to send nutritious food in lunches that your children **will eat**. Parents are welcome to eat with their children in the lunchroom anytime. **DUE TO HEALTH CONCERNS, NO FOOD WILL BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE LUNCHROOM.**

Student Birthdays and Gifts for Teachers

Children are recognized by their teachers on their birthdays; however, no other treats or birthday recognition by parents are permitted. Parents and/or students are asked not to pass out party invitations on campus before, after, or during school.

It is recommended that children and parents express their feelings of appreciation for teachers through thoughtful homemade cards or notes. Parents are encouraged to share feelings of appreciation for teachers to the principal and the Governing Board.

Lost and Found

Please put your child's name on clothing and all other personal things brought to school. Lost things are stored at school until their owners claim them. Please check with us if your child loses something at school. At the end of each grading period, or when the "lost and found" becomes too full, we donate **unclaimed items** to a charitable group.

Solicitation

It is the policy at Benjamin Franklin Charter School that **no items for sale are to be offered or solicited on campus to students, faculty, or staff.**

School Visits

We encourage parents to come to school frequently to visit their child's classroom and to take an active part in the education of their child. For reasons of safety and to help us keep track of campus visitors, we request that parents report to the office and sign in before going to a child's class or visiting the campus.

We also ask parents to avoid conferences with the teachers during such visits so the teacher can conduct class as usual.

Parents are asked to leave small children at home since young children often distract both students and the parent. (This also applies during designated classroom parties.)

Younger brothers and sisters or non-Franklin friends are not permitted to attend classes.

Communication

If you find it necessary to talk with your child's teacher during the day, please call before or after school, leave a message with the office, or email. Once the school day begins, teachers cannot leave their classrooms unattended to take calls. Students are permitted to use the office phones in the case of an emergency.

Parent Concerns

Communication and feedback are critical to the success of Benjamin Franklin Charter School. If parents or students have concerns about any part of the program, they are requested to communicate those concerns to the appropriate people (e.g., teachers and principals). Every effort will be made to resolve those concerns as soon as possible.

Information about the educational and teaching background and experience in a particular academic content subject area for all current employees who provide instruction to pupils is available upon request to parents and guardians of enrolled students. A.R.S. §15-183(F)

**PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS THESE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN CHARTER SCHOOL
POLICIES WITH YOUR CHILD BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

School Rules

School rules are established by parents, teachers, and the principal. These rules cover vandalism and fighting as well as honesty, respect, courtesy, and proper language.

The teachers inform students of these rules, especially during the first weeks of school, with periodic reminders during the school year.

The following is a list of Benjamin Franklin Charter School rules. Benjamin Franklin students will:

- ◆ tolerate and accept physical and cultural differences among others;
- ◆ not bully, harass, intimidate, or participate in the hazing of another student;
- ◆ walk on sidewalks;
- ◆ settle disagreements without fighting or threatening to fight;

- ◆ talk quietly when on campus;
- ◆ show respect to adults and fellow students;
- ◆ display a positive, serious attitude about school and learning;
- ◆ play only in designated playground areas;
- ◆ use only wholesome and courteous language;
- ◆ show consideration for property and others (including not throwing rocks and/or sand at any time);
- ◆ play non-violent games (For safety reasons, they do not play tackle football and are careful using playground equipment.);
- ◆ be mannerly at lunch (including not throwing food and picking up after themselves when they are through);
- ◆ behave properly when watching movies, plays, concerts, etc.
- ◆ be on time to class and school activities;
- ◆ realize teachers' workrooms, supply room, and lounge are for faculty only, not students;
- ◆ respect others' possessions and not take items belonging to others;
- ◆ walk bicycles at all times when on school grounds;
- ◆ place trash and used water bottles in proper receptacles;
- ◆ help preserve school property by not writing or marking on school walls, furniture, or doors;
- ◆ not leave the school grounds without first getting permission from the school office;
- ◆ not be allowed to bring or chew gum at school.

Things to Leave at Home

We ask students to be thoughtful of others both inside and outside the school buildings. Items or actions that might disrupt class, cause injury, or are safety concerns are not allowed. These situations may result in disciplinary action.

Items to be left at home include, but are not limited to, candy, chewing gum, trading cards, skates, skateboards, sports equipment, balls, toys, or personal items that detract from the learning process.

