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## **Middle School Administrative Staff**

Mr. Gene Gross ..... Head of School, 472-3405  
Mrs. Robyn Quaid ..... Assistant Head of School, 472-3425  
Mr. Chuck Hagy ..... Head of Middle School, 472-3435  
Mr. Ken Didsbury ..... Academic Dean of School, 472-3485  
Mrs. Susan Poncy ..... Director of Student Services,  
..... Pre-K thru 8, 472-3434  
Mrs. Karen Basil ..... Coordinator of Instructional Services,  
..... Pre-K thru 8, 472-3408  
Mr. Jeff Cavallo ..... Dean of Students, 472-3431  
Mr. Toby Harbeck ..... Athletic Director, 472-3464  
Mrs. Angie Lokitus ..... Administrative Assistant, 472-3435  
Mrs. Melissa Travaglini ..... Office Assistant, 472-3435

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North Palm Beach, Florida 33408  
School Phone: (561) 472-3435  
Middle School Fax: (561) 472-3439  
The Benjamin School Website:  
[www.benjaminschool.com](http://www.benjaminschool.com)

**To contact teachers' voice mail, please refer to their extensions listed in the front of the school telephone directory. Teachers may also be emailed using The Benjamin School website.**

## **The Middle School Student and Parent Handbook**

Dear Students and Parents,

The mission statement of The Benjamin School clearly states that we are an intellectually challenging and nurturing community that seeks to develop personal responsibility and a concern for others. As we live and learn together, we should be dedicated to these values and seek to support the development of each individual within the larger whole community. We should not be motivated primarily by rules, but rather by our desire to live lives of integrity and to contribute to the common good.

This handbook is intended to familiarize students and parents with the traditions, procedures, and expectations at The Benjamin School. Please take the time to carefully read this handbook. I would ask that you pay particular attention to the sections on athletics, activities, and community service. Full involvement in the life of the school begins, but should not end, in the classroom. The more you are engaged in the full life of the school, the more you will contribute to and feel a part of the school.

As members of a voluntary community, we need to recognize that all of us, students, parents, faculty and staff, represent The Benjamin School on and off campus. I am confident that all of us seek to represent the school well. I look forward to working with all of you this year.

Sincerely,

Gene Gross  
Head of School

Dear Parents and Students,

With a reputation for academic excellence, The Benjamin School is also known for the outstanding character of its students. The Middle School is very proud to be an essential part of maintaining, and furthering, this reputation. During the Middle School years, Benjamin students strengthen their academic skills, personal ethics, and management of responsibilities as they develop their self-identities and explore new interests. To meet the individual needs of students, both academic and co-curricular experiences are geared to exploration and experiential learning, offering opportunities to build enduring friendships and indulge in passionate pursuits of intellectual growth prior to entering ninth grade. It is our passion, as faculty, staff, and administrators, to help students reach their greatest potential during this crucial developmental period.

We are honored to have you here with us and hope that you, too, will recognize the wonderful privilege it truly is to attend the school built on Marshall and Nancy Benjamin's remarkable vision of academic and personal excellence.

In this handbook, you will find references to the academic and personal integrity expected of students. We expect honorable behavior from our students, parents, and all members of our Benjamin School community. In doing so, we promote the most essential and unique component of the Benjamin's vision: our sense of community, as we truly are a family of students, parents, faculty, administrators, and staff. It is this bond of "family" which will preserve the Benjamin legacy for future generations.

It is, then, with great pleasure that I proudly welcome new and returning students to The Benjamin Middle School, knowing each of you will help us build upon our great traditions and create new and enduring visions. During the 2006-2007 school year, may we serve one another well, through creativity of thought, integrity in our actions, and compassion in our hearts.

Sincerely,

Charles Hagy, Jr.  
Head of Middle School

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of The Benjamin School is to provide a challenging college preparatory education to a diverse student body in a structured, nurturing community environment. The School motivates students to master the skills of learning, communicating and evaluating choices, encourages them to grow intellectually, socially, morally, and physically to their fullest potential, and develops in them a coherent set of values that include love of learning, personal responsibility, self-motivation, concern for others and a desire to serve society.

## **School Philosophy**

The Benjamin School's fundamental philosophy is guided by the following goals:

- To provide the student with the best possible academic preparation for college.
- To provide opportunities for students to realize their talents in the fine arts and in athletics.
- To promote intellectual discipline and moral integrity.
- To encourage all students to strive toward moral and intellectual leadership in society.
- To encourage students to be resourceful and independent.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The School declares that no application for admission to the courses and programs offered, nor applications or employment, shall be denied because of the race, sex, creed, color or national origin of the applicant.

**The Benjamin Middle School Calendar  
2006 - 2007**

**2006**

Orientation for <b>all 6th</b> and <b>new</b> 7th/8th gr .....	August 18
School Begins .....	August 23
New Parent Reception.....	August 27
Labor Day (No school) .....	September 4
MS Back to School Night .....	September 20
Middle School Picture Day .....	September 21
Rosh Hashanah .....	Sat., September 23
Yom Kippur (No school) .....	October 2
BASH Golf Tournament .....	October 13
1st Marking Period ends .....	October 20
Red Ribbon Week .....	October 23
Dedication of Barker Perf. Arts Center .....	October 27
Parent Teacher Conf. (No school).....	November 3
Food for Families Drive.....	November 13-17
Thanksgiving Recess .....	Nov. 22, 23 & 24
2 <sup>nd</sup> Marking period ends.....	December 15
Hanukkah begins at sundown .....	December 15
1 <sup>st</sup> Semester Exams .....	December 19, 20 and 21
Winter Break (dismissal at noon).....	December 21

**2007**

School Resumes .....	January 9
Variety Show .....	January 13
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No school).....	January 15
Long Weekend (No school) .....	February 19
Classes Resume .....	February 20
3rd Marking Period Ends .....	March 15
MS Field Day.....	March 15
Spring Break Holidays (after classes) .....	March 16
Faculty In-Service Day .....	March 26
Classes Resume .....	March 27
Good Friday .....	April 6
Classes resume .....	April 9
B.A.S.H. Dinner Auction .....	April 21
Long Weekend (No school) .....	April 27
ERB Tests .....	April 30 - May 4
Classes resume .....	April 30
Keys Trip for 7th graders .....	May 7, 8, 9
Dance performance at Eissey .....	May 11
Founders' Day Arts Festival .....	May 20
4 <sup>th</sup> Marking period ends .....	May 25
Memorial Day (No School).....	May 28
Second Semester Exams .....	May 29, 30, 31
Academic Awards.....	June 1
DISMISSAL FOR SUMMER (Noon) .....	June 1

## Accreditation and Memberships

The Benjamin School is a member of the National (NAIS) and the Florida (FCIS) Associations of Independent Schools. To be eligible for NAIS membership, schools must be independently governed by a board of trustees, practice non-discriminatory policies, be accredited by an approved state or regional association and hold not-for-profit 501 © 3 status.

