

Benjamin Franklin Elementary School
Student / Parent Handbook
2020 - 2021



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SCHOOL
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Benjamin Franklin Elementary School Student/Parent Handbook 2020 - 2021

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The scope and magnitude of our responsibilities as teachers, to our students, their parents, and the community, are almost infinite. Our every word, every action, and unfortunately, every inaction could have a profound impact on the lives within our charge. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to offer nothing less than our best every day and if we do, we will have succeeded in providing everything we can to make a difference.

As we must be held accountable, so must our students. We must expect only their best efforts on a daily basis because to accept less would be a disservice to them. Students must also be held to being respectful and tolerant of all people, and they must understand that interfering with the ability of someone else to learn will never be acceptable.

Lastly, the parents must be brought in as partners in assisting with the education of their child. It is our professional responsibility to: keep them informed and up-to-date, make them feel welcome and most importantly, make them feel necessary. Once we can create effective partnerships with our parents, there is no limit to the level of success that our students can attain. Ours is such a noble profession with so much at stake and for so many people. Through it all, keep in mind that success does not come easy or in isolation. It is the result of collaborative efforts, hard work and cooperation. Remember, "Together we will make a difference".

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE...

TRUSTWORTHY

Benjamin Franklin students are sincere, trustworthy and loyal. They tell the truth. If they may have made a mistake, they admit it, take the consequences, and move on. They avoid cheating, lying, and stealing at all times.

RESPECTFUL

Benjamin Franklin students treat others with courtesy and consideration. They have good manners, say "please" and "thank you" and are friendly and polite to everyone, regardless of who they meet. They treat others the way they would like to be treated.

RESPONSIBLE

Benjamin Franklin students get to school on time, ready to learn. They are prepared with appropriate learning materials and completed homework. They exercise good study skills and work habits, and they manage their time. They understand what their duties are, both in the classroom and at home..

FAIR

Benjamin Franklin students use good judgment in dealing with people and situations. They do not allow others' opinions to bias their thinking, and they listen to others' feelings with an open heart. They are just, reasonable, and impartial in their actions toward others, using the tools of conflict resolution to solve problems.

CARING

Benjamin Franklin students show concern for others, including those who they may not consider to be their "good" friends. They offer help and assistance to others without complaint and without seeking reward. They do things for others, often without being asked. They make the school a friendly and warm place to be.

GOOD CITIZENS

Benjamin Franklin students are proud to be members of their country, the township, and the school community. They show respect for national symbols, such as the flag and the National Anthem. They volunteer to do a little extra to make their class, their town, and Benjamin Franklin School a better place.

At Benjamin Franklin School, Students are Taught to be a Bolt!

Be respectful

Own your choices

Lead with a kind heart

Time to listen and learn

SCHOOL SCHEDULES

Bus pick-up is approximately 30 minutes before school begins. Specific time varies with the particular stop on each route.

Regular Hours:	8:55 – 3:30 (Kindergarten (AM 9:00-11:30/PM 1:00-3:30))
Delayed Openings:	10:30 – 3:30 (Kindergarten (AM 10:30-12:30/PM 1:30-3:30))
Single Sessions:	9:00 - 1:30 (Kindergarten (AM 9:00-11:00/PM 11:30-1:30))

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Arrival

Teachers, as well as safety patrols are out on the playground to supervise the children at 8:45 a.m. Students should not enter the playground area before that time. At 8:45 all students will be allowed to enter the school building. Students will sit directly outside their classroom in the hallway until the 8:55 bell, at which time the teacher will allow the students to enter the classroom to prepare for their day. Homeroom begins promptly at 9am.

Delayed Opening/Early Dismissal/School Closing

Parents/Guardians will be notified of early dismissals, delayed openings, and school closings by our School Messenger telephone relay system.

You may also listen for announcements on radio stations WCTC – 1450, WERA – 1590, and NJ 101.5 FM starting at 6:00 a.m. and continuing at intervals thereafter. You can also watch your local cable station (Channel 118) for delayed openings and closings. Please listen to one of these stations for information. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE RADIO STATIONS OR THE SCHOOL.**

Students will not be dismissed on early closing days unless a parent/family member/neighbor/friend has been notified. Your child should be made aware of exactly what to do when there is an early closing.

On delayed opening days, elementary school classes will begin at 10:30 a.m. Buses will pick students up at approximately 10:00 a.m.

- ❖ **PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR HOME OR WORK NUMBER IS CHANGED OR DISCONNECTED. PLEASE BE CERTAIN THE SCHOOL**

CAN CALL AN ALTERNATE NUMBER OF SOMEONE NEARBY IN ANY EMERGENCY.