Cell Phones

If a parent requests a child carry a cell phone, the cell phone should be powered off (not just on vibrate) before school starts and kept in the backpack for the entirety of the school day and while on school property (buses included). Failure to adhere to the policy may result in disciplinary action. Parents may pick up confiscated items from the office. Smart watches and other devices with capacity to function as a cell phone are subject to the cell phone policy.

Discipline at Franklin

Benjamin Franklin Charter School has a highly disciplined, tightly structured, calm, and orderly atmosphere. Respect, courtesy, friendliness, and cheerfulness are dominant. To ensure this, teachers establish and teach both

school and classroom rules. Consequences for inappropriate behavior are clearly spelled out and enforced. Every effort is made to keep parents informed during each step of the disciplinary process.

Under most circumstances, the following disciplinary process is followed:

1st level	Warning from teacher or supervisor
2nd level	Teacher-directed corrective action, parent notified
3rd level	Teacher -directed corrective action, parent notified
4th level	Teacher, parent, child conference
5th level	Principal discipline – parent notified
6th level	Principal, parent, teacher, child conference mandatory
7th level	Temporary suspension for less than five days (Student, parent, teacher, principal conference)
8th level	Long term suspension and/or expulsion (more than five days)

Bullying

Introduction

Benjamin Franklin Charter School strives to provide a safe, secure and respectful learning environment for all students in our school building, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored activities. Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. The school consistently and vigorously addresses bullying so that there is no disruption to the learning environment and learning process.

Definition

Bullying is defined as repeated acts over time that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful.

Bullying can be physical in form (e.g., pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting, stealing); verbal (e.g., making threats, taunting, teasing, name-calling); or psychological (e.g., social exclusion, spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships).

Prohibition

Bullying behavior is prohibited in our school buildings, property and educational environments, including any property or vehicle owned, leased or used by the school. This includes public transportation regularly used by students to go to and from school. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under school supervision. This prohibition extends to student-to-student behavior, as well as student-to-staff and staff-to-student behaviors.

Procedure for Reporting/Retaliation

All school staff members and school officials who observe or become aware of acts of bullying are required to report these acts to the school principal or any member of the administration team. Any other person, including a student who is either a victim of the bullying or is aware of the bullying or any other concerned individual, is encouraged to report the conduct to a teacher or the school principal. Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports, whether verbal or in writing, will be taken seriously and will be investigated. A clear account of the incident is to be documented. A written record of the report, including all pertinent details, will be made by the recipient of the report. The school official receiving a report of bullying shall immediately notify the principal, who is responsible for investigating the report or identifying the employee that will be doing the investigation. There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action. Filing a report in good faith will not reflect upon the individual's status, nor will it affect his or her grades or employment status by the school if the complainant is an adult staff member. The school shall keep the complaint confidential for both the accused and the accuser, until such time as the misconduct is confirmed and sanctions are imposed.

Procedure for Investigating Reports of Bullying:

The person assigned by the school to conduct an investigation of the bullying report shall, within one school day, interview the person(s) who are the victim(s) of the bullying and collect whatever other information is necessary to

determine the facts and the seriousness of the report. Parents and/or guardians of each pupil involved in the bullying will be notified prior to the conclusion of the investigation. The school shall maintain the confidentiality of the report and any related pupil records to the extent required by law.

Sanctions and Supports

If it is determined that students participated in bullying behavior or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, the school executive director and governing board may take disciplinary action, including the following: suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate. Student services staff will provide support for the identified victim(s).

Disclosure and Public Reporting

The policy will be distributed annually to all students enrolled in the school, their parents and/or guardians and employees. It will also be distributed to organizations in the community having cooperative agreements with the schools. The school will also provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it.

Hazing

Every educational institution (defined as a K-12 public school, public community college, or public university) must adopt, post, and enforce a hazing prevention policy that includes the following:

- 1) statement that hazing is prohibited
- 2) statement that soliciting engagement to haze is prohibited
- 3) statement that aiding and abetting another person to haze is prohibited
- 4) statement that consent to hazing is not a defense to a hazing violation
- 5) statement that all students, teachers, and staff shall take reasonable measures to prevent hazing
- 6) description of the procedures for students, teachers, and staff for reporting and filing hazing incidents
- 7) procedures to investigate hazing violation complaints
- 8) description of circumstances when a hazing violation is to be reported to law enforcement
- 9) description of appropriate penalties, sanctions, and appeal mechanisms for persons and organizations violating the hazing policy and shall include the revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to conduct operations at the educational institution and any teacher or staff that knowingly permitted, authorized, or condoned the hazing activity shall be disciplined by the educational institution.