The Benjamin School is also a member of The Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education and of the National Middle School Association.

## Academic Probation

The School reserves the right to restrict a student's participation in co-curricular activities when a student demonstrates academic difficulty. If a student's **quarter or semester average is below a "C" or he/she earns an "F" in a core course** at the end of any quarter or semester, the student will be placed on "Academic Probation." The student will **not** be eligible to participate in interscholastic games, musicals, dance performances, or theatrical productions until his/her average improves. This determination of eligibility will be at the discretion of the Middle School Head in conjunction with appropriate faculty and administrative personnel.

Once placed on Academic Probation, the student must attend **ETC** on a regular basis, and the student's enrollment status will be reviewed at the end of each quarter. **Significant and sustained effort and improvement** must be shown for continuance at the School.

## Advisory Program

The Advisory program provides students with regular opportunities for interaction with a small group of peers and a caring adult. Each student is assigned a faculty advisor, whose role is to assist the student in any way possible and to serve as a resource person for parents and faculty. Students meet with their advisory groups **every Monday and Wednesday**. Students are also encouraged to meet with their advisor individually on an ongoing basis.

## Assignments

All academic work must be completed for planned absences or absences due to co-curricular activities. Prior arrangements must be made with both the subject teachers and the administration.

**Assignments are the responsibility of the student.** Failure to turn in assignment(s) on time without making appropriate arrangements with the subject teacher will result in a zero. Students must make up assignments for an excused absence as soon as possible upon their return, as determined by their teachers. In cases of early dismissal for school-sponsored activities, assignments must be turned in to the appropriate teacher **before the student's departure**.

**NOTE: Although assignments can be given ahead of time, teachers are not obliged to assist children in making up work missed due to planned absences.**

Students and parents should consult the homework assignments as posted on the **Middle School website**. While the assignments given daily by the classroom teacher are the most current assignments, the information on the website is an excellent source for homework notices.

## Attendance, Absences and Tardies

**Regular and punctual attendance at classes is required.** The School is charged with the education of each student, and this can only be accomplished when the students are in school. **Please do not ask if a student will miss anything; it is guaranteed that much will be missed, and only a small portion of that can be made up.** Teacher instruction, demonstrations, cooperative learning, hands-on activities, group discussions, and labs are just some of the experiences that cannot be prepared in advance or re-created upon

the student's return. Only the written responses to the real educational experience can be made up.

A Benjamin education is both a privilege and a responsibility. Therefore, prompt and regular attendance at every scheduled class and other academic activity is required. By having your student to school on time and present each day, you are modeling to your child the importance of education and an attitude of commitment. These are essential values for students to carry into later education and even into their adult lives.

**When a student is unable to attend school because of health reasons or other emergencies, parents must call the Middle School Office by 8:45 a.m.** Assignments should be requested at that time; parents and students should also consult the Middle School website for homework information.

**Upon the student's return to school, he/she must present a written statement from his/her parent, guardian or doctor to the Dean of Students or the absence will be considered unexcused.**

#### **Absences:**

#### **Excused**

- Illness;
- A family emergency;
- A special reason approved in advance by the Head of Middle School;
- Participation in required school related activities and competitions.

#### **Unexcused**

- Absences not excused or approved by the Head of Middle School;
- Days missed immediately preceding and/or following vacations (unless requested and approved in advanced by the Head of Middle School);
- Days missed as a result of suspension;
- Failure to produce proper documentation; for an absence.

The School realizes that there are planned absences when the student is away for important family occasions. These should be kept to a **minimum**. An inordinate number of absences, excused or unexcused, jeopardizes academic success.

Special school programs and class activities often highlight the days just prior to vacations. Therefore, parents are respectfully asked **not to plan absences preceding (or following) vacations**. The School calendar is published well in advance.

The Benjamin School strongly believes there is no substitute for class attendance and participation. Because of the difference in the number of days in the semesters, **students may not miss more than 10 classes in a course in the 1st semester or 12 classes in a course in the 2nd semester. If students miss more than the designated amount of days in a semester, they are subject to receive no credit in that course.** Thoroughly documented cases of long-term illness or accident are subject to review by the Head of the Middle School.

Excuses for lateness, absence, non-participation in sports, medical appointments (please keep to a minimum during school hours), early dismissal or transportation change of plans **MUST** be reported to the Office by the student's parent or legal guardian. It is important that the School know with whom the child goes home. **Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. or students who are late to classes will be marked as tardy. A letter will be sent home by the Dean of Students after a student has accumulated two tardies. Subsequent tardies to school or classes will result in disciplinary action as determined by the Dean of Students in conjunction with the Head of Middle School.**

## Benjamin Parents Association (BPA)

The purpose of the BPA is to enhance communication, understanding, and support among the School Administration, faculty, parents, and student body. As a group, The B.P.A. tries to improve the quality of campus life by providing programs and activities that encourage participation and unity within the school community; and, promote cooperation toward education, growth, character development, and general development of the children.

## Book Rental Policy

All textbooks are rented from the School. These books will be collected at the end of the school year and the teacher will determine if the books are in acceptable condition for next year. If a student has lost a book or it is in unacceptable condition, the parent will be billed for the cost of a replacement. Paperback books are not returnable; only textbooks will be returned for credit.

## Campus Security

The safety and security of Benjamin students is of acute concern to all members of The Benjamin School given the current national climate in schools. Your help and support to enforce these procedures will keep our Benjamin family safe.

- **All visitors to campus must sign in and wear the visitor's badge.** The three divisional offices will have sign-in sheets and distribute "Visitor Badges." Anyone not wearing a badge will be questioned. If you are on campus and see someone you do not recognize as an employee and who does not have a badge, please feel free to notify a staff or faculty member.

Many Benjamin parents are regular, welcomed, and recognizable visitors; however, the School must be consistent in requiring all visitors to wear badges in order to ensure that someone unwanted does not make his/her way onto campus unnoticed.

- All faculty and staff wear badges.
- **Classroom doors are to be locked at all times.** This tactic will allow us to keep potential unwanted visitors from entering classrooms.
- **A campus wide phone system allows two-way communication between all classrooms and their offices.** In addition, outside speakers alert faculty and students on the playing and recess areas of all situations.
- **"Safe Areas" have been designated** in the unlikely eventuality that we need to evacuate the campus because of a bomb threat or similar major issue. We have a plan in place that will allow us to move our students to these safe areas.

Our goal is to protect our students, staff and faculty, while maintaining the welcoming and secure climate of The Benjamin School. Thank you for your assistance in carrying out these procedures.

## Chemical Abuse Policy

Students who are in possession, using, transmitting, concealing, or who are under the influence of drugs or showing evidence thereof on the school premises, at **school-sponsored activities**, or while **representing the School**, are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Students who are suspected of using, abusing, concealing or transmitting, or otherwise facilitating the use of intoxicating and/or illegal substances will be referred to the Headmaster and/or the Head of Middle School.