Visitors

Starting at 8:55am, all exterior school doors of Benjamin Franklin School will be locked for student and staff safety. Visitors to the building **MUST** utilize the front entrance for possible entry into the building. This door is monitored by closed circuit TV, and visitors will need to ring the bell and identify themselves before the door is unlocked and admittance is granted. It is BOE policy that all visitors who enter a district building during school hours must present an ID such as a Driver's License, which can either be scanned or manually entered into the new Raptor Security System. If a parent or guardian for any reason does not have a US government-issued ID, the school staff member can use any form of identification and manually enter the person's name into the system. The system will check to ensure that registered sexual offenders are not entering our school campuses without our knowledge. The system checks the visitor's name and date of birth for comparison with a national database of registered sex offenders. The registered sex offender database is the only official database checked by the system. **No other data from the ID is gathered or recorded and the information is never shared with any outside agency.** Once entry is approved, we will issue a badge that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of his/her visit. A visitor's badge will not be necessary for those who visit our schools simply to drop off an item in the office or pick up paperwork. If the Raptor system is not positioned at the front door, the visitor must immediately report to the Main Office where the Raptor System will then be utilized. **NO Visitor** is permitted to go to a child's classroom, nurse's office, library or anywhere else in the building unless being scanned in by the Security Officer at the front entrance or reporting to the Main Office first. This policy has been adopted by the entire Edison Public School District and is necessary for the children's protection and safety.

*** If you are visiting Benjamin Franklin for the purpose of taking your child out of school due to illness or for personal reasons, your signature will be required before being allowed to do so. The Sign Out book, which is located in the Main Office, will be where your signature is required. Please do not go straight to the nurse's office or your child's classroom upon being granted access into the building as you are always required to report to the Main Office first. If your presence is required at another location of the school, the secretaries in the Office will direct you from there.**

**** NOTE **** If you come to the school from 3:15pm or later you will NOT be able to sign your child out for the day. From this time on, all students will be dismissed as normal.

Parking and Drop-Off/Pickup Guide

AM DROP-OFF PROCEDURES:

1. When dropping off your child, you must pull up to the side entrance of the school (The Primary Parking Lot) and drop off from the right lane along the fence only.
2. Please drive up **slowly** and drop off children at the crosswalk. * **Please do NOT** get out of your car while dropping off the students, as unattended cars cause traffic issues for buses that need to pass. Students will be allowed to enter the side entrance at 8:45.
3. If you feel it is necessary, you may park your car, **BUT ONLY** in the primary lot, facing the trailer park. Parking in the front lot is reserved for staff only. You **MUST** then escort your child to the door. Please **Do Not Park** and then allow your child to walk through the parking lot unattended and be sure to use designated crosswalks when crossing traffic to enter the playground area.
4. No Drop Offs are allowed at the front entrance of the school as this area is restricted to buses, vans, and other school vehicles, which will continue to discharge students at the main entrance. *Any unauthorized vehicles in the bus lane during drop offs can/will be summoned by the police supervising the building.

IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO STOP THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE DROP OFF OR PICK UP TIME, PLEASE PARK ON THE GRAVEL TOWARDS THE BACK OF THE PRIMARY LOT.

PM PICK-UP PROCEDURES

1. Drivers planning on picking up children must park in a provided parking space, exit their vehicles, and escort their child across the parking lot and lanes of traffic. Children are not to cross unescorted. ***Parking along the curb in the Bus lane is Not Permitted at any time.**
2. Stopping along the fence and waiting for a child blocks traffic flow and is **NOT PERMITTED**. Please drive slowly, be considerate, respect each other, and keep our kids safe.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION
2019-2020 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Co-President	Patricia Holderbaum
Co-President	Ashley Miller
Co-VP	Dharini Mehta
Co-VP	Michele Gonzalez
Co-VP	Jaymi DiBisceglie
Treasurer	Vidya Shetty
Hospitality	Natasha Castiblanco
Correspondence	Laura Singh
Recording Secretary	Ria Gaviria

PTA Meetings

- PTA meetings are open to all concerned individuals. They take place on the third Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise stated in the school calendar. Business is conducted by having the executive committee, and the chairperson of each standing committee make a report. While everyone is welcome, only members have voting rights. Membership is available throughout the school year. The PTA will hear the concerns of anyone attending the meeting, but if a subject requires significant attention, it is suggested that you bring it up first with the appropriate committee.

Volunteering

- The PTA only works through the efforts of concerned parents, teachers, grandparents, and other individuals that volunteer their time to make Benjamin Franklin Elementary a better school. Regardless of the amount of time you have available, or your specific situation, there are ways through which you can contribute to the PTA. If you would like to volunteer in any way, please contact any of the PTA officers or the chairperson of the committee that interests you.