Hazing is defined as any intentional knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with other persons, against another student, and in which both of the following apply: a) the act was committed in connection with an initiation into, an affiliation with or the maintenance in any organization that is affiliated with an educational institution; b) the act contributes to a substantial risk of potential physical injury, mental harm or degradation or causes physical injury, mental harm or personal degradation. Student is defined as a person enrolled, been promoted or accepted to, or intends to enroll or be promoted within the next twelve months at an education institution and will continue to be defined as a student until the person graduates, transfers, is promoted or withdraws.

Note: The above state law applies to all school personnel including principals, athletic directors, coaches, teachers, and staff.

Dress Code

Benjamin Franklin students are expected to dress in a neat, attractive fashion reflecting pride in themselves and their school. The dress code is established to help ensure an atmosphere conducive to study. Pride in student dress is one of the most observable differences at Benjamin Franklin Charter School. It is both the parents' and the child's responsibility to ensure compliance with the dress code.

ALL CLOTHING MUST BE MODEST IN STYLE AND FIT. CLOTHING MAY NOT BE TOO TIGHT OR REVEALING.

Tops:

- * Must be size appropriate
- * Must cover the shoulders, chest, and back
- * Must overlap the waistband

Not permitted:

- ⊗ Tops that have inappropriate writing or pictures
- ⊗ Tank tops, sheer shirts, and open backs unless layered with a modest shirt
- ⊗ At no time should undergarments/straps show

Bottoms:

- * Must be size appropriate
- * Must be clean and in good repair
- * Shorts, skirts and dresses must be within 2 inches from the center of the kneecap

Not permitted:

- ⊗ Pants with holes
- ⊗ Pajama pants
- ⊗ Sagging or dragging pants
- ⊗ Leggings or tights unless layered with a modest dress/skirt

Other:

- * Sunglasses and hats are permitted, but must be removed when inside a building
- * Piercings may only be worn in the ears
- * Shoes must be worn with socks, laced, buckled, and enclosed at the toe and heel
- * Hair must be natural in color, cut, and style (includes clip-ins and accessories)

Not permitted:

- ⊗ Flip flops, clogs, or other non-secured footwear
- ⊗ Makeup
- ⊗ Loop or dangling earrings (safety reasons)
- ⊗ Tattoos or other forms of body decoration, including drawing on yourself or others
- ⊗ Extreme haircuts/styles- Mohawks, shaved words/designs, unnatural colors

- * If a student is not in compliance with the dress code, parents will be notified.

THE PRINCIPAL WILL RESOLVE ALL QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE DRESS CODE.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Kindergarten Through Sixth Grade Curriculum Overview



Mathematics—Mathematics is taught daily and receives a great deal of emphasis. The program uses oral drill, written practice sheets, and stresses memorization of math facts. Metric and modern math terms are included. The textbooks used are from the Saxon Math series (Gr. K-6).



Reading—Reading instruction is an essential element and is a daily part of the curriculum. Students learn to enjoy reading quality literature, identify different text structures, and apply specific mental actions in all subjects. The literature selections include classics and literature sets with wholesome ideals. Each room has its own grade level appropriate library selections.



Recitations—Each student will memorize and recite one selection of either prose or poetry at least once every nine weeks. Students may also enter poetry recitation contests.



Penmanship—The standardized handwriting program in the textbook *The Writing Road to Reading* is taught in grades K-6. Neatness and legibility of penmanship are stressed through daily work. Cursive writing is introduced during the second semester of 2nd grade, and an annual review of printing is conducted.



Spelling—The spelling program has a strong phonetic base articulated through daily oral and written drill. The program consistently teaches spelling, language rules, vocabulary development, and is the core of the language arts curriculum. Spelling is also emphasized in the literature and composition programs. *The Writing Road to Reading* is the text for spelling.