To protect the Benjamin School community, the School reserves the right to inspect and conduct a search of a student's locker, book bag, backpack, and/or any other possessions or property on the school premises or on a school-sanctioned excursion.

Offenses involving the possession of a quantity of drugs, which may suggest the possibility of sale or distribution will be reported to the police. Any student convicted of a felony in a state or Federal court will be permanently separated from the School.

If a student or his/her family recognizes an on-going problem with alcohol, tobacco or drugs, the School will, whenever possible, provide information that may assist in professional evaluation and/or treatment.

**Self-referral** will be treated in confidence and will not result in punishment, provided the Chemical Abuse Policy of the School is not violated. In addition, **no adverse action will be taken against any person for making a good faith report of a student's alleged chemical abuse.** The School, however, when confronted with observations, suspicion, and/or evidence of alcohol/drug use by a student will require an alcohol/drug assessment by a School-approved facility with the test results to be sent to both the School and the parents.

Parents/legal guardians will be notified when students are required to undergo an alcohol/drug assessment, and the financial cost for this will be the parents'/legal guardians' responsibility. Continued enrollment is contingent upon the student's completing the assessment and, if recommended, follow-up care.

## **Citizenship**

Students at the Benjamin Middle School are expected to conduct themselves properly while at school, in transit to and from school by bus, at athletic and/or other co-curricular activities, on class trips and at assemblies. School jurisdiction applies to the buildings and grounds around campus, Benjamin buses, and on school-sponsored trips and activities.

**Consideration for others, courtesy, cooperation, respect, integrity, and helpfulness are qualities expected of a Benjamin Middle School student.**

In recognition of a student's exhibiting exceptionally good character and citizenship, he/she may be recommended to be "Student of the Week." This selection will be by recommendation of faculty in conjunction with the Dean of Students, Director of Middle School Student Services, and the Middle School Head. Students honored as "Students of the Week" will receive recognition that week at Monday assembly and have their photos posted in the Middle School Office for the entire week. They will also be honored at an end of the year luncheon at school. These students' names will be included in the quarterly mailing of report cards. Being selected as "Student of the Week" carries a special honor that speaks well of the student's character as both a person and a student.

## **Co-Curricular Activities**

Students in the Middle School are required to participate in a **minimum of two "on-campus" activities, one of which must be a sport.** Participation in co-curricular activities is governed by the student's academic and behavioral deportment. Any student on Citizenship Probation or Academic Probation is subject to the restrictions as outlined for those probations in this handbook.

## **Activities**

Benjamin students have the opportunity to participate in a number of co-curricular activities throughout the school year. These include: sports; Foreign Language competitions such as Congres and Conferencia; Academic Games; MathCounts; Odyssey of the Mind; Student Council; art, band, and choral performances and competitions; and various "project oriented" clubs and interest groups.

## **Athletics**

The Benjamin School athletics program offers students a broad exposure to a variety of sports and physical activities. Students learn the basic skills, rules and strategies for each sport, a sense of cooperation with teammates and coaches, an understanding of fair and healthy competition, and good sportsmanship. Therefore, once a student makes the commitment to participate on a team, he/she is required to continue

participation for the duration of the season.

The athletics program at the Benjamin School is considered an integral part of the overall school curriculum. **Participation in at least one sport each year fulfills the state physical education requirement and therefore attendance is mandatory. Students may not miss more than 10% of practices and games combined to fulfill this requirement.**

**Students wishing to satisfy the physical education credit through participation in a sport that the middle school does not offer must submit this request to the Athletic Director by September 30th.**

The following sports are offered to Middle School students:

**Fall Sports:**

Boys

Cross Country \*\*  
Football  
Swimming\*\*  
Tennis

Girls

Cheerleading  
Cross Country\*\*  
Golf \*  
Softball  
Swimming \*\*  
Tennis  
Volleyball

**Winter Sports:**

Boys

Basketball  
Soccer  
Wrestling

Girls

Basketball  
Cheerleading  
Dance Team\*  
Soccer

**Spring Sports:**

Boys

Baseball  
Football  
Lacrosse  
Swimming  
Track \*\*

Girls

Lacrosse  
Swimming  
Track\*\*

\*Limited number of participants

\*\* Varsity Team only

Middle school students are not eligible to participate in any upper school sport if the sport is also offered in the middle school.

A schedule of practices and games will be distributed at the beginning of each season. Parents should be aware of AWAY GAMES and LATE GAMES.

As required by the Florida High School Activities Association, every student must have a physical examination yearly. This examination MUST be dated after the last day of the previous school year.

**A student must remain in good standing both academically and behaviorally to be eligible to participate in games. If a student is on academic probation he/she may not participate in games. He/she will, however, continue to practice with the team unless his/her advisor or other school official notifies the coach that the student must attend ETC (See section on ETC) for a specific academic or behavioral reason. Further, a student must demonstrate good sportsmanship and conduct to participate in any practice or game.**

A student must attend school most of the academic day in order to participate in a game, match, or meet.

Athletes are required to travel to and from away games with their team on school-sponsored transportation. Any other request must be presented to the Athletic Director at least 24 hours in advance.

If a student is injured to the degree that he/she must see a doctor, the Benjamin School must have a written release from the doctor in order for the student to resume full participation in practices and/or games. A copy of the release will be kept on file in the Athletic Director's Office. In order to receive credit, a student is required to attend practices, games, and/or performances—even if the injury precludes participation.

Given the nature of sports, some students may incur injuries. While the Benjamin School does provide a part-time trainer, each family is responsible for its own medical services and insurance coverage. (See "Insurance" section.)

## **CONDUCT, DISCIPLINE AND DETENTION**

**Expectations for Student Conduct:** The Benjamin School community and its members – students, faculty, administration, staff and parents – are committed to high standards of character and behavior.

**Respect for others and property, honesty, compassion, and responsibility are values governing daily deportment at the School. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner reflective of these values during the academic day and while pursuing co-curricular and/or school sponsored functions both on and off campus.**

The School believes that students should strive to conduct their lives based on values that contribute to their personal growth and allow those around them to benefit from their example. Following Marshall and Nancy Benjamin's ideals, the School takes pride in the character and behavior of its students being *nulli secundus* – "second to none."

**General Conduct and Language:** The words and actions of Benjamin students should reflect the values honored at the School: responsibility, integrity, respect for self, others, and their property, fairness, and compassion. **Therefore, students, both participants and spectators, will show good will, sportsmanship, and courtesy at all school-sponsored/related events, both on and off campus. Foul language and obscene gestures will not be tolerated on campus or at any school-sponsored activities.**

**Assembly Conduct:** At the beginning of any assembly, Benjamin students will follow a time-honored tradition begun by Marshall and Nancy Benjamin: standing upon the entrance of the speaker/presenter, and offering a collective greeting to the individual, welcoming him/her to the presentation; the presenter will, in turn, honor the audience through a greeting. During assemblies, students will sit with their assigned advisory group. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to participants and/or spectators. Students making presentations at assemblies will follow generally accepted standards and good taste. Loud outcries or other similar displays are not acceptable behaviors at presentations, concerts or other performances.