Language—The language program includes daily practice and drill in fundamental English grammar, rules, and usage. Composition and poetry are an integral part of the program. The language texts used are *The Writing Road to Reading* and *Easy Grammar* (Gr. 1-6)



Composition—Each Benjamin Franklin student is expected to follow a defined writing process in a grammatically correct manner that emphasizes clarity of thought and preciseness in spelling and penmanship. A variety of writing experiences are provided at each grade level. The writing texts are *The Writing Road to Reading* and *Excellence in Writing* (Gr. 1-6).



History and Geography—This program emphasizes the study of social studies, history, and geography. Memorization of important geographical and historical data is required. Current events are also presented. The texts used are from *Studies Weekly* and other supplemental publishers.



Science—The science program includes physical, earth, and biological sciences. It utilizes *Studies Weekly* and other supplementary materials.



Music—A structured general music and music appreciation program is taught in all grades. An instrumental music program is available to students in 4th grade and above for band and orchestra. The band and orchestra programs meet before and/or after school.



Physical Education—Each child at Benjamin Franklin Charter School participates in a structured physical education experience. The physical education program is designed to teach children important physical skill development that will carry over into day-to-day life and help promote good health.



Art—Art appreciation is a part of the basic program. Art is used to emphasize holidays and seasons and, where appropriate, is incorporated into other areas of study. Art activities are kept to a minimum and emphasize traditional art concepts. The school also provides an Art Masterpiece Program presented by parent volunteers.



Computers—Computer education includes typing, parts of a computer, internet safety, and digital citizenship for students in 2nd through 6th grade. Computer activities may also include word processing, research, digital presentations, and other digittools.



Character, Virtues, & Citizenship—Character, virtues, and the meaning of citizenship are taught through the use of the Core Virtues program. The Core Virtues program is a literature based method of teaching civic virtues. Teachers set examples for students and teach them through acknowledgment, praise, and role playing. Respect for personal and public property is taught by stressing respect rather than fear of punishment.

Curriculum and Time Analysis

Weekly Minutes								
Academic Block	Half KDG	Full KDG	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Seatwork	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
Phonics/Spelling	200	250	300	285	255	195	155	120
Grammar	25	50	120	110	100	100	100	100
Composition	25	50	150	175	200	210	215	200
Literature	135	180	380	375	290	275	275	300
Mathematics	120	150	300	305	375	390	395	300
History	10	20	60	60	60	85	100	150
Science	10	20	60	60	60	85	100	150
SUBTOTAL	600	795	1445	1445	1415	1415	1415	1415
Enhancement Block	Half KDG	Full KDG	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Enrichment (KDG-full)	N/A	650	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Music	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Physical Education	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Computer Literacy	N/A	N/A	N/A	30	30	30	30	30
Art	30	60	60	60	60	60	60	30
Lunch and/or Recess	75	325	325	325	325	325	325	325

GRAND TOTAL	825	1,950						
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Grades

Letter grades are given to reflect actual achievement.

- A** 90-100 Percent
- B** 80-89 Percent
- C** 70-79 Percent
- D** 60-69 Percent
- F** Below 60 Percent

Report Cards

Kindergarten through 6th grade report cards are issued every nine weeks. The information on the report card includes letter grades and percentages reflecting student achievement in all subjects as well as an evaluation of the child's behavior.

K-6 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences for kindergarten through 6th grade students are held in the first and third quarter. We feel that these conferences benefit the students, parents, and teachers by working together in a cooperative effort to ensure growth and progress in our students.

Student Growth and Support

The teacher is responsible for the mastery of each concept by all students. One of the most effective ways to ensure this with the lower-performing student is the pre-teach, teach, re-teach method. When considering what is to be taught, thought must be given to those who will likely find the concept difficult. Time should be found to teach that concept to those students before it is presented to the total group. This will instill confidence in the student and enhance the chances for mastery. If necessary, the concept can then be re-taught at a separate time to further ensure understanding.

Generally teachers do not have outside-of-classroom duties. Great effort is made to free up teachers to provide them with pre-teaching and re-teaching time for students with additional needs. Before school, during recess, and after school times should be utilized to meet students' needs.

All students participate in regular screenings to evaluate growth and progress. During the first week of school, students will participate in a baseline screening in basic reading and math skills. Students in grades who are found to be at-risk will then be further assessed to determine specific needs. Tutoring and intervention targeted to specific skills may be provided in the school's intervention program. Students are screened and progress checks conducted once again at mid-year and at the end of the school year. Parents will be provided with the screening results and any plans for targeted skills practice and interventions.