**Classroom Greetings:** To honor the founders of the School, Marshall and Nancy Benjamin, each class will begin by following a tradition begun by the founders: standing to greet the teacher and/or other adults who may be participating in the class. Students will stand and offer a greeting of welcome to the individual who will, in turn, extend the honor to the students by greeting them.

**Food, Drink, and Gum:** To keep the campus and facilities in attractive and healthy condition, food and beverages may not be consumed in classroom buildings unless such is pre-arranged by the teacher or weather prohibits being outside during snack/lunch periods. To protect the appearance of our school, **gum chewing is not allowed anywhere on campus at any time.** Those found chewing gum will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Luggage, Backpacks/Other Carriers with Wheels:** Luggage, backpacks, or other carriers with wheels are not permitted on campus except under special, pre-arranged and documented circumstances. These kinds of carriers cannot be stored in lockers and present safety risks to others when left in hallways or along sidewalks.

**Public Display of Affection:** Public display of affection between students is not appropriate at School. Such behavior is inappropriate, embarrassing to others, unacceptable in the school environment, and

subject to disciplinary action.

**Valuables and Liability:** Students should not bring valuables or large amounts of money to school. All belongings are to be kept in assigned lockers. The School will provide locks in good working condition. Only the school-supplied locks may be used. The School does not assume or accept responsibility for loss of or damage to personal property, including textbooks rented by the student. Personal items should be locked in the locker.

**Sharing School Supplies:** Students are required to use ONLY THEIR OWN BOOKS—they may not go to class with someone else's textbooks/books. *Students may not go into another child's locker and borrow items such as books, notebooks, notes, paper, and/or calculators.*

**Discipline:** When a student makes an error in judgment or engages in improper behavior, the School must act on the situation in an appropriate manner, bearing in mind the needs of the child as well as the group at large. Whenever possible, the student is given the opportunity to learn from the experience, through discussions with faculty and/or administrators, but perhaps also through some kind of disciplinary action. If a student behaves in an unacceptable/inappropriate manner, his/her teacher or other school official will notify the parent of the behavior problem. This notification may be communicated by phone, email, or in writing. In all matters of discipline, the School attempts to exercise fairness and an approach which takes into account the child as an individual.

**Disrespect for others and/or property (either the School's or that of another person), rudeness, use of bad language, bullying, teasing, and inappropriate physical contact and/or touching will NOT be tolerated. Any form of such harassment, including sexual, of one student by another is considered grounds for suspension or dismissal.** Any student found to have harassed a fellow student will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school.

**No adverse action will be taken against any person for making a good faith report of alleged harassment.** Any student found to have threatened or otherwise maligned another student for making a good faith report of harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

The School also considers academic honesty a most important area and it takes the position that intentional (or even inadvertent) plagiarism is a most serious matter. Both are subject to immediate disciplinary action. (See "Plagiarism", p. 23.)

**No Harassment Policy:** The Benjamin School does not and will not tolerate any type of harassment. The word harassment includes, but is not limited to slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's age, race, religion, color, sex (including same-sex sexual harassment), national origin, citizenship, or disability. Offensive conduct of this nature creates a hostile school environment.

All Benjamin students have a responsibility for keeping the school environment free of harassment. Students must report incidents to the Middle School Head or another member of the Middle School administrative team. All reports will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have harassed a fellow student will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from school. No adverse action will be taken against any person for making a good faith report of alleged harassment.

**Detention:** Students who behave contrary to the School's expectations for conduct are subject to disciplinary action. Students will receive a detention when they do not respond to the trust placed in them, or when their conduct, manner of dress, influence or academic work is deemed unsatisfactory. These students will serve detention as determined by the teacher and/or Dean of Students. *If a student earns a detention, his/her parents will receive an advance notice which they must sign and return with the student the following day.* Failure to return the signed detention slip will result in additional disciplinary action.

**Suspension/Probation/Dismissal:** Consistently unacceptable behavior and/or a violation of the School's Honor Code may subject the student to stronger disciplinary action, such as suspension or dismissal. Suspended students may not participate in any co-curricular activities or other school sponsored events on the day(s) and/or evening(s) of the suspensions. The disciplinary action of suspension is viewed as a

extremely serious measure to deter unacceptable behavior. Therefore, if a student is suspended, he/she will be placed on **Citizenship Probation**. Once placed on Citizenship Probation, the student and his parent/guardian will receive a bi-weekly report of his/her behavioral progress. The Citizenship Review Committee, made up of faculty and administrators, will review all reports of the student's behavior and determine the duration of the probation. The Committee will review a student's status on Citizenship Probation once a minimum of two bi-weekly reports have been completed. **Significant and sustained effort and improvement** must be shown for continuance at the School.

**If a student who has been on Citizenship Probation continues to demonstrate unacceptable behavior prior to the conclusion of the year, he/she may be subject to immediate dismissal.**

## Community Service

Community service is defined as a non-profit service that benefits not-for-profit organizations, agencies, or groups within the community. All students are required to perform a minimum number of hours of community service. That number, determined by the student's grade level, is as follows:

- 6th grade: 6 hours
- 7th grade: 8 hours
- 8th grade: 10 hours

When grade level community service projects are planned, all students are expected to participate in these as a class activity. Those students who complete 100 hours or more of community service during the year will receive recognition at the end-of-the year awards assembly.

## Computer Use

**Use of school computers is a privilege, not a right. In order to maintain this privilege, students must follow the School's Acceptable Use Policy and not play computer games, download material without teacher approval, or email/instant message fellow students. Also, students must properly maintain and care for school hardware and software, etc. Students and parents must sign a copy of the Acceptable Use Policy, which is kept on file in the Middle School Office.**

## Daily Schedule

School begins at 8:15 a.m. for all students. Students are dismissed from their last period classes at 3:15 p.m. Unless students are participating in after school sports or other school organized activities (clubs, study halls), they should be picked up promptly following the 3:15 dismissal. After 3:15 p.m. dismissal, any student not participating in an after school sponsored activity, ETC or detention will be sent to a late pick up room or the Office to be signed out by a parent or guardian.

Middle School students may not leave campus **except when accompanied by an authorized adult**. If a student leaves campus before 3:15 p.m. he/she must be signed out in the Office. The School cannot accept responsibility for students who arrive before 7:45 a.m. or who are picked up after 3:45 p.m. unless they are attending or participating in an official school-related activity such as a game, rehearsal or practice.

**All students are to be picked up immediately after school unless they are involved in supervised Benjamin School activities.**

## Dress Code

**Benjamin Middle School students must be in uniform when they arrive on campus and must remain in proper uniform until they leave campus or participate in an afternoon school-sponsored activity that requires them to be dressed in different clothes.** These uniforms must be purchased at The Benjamin Nook located in the Fine Arts Building.