Students in grades 3-6 participate in state mandated AzM2 testing (English Language Arts and Math) that takes place each spring. Students in grade 5 participate in AzSCI (science) testing as well. Parents will be notified when testing is to take place and will receive information regarding their child's performance when test scores are released.

Students also participate in monthly testing of basic skills that correlate to progress and success in the BFCS curriculum. Teachers monitor student progress each month and work collaboratively to assess data and tailor instruction to ensure the continued growth and success of each student across every subject area.

Before and after-school tutoring is offered by classroom teachers. Students who experience lack of progress, low grades, or struggle with concepts may be offered tutoring with the classroom teacher. Teachers will reach out to parents to invite students to tutoring sessions. Students who consistently struggle with growth despite classroom interventions may be referred to the Child Study Team via the Child Find Process for further evaluation and possible consideration for 504 Plan or Exceptional Student Services. Parents who have concerns with the progress of their child made at school may reach out to the teacher to schedule a conference.

Retention

Moving automatically from one grade to the next is not always the best thing for all children. Some children have a better chance for success if they remain at a grade level for an extra year.

The Benjamin Franklin Charter School Governing Board has set standards consistent with state guidelines for promotion from grade to grade. The State Academic Standards required by the State Department of Education are available from your principal.

If the teacher thinks your child will benefit by staying in his or her current grade, you will be involved in meetings with the teacher, the principal, and other staff members involved with your child's education. However, state law provides that the final promotion/retention decision is for the classroom teacher. If you choose not to accept the teacher's decision, you may request in writing that the Governing Board review the decision.

Students may not be promoted from the 3rd grade if they obtain a score on the reading portion of state assessments that falls below the Move On When Reading cut score established by the State Board of Education pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-701.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;

- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

FERPA Compliance Guidelines for Teachers

The following guidelines are offered to assist teachers in complying with the confidentiality requirements concerning student education records under the Family Educational Rights Act (FERPA). For the purposes of these guidelines, educational records are defined to include all records, files, documents, and other materials that contain personally identifiable information on any student as well as personally identifiable information itself.

Teachers **CANNOT**:

- disclose education records to other school employees who do not have a legitimate interest in the educational records for purposes of carrying out their authorized duties as determined by the school.
- disclose educational records to college-level student teachers, consultants, or authorized community volunteers who do not have a legitimate educational interest in the education records as determined by the school.
- disclose education records (including student contact information) to persons who are not school employees, college-level student teachers, or authorized community volunteers unless permitted to do so by the building principal.
- disclose education records (including student contact information) to other students.
- post student grades or give access to the teacher gradebooks.

Teachers **CAN**:

- check with the building principal to determine what information has been designated under FERPA as “directory information” at a particular school. Certain directory information, such as student names, participation in sports, and awards, is eligible for disclosure through the school office.
- disclose education records to other employees who have a legitimate interest in the education records for purposes of carrying out their authorized duties as determined by the school.
- disclose education records to college-level students, consultants, and authorized community volunteers who have a legitimate interest in the education records for purposes of carrying out their authorized duties as determined by the school.
- direct or allow students to grade, edit, and/or correct each other’s work and provide the results to the teacher for use or consideration in assigning student grades.
- allow any students assistant or student volunteer to grade, edit, and/or correct student work and provide the results to the teacher for use or consideration in assigning student grades.
- display work with a student’s name as long as the grade is not visible.
- display anonymous student work showing a grade, corrections or other markings as long as the student name is not visible.

The Supreme Court determined that FERPA does not apply to papers graded by students prior to their inclusion in teacher grade books. Teachers are strongly encouraged to consider the following factors when students are grading other student’s work:

1. Maintaining a classroom environment that respects the dignity of all students.
2. Using student grading as a learning opportunity.
3. Collecting and distributing papers in the most time-efficient manner possible.
4. Discouraging the calling out of scores in class.

Homework Policy

Homework is a central theme at Benjamin Franklin Charter School. Homework is the important last step of instruction where a child masters the information taught. Students should be able to independently complete homework. This independent practice will help reinforce concepts learned and prepare for new learning. It has three major purposes: teach personal responsibility and time management skills, keep parents informed about what their children are learning, and provide additional academic growth and development for the student.