**Shorts/Pants and Shirts/Blouses Belts:** Shorts, skorts, and pants are to be worn at the waist—they must **not be rolled up in any way or pulled down** below the waist. Shorts and skorts should not rise higher

than three (3) inches above the top of the knee, or the length of a dollar bill when placed from the center of the knee cap to the bottom of the short/skort. Students are required to wear conservative belts with their shorts and pants, and shirts/blouses must be buttoned appropriately and **tucked in with the belt showing**. Garments worn under uniform tops must be unobtrusive. Clothing should never be too baggy or too tight.

**Shoes:** Feet must be completely covered by shoes, including toes and heels. Boots, open-toed shoes, and “flip-flops” are not permitted. Other styles of shoes deemed by school officials as potentially distracting or unsafe (e.g., sneakers with rollers or lights, platform shoes, etc.) will not be permitted.

**Sweatshirts and Jackets:** Only Benjamin School sweatshirts and jackets sold in the Nook or solid-colored sweatshirts, jackets, or **garments may be worn over the school uniform. No writing or logo of any kind other than The Benjamin School name and/or logo can appear on sweatshirts, jackets or other garments worn over the school uniform.** **Cold Weather Attire:** On days when the temperature falls below 60 degrees, students may choose to wear:

**Slacks and Sweatpants:** Students may wear uniform slacks or **Benjamin School sweatpants over uniform shorts (each purchased in the Nook) or navy or khaki slacks purchased elsewhere as long as the style conforms to that of the Nook slacks. Cargo pants, corduroys, slacks styled with frayed hems or edges, slacks with decorative designs, jeans, or non-Benjamin School sweat pants are not acceptable. Once the temperature reaches 60 degrees or higher, students are expected to wear regular uniform clothing.**

**Overall appearance:** The school believes in good grooming and good taste. A student’s appearance is a reflection of his/her self image and a reflection on the school community. It is for this reason that students must be dressed in a way that will not distract from the learning process. Any student whose make-up, hair (color, length, or style), jewelry, or general appearance is deemed inappropriate by the faculty and/or **administration will be required to make proper changes and may be subject to disciplinary action. Students will be warned if they are out of uniform and may not attend class until they are properly attired.**

**Dress for Special Occasions:** On School-designated special occasions, students may be allowed to wear non-uniform clothing. During such times, students may not wear tank tops, spaghetti straps, or tops cut too low or too short. Non-uniform shorts or pants must conform to school uniform standards (see above). Out of safety considerations, only regular school shoes may be worn. (Students attending or participating in events requiring dressy/formal attire may request to wear alternative footwear.) For classroom presentations or projects requiring students to wear non-uniform clothing, students must be in the Benjamin School uniform in all other class periods.

**Field Trip Attire:** Proper field trip attire will be the school uniform unless determined otherwise by the appropriate faculty and administrators prior to each trip.

## **Extra Time Classes (ETC) and Academic Coaching (AC)**

The Benjamin Middle School provides two after school programs, ETC (Extra Time Classes) and Academic Coaching, for those students who:

- A. Would like to get a head start on homework;
- B. Are on Academic Probation; or,
- C. Are experiencing academic difficulties that may be addressed through attendance at ETC or AC.

ETC provides a quiet, supervised study environment for students. A “No talking” policy is to be observed. Although any student may attend, ETC is specifically designed to accommodate those who are referred by administration, teachers, or parents. It is particularly helpful for students who need to make up tests or missed work. Students may also use this time to see their classroom teachers for extra help. Unless assigned other school duties, teachers are available after school to provide extra help to students. Students are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity for assistance.

AC provides trained academic coaches to attend students who need primary assistance because of academic

difficulty, extended illness, special projects, or daily help in one or more subject areas.

Faculty and/or members of the administrative team may recommend/require a student's enrollment in ETC or AC. The length of enrollment will depend upon the reason for the student's assignment to ETC/AC. In cases of mandatory enrollment (e.g., Academic Probation or other academic need), a student's parents will be advised of the student's need to attend prior to his/her being enrolled.

In cases where a student chooses to attend ETC or AC to get an early start on homework, the student must first contact a teacher/advisor and obtain permission to attend. If permission is granted, the student may begin the following day and must notify his/her parents of his/her enrollment. Students wishing to work in the Library after school must first sign into ETC and then be dismissed to the Library. Students then return to the ETC room for pick up by a parent/guardian.

**ETC and AC will be run Monday through Thursday from 3:30 until 4:45.** Specific classrooms will be designated for ETC and AC. Faculty or staff members will supervise all students. The behavioral rules governing ETC and AC will be explained to students upon enrollment. **Any student in ETC or AC must be picked up from the ETC or AC room by a parent/guardian.**

## Foreign Language

Students may only change a language upon **entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade** and **entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade**.

Once a student begins taking a specific foreign language, the student **MUST** continue taking that language during the middle school years.

## Thursday Reports

All students who are on Academic Probation will automatically receive a Thursday Report every two weeks, which indicates the student's progress in all the classes.

## Grading System and Academic Reports:

Grades will be reported quarterly by letter grades. At the end of each marking period, grades are mailed to parents. Letter grade averages will be computed using the appropriate numerical grades as earned by the student and reported by his/her teachers. A student's "average" is the average of his/her grades in all subjects.

The grading system utilized is as follows:

A+	(97 – 100)
A	(93 – 96)
A-	(90 – 92)
B+	(87 – 89)
B	(83 – 86)
B-	(80 – 82)
C+	(77 – 79)
C	(73 – 76)
C-	(70 – 72)
D+	(67 – 69)
D	(63 – 66)
D-	(60 – 62)
F	(Below 60)

In each subject, a student will also earn an "effort" mark reflective of his/her efforts during the course of study. Effort marks are 1 = outstanding, 2 =satisfactory, and 3 = needs improvement.

In addition to quarterly grade reports, other reports may be sent home in between these regular reporting periods if a teacher feels that this is warranted or a student's grades fall below a B-. For students on

Academic Probation a **Thursday Report** will be sent. A teacher who wishes to communicate a student's progress in a particular subject may send a **Progress Report**.

Parents are urged to read all reports carefully with their children and, if there are any questions or concerns, to contact the appropriate teacher. Teachers may be reached by email through the School's website and by phone. Parents are also welcome to contact teachers to arrange a conference. Teachers may also initiate conferences. Parents who have questions concerning their child's academic progress should contact the subject teacher first and then the Middle School Head.

## Honor Code

A cornerstone tenet of the Benjamin School as contained in its "Mission Statement" is "to promote **intellectual discipline and moral integrity**." Accordingly, the Benjamin School believes strongly in its Honor Code, and expects all members of the school community to uphold and integrate it throughout all aspects of school life on a daily basis.

The Benjamin School Honor Code rests on the principle that a spirit of trust and personal integrity affects all aspects of our school community. It provides students with a framework for acquiring and promoting the moral and ethical foundations of The Benjamin School.

The Honor Code is comprised of the following pledge:

Pledge: *I will maintain my self-respect. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate anyone who does.*  
(Alternate form for use in class and/or on assignments: *I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this work.*)

This Honor Code demands the highest standard of **personal behavior and academic honesty**. All Benjamin Middle School students and their families must acknowledge that the **School expects honorable behavior of its students at all times**. Every member of the school community must know that violations of the **Honor Code can result in consequences ranging from a formal reprimand or on campus counseling to suspension, probation, and expulsion**. The seriousness of these violations cannot be overstated.

As members of the Benjamin School, each student pledges his/her academic and personal integrity through **honorable behavior and support of the school community**. Each student expects responsible behavior of himself/herself and expects others to behave likewise.

**Upholding the Honor Code is the responsibility and privilege of the entire Benjamin community. All who abide by the tenants of the Honor Code contribute to the integrity and well-being of the School at large. No adverse action will be taken against any person for making a good faith report of an alleged Honor Code violation.**

### Violations of the Honor Code include:

**Lying:** When a student knowingly misrepresents the truth when asked a question or willfully deceives another member of the School community. This includes concealing facts with the intent to mislead. Lying can only undermine a student's self-esteem while prompting others to question that individual's character. The Benjamin School encourages honesty in both thought and deed under all circumstances.

**Stealing:** Taking another person's property without the owner's permission, even with the intention of returning the article. This includes items or materials taken from any Benjamin School facility or from the school grounds.

**Cheating:** When a student attempts to give or receive unauthorized assistance in association with

academic work.

**Plagiarism:** Taking the ideas and/or words belonging to another person and representing them as one's own. This type of behavior is a form of stealing and is clearly dishonest. Copying "word for word" from a work such as a book, magazine, pamphlet, video, or Internet website is a form of plagiarism. A student always must recognize the source of the "borrowed idea or phrase" by way of a footnote, quotation marks, or stated reference. Students are encouraged to seek the assistance of a teacher if questions arise as to how to complete a given assignment or acknowledge a source.

Upon admission, and for each school year thereafter, every student in Grades 6-8 makes a formal commitment to the Honor Code by signing a form containing the Honor Code Pledge and an "Acknowledgment and Acceptance of Handbook Policies" statement. By doing so, every student, as well as his or her family, acknowledges that he/she understands and accepts the terms of the Code.

## **Honor Rolls:**

Each semester, students with high academic standing are recognized by being placed on honor rolls. The Benjamin Middle School has two categories of academic distinction: "Headmaster's Honor Roll" and "Honor Roll". To attain Honor Roll distinction, a student must have a cumulative grade average of "B" to "A-" (83-92) with no grade of C+ or below. Headmaster's Honor Roll requires a cumulative grade average of "A" or higher (93 – 100) with no grade of C+ or below. These lists are included in the mailing of grades at the end of each semester.

A student's behavior and attitude are viewed by the School as integral parts of his/her academic life at Benjamin. Accordingly, students' conduct must meet faculty and administrative standards before students are placed on either honor roll. Additionally, any student earning a "3" in effort in any subject is ineligible for honor roll distinction.

Honor Roll distinction should be and is a respected achievement. Students earning honor roll placement will receive congratulatory notes as well as have their names listed in the semester mailing of grades.

## **Insurance**

### **Catastrophic Injury Medical Plan**

#### STUDENT INSURANCE

The Benjamin School does not provide full medical or dental insurance for students and expects parents to carry such insurance for their children. The school provides supplemental Basic Accident Insurance and a Catastrophic Injury Medical Plan (to cover any medical expenses that exceed \$25,000 per incident). Both plans cover all student activities, including interscholastic sports and football, during the period of school related activity only (this is not a 24 hour coverage).

Basic Student Accident Insurance covers all expenses, to a maximum of \$25,000 and 100% of Usual and Customary Charges not recoverable from another health plan, after a \$500 deductible. The Catastrophic Injury Medical Plan includes a \$25,000 deductible and a \$1,000,000 Medical Maximum with certain exclusions.

THE FOREGOING IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT REPRESENT A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF INSURANCE COVERAGE.

## **Late Pick Up**

Any students not picked up by 3:30 who are not participating in a school sport or other organized activity will be directed to an "after school" room. Parents must pick up students directly from this room.

## **Library Media Center (LMC)**

The Library Media Center is open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. In addition to print and non-print resources, the LMC has computers available for student use. The computers include word processing, database, spreadsheet and presentation software, as well as reference resources, including access to the Internet.

**Students must have a signed Acceptable Use Policy on file in order to use the computers.**

While in the LMC, students are expected to observe library rules.

The Library Media Center has available for use a color printer and a copy machine. Color prints are .25 per page and the copy machine is .10 per page. No credit is given.

### **Circulation Procedures:**

1. Students are responsible for all materials checked out in their name.
2. Materials may be checked out for one, two, or three weeks and may be renewed by a student unless they have been requested by another student. It is not necessary to bring the material(s) to the LMC for renewal.
3. No reference or special reserve materials may be checked out.
4. Project materials are designated by teachers and there are no renewals for materials that have been requested by other students. A student may check out one project item at a time.
5. Overdue notices are sent to students via Advisors. When materials are overdue for 3 weeks, parents are notified by a phone call. After 4 weeks a notice is sent home.

### **Lost or Damaged Materials:**

The Library Media Center will charge replacement value of the material(s) plus a \$3.00 per item handling fee. If lost materials are returned during the same school year and have been paid for, the money minus the handling fee will be returned to the student. All Library Media Center obligations must be met before report cards are issued.

## **Lunches**

Students should bring their lunches to school daily unless purchasing lunches at school on designated days.

**Lunch boxes/bags are to be kept in a student's locker or in a teacher's classroom.** Any lunch boxes or bags not stored properly will be placed in lost-and-found for a week, and discarded if unclaimed after a week.

## **Make-up Work**

Assignments are the responsibility of the student. Failure to turn in assignment(s) on time without making appropriate arrangements with the subject teacher may result in a zero. Students must make up assignments for an excused absence as soon as possible upon their return, as determined by their teachers.

In cases of early dismissal for school-sponsored activities, assignments must be turned in to the appropriate teacher before the student's departure.

## **Medications**

All medication, including over the counter remedies, must be administered through the Nurse's office. Any prescription medication must be accompanied by a Palm Beach County School form (available at your doctor's office) and signed by the child's doctor. The medication must be in the original labeled container with the student's name on it. All medications must be left with the Nurse.

## **Office Hours**

August 1, 2005 – June 1, 2007: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Office is closed for the month of July. Summer hours during June are from 9:00 – 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Office observes the same holiday schedule as that of the students. (See calendar at beginning of book.)