Parent responsibilities concerning homework are as follows:

1. Provide a time and place free from distraction for the homework to occur.
2. Sign the daily homework sheets or papers (whether completed or not).
3. Review the child's work and provide encouragement.
4. Work closely with the teacher if a problem occurs.

Kindergarten - Sixth Grade Homework

All K-6 students receive homework four nights per week, Monday through Thursday. There is no regular homework issued on weekends or holidays. Homework will be directly related to daily instruction and will be reviewed by the teacher daily. Standards of neatness and accuracy are to be maintained regardless of the subject matter area. Completion grades rather than accuracy grades are kept in the area of homework and included on report cards at the end of each term. Students in grades 1-6 write homework assignments on the daily homework assignment sheets provided by teachers in class. Students bring these homework assignment sheets home each day for both parents and students to use as a reference when completing homework. Any questions or issues with homework can be communicated back to the teacher using the homework assignment sheet.

Homework Club is offered after school for a small fee. This provides a supervised place for students to work on homework while still at school. Check with the front office for details and registration.

Below are homework guidelines in each subject area for an average student. Students may complete homework in less time than listed in the guidelines, but **should not exceed the maximum time for each grade level.** If a student has been working consistently without breaks or other distractions, and spends more than the maximum time on homework, a parent should stop the student and notify the teacher via email or the homework assignment sheet. Teachers will count a student's best effort accompanied by parent documentation as completed homework for the day. If a student is consistently unable to complete homework in the recommended times listed below, then a conference with the teacher may be necessary to assess the student's needs.

Maximum Homework Time Chart

Grade	Maximum Time	Spelling	Grammar	Math	Reading	History/ Science	Other (to include comprehension or studying for weekly tests)
Kindergarten	10 min.	5 min.		5 min.			
1 st Grade	20 min.	10 min.		10 min.			
2 nd Grade	30 min.	10 min.		20 min.			
3 rd Grade	40 min.	10 min.	10 min.	20 min.			
4 th Grade	50 min.	10 min.	10 min.	20 min.			10 min.
5 th Grade	60 min.	10 min.	15 min.	25 min.			10 min.
6 th Grade	70 min.	5 min.	10 min.	30 min.	15 min.	10 min.	

Unfinished daily work is not counted as part of the actual homework time. Therefore, absences or tardiness may account for some students spending more than the amount of time stated. Homework is a critical piece of academic

success. It allows parents to know what their child is doing in school; it allows students to work independently and assess their own learning; and it allows teachers to assess student mastery. When parents are engaged in the homework process, they are able to assist teachers in identifying strengths and weaknesses that may exist in their child's learning.

Research has shown that children who read or are read to for 20 minutes a day score in the 90th percentile on tests. Between Kindergarten and 6th grade, students who read 20 minutes a day will have read 60 full school days by the end of 6th grade. In order to encourage a love of reading and to achieve the quarterly page requirements, it is recommended that your child spend 10-20 minutes reading per day.

McKinney-Vento Act

Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) is included in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The reauthorization requires that children and youths experiencing homelessness are immediately enrolled in school and have educational opportunities equal to those of their non-homeless peers.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act includes certain rights and/or protections to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there. You must be given access to the same public education provided to other students.
- Continue in the school you attended before you became homeless or the school you last attended, if that is your choice and is feasible. The school district's local liaison for homeless education must assist you, if needed, and offer you the right to appeal a decision regarding your choice of school if it is against your wishes.
- Receive transportation to the school you attended before you became homeless or the school you last attended, if you request such transportation.
- Attend a school and participate in school programs with students who are not homeless. Students cannot be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of your choice even while the school and you seek to resolve a dispute over enrollment.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other students served in these programs.
- Receive transportation to school and to school programs.

If you believe your student is eligible for McKinney-Vento services, please contact your school's Assistant Principal

Title IX Notice of Nondiscrimination

Benjamin Franklin Charter School-Queen Creek does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex or gender, sexual orientation, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. In compliance with Title IX, the District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its programs or activities, including but not limited to, in admissions and employment. The following persons have been designated to handle Title IX inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Diana Dana
Director of Education/Title IX Coordinator
690 E. Warner Rd, #141
Gilbert, AZ 85296
(480) 264-3710

ddana@bfcsaz.com

Inquiries about Title IX may be directed to the School's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.

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