## **Parent Advisory Board**

**Two parents from each grade level are asked to serve a two-year term on the Parent Advisory Board. The main function of this Board is to serve as a liaison between the parent body and the school administration. The Board's primary goal is to establish and maintain an open line of communication between the parents and the School. Other functions of the Board include implementing community service projects for each grade and coordinating parent volunteers for each classroom.**

## ***Parents Working With Schools, Schools Working With Parents***

Parents and independent schools work together to create and sustain effective partnerships. The following principles of good practice describe the respective roles and responsibilities of both partners.

### **Parents Working With Schools**

1. Parents recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect and a common vision of the goals to be reached.
2. In selecting an independent school, parents seek an optimal match for the needs of the student, their own expectations, and the philosophy and programs of the school.
3. Parents are familiar with and support the school's policies and procedures.
4. Parents provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits.
5. Parents involve themselves in the life of the school.
6. Parents seek and value the school's perspective on the student.
7. When concerns arise, **parents seek information directly from the school, consulting with those best able to address the concerns.**
8. Parents share with the School any religious, cultural, medical, or personal information that the School may need to serve the student best.

### **Schools Working With Parents**

1. The School recognizes that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and common vision of the goals to be reached.
2. The School clearly and fully presents its philosophy, program, and practices to parents during the admission process and encourages dialogue that clarifies parental expectations and aspirations for the student.
3. The School seeks and values the parents' perspective on the student.
4. Teachers and administrators are accessible to parents and model candid and open dialogue. The Benjamin School respects the confidentiality of such dialogue.
5. The School keeps parents well informed through systematic reports, conferences, publications, and informal conversations.
6. The School defines clearly how it involves parents when considering major decisions that affect the School community.
7. The School offers and supports a variety of parent education opportunities.
8. The School suggests effective ways for parents to support the educational process.
9. The School actively seeks the knowledge it needs to work effectively with a diverse parent body.

\*\*\*\*\*

Spring 1991, National Association of Independent Schools

## **Parking, Drop-Off, and Pick-Up**

Due to extremely limited parking areas and heavy traffic congestion during times of arrival and dismissal,

parents are to utilize the circle drive-thrus on Ellison Wilson and McLaren Roads for dropping off and picking up their children. **No parking is permitted on Ellison Wilson Road or McLaren Road.** Parents are requested not to park in spaces designated for faculty/staff in the Office parking lot, even if a space is open. Faculty come and go during the day and need to be able to count on these parking spaces. Also, the parking lot north of Carolinda Road is reserved for faculty and parents during school hours.

Drop off and pick up locations for grades 6, 7 and 8 are as follows:

- **Grade 6:** the semi-circle drive on Ellison Wilson Road in front of the Middle School Office building.
- **Grades 7 and 8:** the circle drive on the southwest side of campus - enter from McLaren Road, drop your child off on the patio south of the Middle School Foreign Language building (near Ellison Wilson Road) and exit north onto Ellison Wilson Road.

To facilitate traffic flow and maximize the safety of students and their families, parents are asked to comply with the drop-off and pick-up procedures described in detail in correspondence mailed home prior to Opening Day. In brief, those procedures describe permissible approaches to the drive-thrus and how students are to be picked up and dropped off. Parents need to familiarize themselves with the procedures before Opening Day. **In the interest of safety, all cell phones must be hung up while in any of the drive-thrus. In addition, all drivers must obey the posted turning signs. Please do not turn left or right against traffic.**

## Publication Policy

The Benjamin School utilizes print and electronic media to showcase outstanding student accomplishments. The Benjamin School takes pride in student achievements, special classroom projects, fine and performing arts events, athletic successes, and community service activities. We enjoy sharing academic, athletic, artistic, and community service distinctions with the Benjamin community through displays, performances, publications, newspaper articles, and The Benjamin School website.

**We continue to enhance our publications and web pages to offer comprehensive communication to our Benjamin community. Website and/or publications include school event calendars, student life activities, academic expectations, outstanding accomplishments, athletic and fine and performing arts programs, alumni information, and correspondence from the School administration.**

If you prefer that your student's name or individual photo not be included in print and electronic media associated with The Benjamin School, contact Dr. Kathy Aiello at 561-472-3482, [kaiello@benjaminschool.com](mailto:kaiello@benjaminschool.com).

If you prefer that your student's name or individual photo not be shown on The Benjamin School website, contact Rhonda Thomas at 561-472-3488, [rthomas@benjaminschool.com](mailto:rthomas@benjaminschool.com).

## Required Forms

The following forms must be completed and on file in order for any student to attend classes. The Emergency Information/Authorization form and FHSAA Medical/Athletic Consent forms must be on file to participate in athletic practices. **These forms must be dated after May 15th, 2006.**

- **Birth Certificate:** required of all students enrolling for the first time at The Benjamin School;
- **Physical Exam:** HRS Form 3040 and Immunization Form #680, for all incoming 7th graders and new transfer students;
- **FHSAA Medical/Athletic Consent Forms:** Required for each student every year. These forms give authorization for athletic participation;
- **Emergency Medical Information and Authorization:** Required of each student every year;
- **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) For Computers:**

The AUP governs the student's use of computers at The Benjamin School. The AUP must be signed by both parent and student, and returned to school before a student will be allowed to use the school's computers;

- **Statement of Handbook Acceptance:**

Required for each student every year. Parents and students must sign this statement saying that they have read and agree to abide by the rules of the handbook.

Students will not be admitted to classes until these forms are completed and returned to the Middle School office.

## School Cancellations

In cases of inclement weather or hurricane warnings, The Benjamin Middle School will close in conjunction with all announced closings of the Palm Beach County School System. If our school must close for other reasons, we will notify the radio and television stations to announce the closing.

## School Property and Facilities

Marshall and Nancy Benjamin had a deep and abiding respect for nature, and established a campus mindful of its beautiful surroundings. In keeping with their view of nature and this campus, the Middle School takes great pride in its grounds and facilities. All members of our Middle School community are expected to share in the responsibility of maintaining the beauty, safety, cleanliness, and overall appearance of the grounds and facilities.

**Neatness and Cleanliness:** The neatness and cleanliness of bathrooms, lockers, classrooms, corridors, and surrounding campus grounds are the responsibility of the users. Students observed littering or otherwise damaging or defacing school property are subject to disciplinary action.

**Lockers, Locker Use, and Hallways:** All Benjamin Middle School students are assigned a locker and supplied with a lock. **Lockers must be kept locked at all times, with the school-supplied lock.** As property of the School, all lockers are to be kept neat and may be inspected periodically. The area around their lockers must be kept neat and clean. Large displays on the front of lockers, such as birthday balloons, are not permitted, as hallways are busy and crowded much of the academic day. **All backpacks/book bags must be unpacked upon students' arrival to school and stored in their lockers.** During the day, students are given adequate time to visit lockers; therefore, **no backpacks/book bags are to be taken into classrooms.**

**Campus Area Limits:** Due to the need to promote an optimal educational environment, Middle School students must stay within the confines of the Middle School campus. Middle School students are not allowed off campus or in any Lower School areas, unless they are attending specific classes held in those areas or visiting the nurse.

## School-Sponsored Social Events

A student who misses any part of the academic day due to illness or an unexcused absence may not attend a school-sponsored function held after school and/or in the evening. If a student misses part of the academic day due to a scheduled appointment (e.g., documented doctor or dentist appointment), he/she may attend the function.

**Students may not leave a school-sponsored event unless accompanied by a parent/guardian, and must check out with a school chaperone. For this reason, students are not to be dropped off or picked up by a limousine at any school-sponsored event.** During a school social, if a student leaves the building he/she will not be allowed to return that evening. Students are expected to be properly dressed for all social events. The School reserves the right to deny admission to any students who are improperly attired or behave inappropriately. School sponsored events are for Benjamin students only.

Students who are on Citizenship Probation may not attend school sponsored social events.

## Semester Exams

Departmental exams in each academic area are given at the end of each semester for 8th grade students and at the end of the second semester for 7th grade students. The second semester exam in 7th grade is introduced at that time to help ready those students for their 8th grade experience. Semester exams for students in 7th and 8th grade will count one-fifth of the semester grade. Each quarterly marking period grade will count two-fifths. The final grade in a yearlong course will be the average of the 1st and 2nd semesters.

Sixth grade students will take tests in English, science, math, and social studies during exam week. These tests will be figured in the quarterly grade.

Semester and Final exams are retained by the School, and parents wishing to inquire about a student's performance on a particular examination should contact the teacher.

## Shuttle Bus

Families may choose to drop their Lower and/or Middle School children at the Upper School campus for transport to the Kehl Campus (on Ellison Wilson Road) via Benjamin shuttle buses. **Shuttle buses will leave the Upper School campus promptly at 7:45 a.m. The buses will not wait for late arrivals.** If you arrive after the buses have left, you will be responsible for transporting your child to school. Students riding The Benjamin School shuttle buses are expected to conduct themselves properly in transit to school by bus as on all busses.

## Student Council

The Benjamin Middle School Student Council functions as a service organization. The members raise funds for school projects by selling lunches, serve the School as hosts/hostesses on special occasions, and sponsor social activities and service projects.

The Council is made up of representatives from the sixth, seventh and eighth grade classes. The student body elects two representatives from each grade. Additionally, each advisor group also elects a representative. The representatives bring to the floor of the Council meetings comments or suggestions from the student body for the benefit of the Middle School community and/or Benjamin School at large.

Student Council representatives demonstrating unacceptable grades, efforts, and/or conduct may jeopardize their continuance on the Council.

## Student Disability Accommodations

The Benjamin School complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) in making its programs and services fully accessible to individuals with documented disabilities. The School welcomes all requests for reasonable accommodation. To the extent that available resources permit, the School attempts to provide accommodations for qualified students who fall into the following categories: The learning disabled, the visually impaired, the hearing impaired, the physically impaired, and those with qualifying medical conditions.

The first step in requesting accommodation for a student identified as having a disability is to provide the School with documentation of the condition from a qualified professional, such as a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist. Upon receipt of a diagnosis and recommendations, we will ask the parent to complete and sign an Accommodation Request Form. Requests may be initiated through the Director of Student Services.

To ensure that parents, the student, and the School are acting on current information and needs, requests for accommodation will be reviewed each year and must be reaffirmed by completing a new Request Form

each year. Documentation of a disability will need to be updated every three years.

## Student Services

Student Services is responsible for the overall guidance program of the Middle School. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the department's open-door policy to discuss issues of concern, such as academic progress, relationships, and conflict resolution. Standardized testing, the advisory program, and community service learning are also administered through this department. The Director of Student Services teaches the Middle School Skills for Adolescence curriculum.

## Telephones and Cell Phones

The Middle School Office phone is **not for student use except in cases of emergency**. The office phone is not to be used to request forgotten items of clothing or homework or to arrange social engagements after classes. School officials may determine if students may use the phone to inform parents of school-related schedule changes.

Students may not **display or use cell phones during the school day, any co-curricular activity, or school sponsored activities and trips**. Any student violating this policy will have his/her phone confiscated and taken to the Office, and may be subject to disciplinary action. Confiscated cell phones may be picked up by a parent of guardian.

## Trips

Over the years, The Benjamin School has made use of the many educational resources within the local area and beyond. These trips are intended to be of an educational nature and related to the curriculum. Most trips are taken during a part of the school day although some may involve an overnight and/or a period of several days.

**On any school-sponsored trip, students are held to the same behavior expectations as that governing department on a normal school day on campus.** Proper field trip attire will be the school uniform unless determined otherwise by the appropriate faculty and administrators prior to each trip.

Attendance of any field trip or school-sponsored activity is subject to a student exhibiting good daily citizenship, conduct, and academic effort. Any student on Citizenship Probation may not participate in school-sponsored trips.

## Visitors on Campus

To maintain the security of the Benjamin students and personnel, any student or adult visiting the campus must first check in at the Middle School Office and sign for a Visitor's Badge. The badge must be visibly worn during the stay on campus, regardless of the brevity and/or purpose of the visit. Each visitor must return his/her badge to the Office prior to departing the campus.

Benjamin parents who are on campus for a particular function or activity must also obtain Visitors' Badges as campus personnel cannot be expected to know/recognize all parents. Supporting this policy assists the School in safeguarding its members.

## Weapons

Possession of firearms, dangerous weapons (whether operable or not), knives, explosives of any kind, or harmful personal safety devices on campus or at school sponsored events will result in either a suspension or expulsion from The Benjamin School.

## Weekly Test Schedule

The weekly test schedule for the first quarter is listed below. This schedule rotates quarterly.

Monday: Social Studies/English  
Tuesday: Math/Foreign Language  
Wednesday: English/Science  
Thursday: Foreign Language/Social Studies  
Friday: Science/Math

## **Alma Mater**

1. When the sun breaks free of the sea  
And dawn comes again,  
My Alma Mater fends me - beloved Benjamin

Like a ray of shining light,  
Welcomes me back home.  
Keep us in sight throughout the night,  
Sweet Benjamin, her own.

2. Nestled 'neath the palms glorious and green,  
Ever she's victorious, our Alma Mater Queen.  
Through laughter and tears we'll stay ever true.  
We're Buccaneers through all the years.  
We love you, orange and blue,  
We love you, orange and blue.

By Mr. Mark Poncy

## **Interpretation, Modification, and Amendment of Handbook Contents**

The Benjamin School reserves the right to interpret the content of this Handbook, including the policies and regulations governing academic and non-academic conduct of its students. The School reserves the right to modify and/or amend the content of this Handbook at any time during the academic year. If any written modification or amendment is made to this Handbook, a copy of such modification or amendment will be distributed to the students and parents.