PTA Mission

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children.
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation

Email - <http://benjaminfranklin.my-pta.org>

Attendance

- In compliance with state compulsory attendance laws and to ensure learning, all students are expected to be present in school on every school day. Understanding that due to illness, and planned or unplanned family matters, students will invariably miss school on occasions. Students are reminded of their responsibility to attend school as often as possible as per board of education policy:
- A policy will be distributed to all students/families at the beginning of the school year. It is your responsibility to read it and verify you have done so by returning the Attendance Policy Sign off Sheet. The policy can be found on the district website as well.
- Students are also expected to report to school on or before the scheduled starting times. Students that are habitually tardy to school will also be referred to the school Intervention and Referral Team to determine appropriate interventions, and the school attendance investigator to determine if legal action is warranted. See Discipline code.
- If a student is absent and would like to obtain work, parents must call the office in the morning to report the absence and make the request. Teachers request 24 hour notice to prepare homework. Students are not permitted to attend school events if they are absent from school.

Discipline

- Students are expected to demonstrate safe and respectful behavior to all members of the school community at all times while on school property or during school hours (including their commute to and from school). Students are also expected to demonstrate positive school character as outlined by our "Character Counts" and "Social Skills and Decision Making" character education program. Students that do not comply with such are subject to the following dispositions included in the school discipline policy listed on the next several pages:

Electronic Communication Devices

- As stated in Board of Education Policy 5145.7 students may possess cell phones but cell phones must be turned off and be out of sight during the school day or when students are on school grounds during school hours. The same applies to activities beyond school hours. When the school activity has ended and students have exited the school or activity location, students can use cell phones.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

- As stated in policy 4111.1/4211.1, The Board prohibits engagement of any act or behavior of harassment, intimidation, or bullying towards others on school property, at school-sponsored functions, or on a school bus. Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any gesture or written, verbal or physical act that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory handicap, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function or on a school bus and that:
 1. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect or harming a person or damaging the student's property, or placing a person in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property; or
 2. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any person or group of people in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

The consequences and discipline for a person who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or who engage in acts of retaliation against a person who reports such an action are presented in Policy #5131.

School Nutrition

- The Edison Board of Education ("Board") recognizes that child and adolescent obesity has reached epidemic levels in the United States and that poor diet combined with the lack of physical activity negatively impacts on students' health, and their ability and motivation to learn.

All reimbursable meals shall meet federal nutrient standards as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Program regulations. All items served as part of the After School Snack Program shall meet the standards as outlined within this policy.

The following items may not be served, sold or given out as free promotion anywhere on school property at anytime before the end of the school day:

- Foods of minimal nutritional value as defined by U.S. Department of Agriculture regulations
- All food and beverage items listing sugar, in any form, as the first ingredient
- All forms of candy.

Schools shall reduce the purchase of any products containing trans fats. Food and beverages served during special school celebrations or during curriculum related activities shall be exempt from this policy, with the exception of foods of minimal nutritional value as defined by USDA regulations.

- Benjamin Franklin has a **Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)** composed of two student representatives from each grade level. These students meet with Chartwells leadership twice a year to discuss, review, and make changes to the food options that are served during Breakfast and Lunch.

Public Schools of Edison Township

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Bernard F. Bragen, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Daniel P. Michaud
Business Administrator /Board Secretary

SUN SAFETY AND PROTECTION

The Board of Education (along with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among other organizations) recognizes that continuous exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can increase the risk of skin cancer. Acknowledging that students spend a significant amount of time in the sun during school hours and after school in sports and recreation programs, the Board of Education recommends that schools take measures to protect student health to ensure the safe implementation of N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6 and N.J.A.C. 5:23. All students should possess the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to protect their skin from harmful sun exposure and thereby help to prevent skin cancer. The Board further recognizes that skin cancer prevention is important for all school workers, particularly for those who spend significant portions of their day in the sun. Finally, the Board acknowledges the essential role of family and community involvement in the school sun safety program.

SUN SAFETY EDUCATION

The school district and its schools shall provide opportunities to educate students on sun safety at every grade level, pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. These opportunities may include students' sun safety behavior when they are outdoors, be based on theories and methods proven effective by published research, and be consistent with the state's/district's health education standards/guidelines/framework. Sun safety education shall be designed to help students acquire:

1. Knowledge about the harmful effects of the sun and ways to protect the skin; and
2. Sun-safe skills, including the correct use of protective clothing, hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, and lip balm, as well as seeking shade and limiting sun exposure when possible and practical, during the hours of peak sun intensity.

Activities shall be developmentally appropriate, active, engaging, and emphasize the positive benefits of sun safety. The program shall encourage families as partners in their children's education.

Sun safety education shall be closely coordinated with other sun safety efforts, such as projects to increase the amount of shade on the school campus. In addition, sun safety concepts may be integrated into subject areas such as science, geography, and mathematics.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The school district/schools shall consider creating, implementing, and monitoring safety measures such as protective clothing, hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, lip balm, and access to shaded areas on the school campus. These measures shall contain ways to encourage students to seek shaded areas for outdoor activities and limit sun exposure, when possible, and practical, during the hours of peak sun intensity. During the time span of March 1 to October 31, the school(s) shall optimize shade options for students and personnel and shall encourage the utilization of existing shaded or indoor areas for congregation and recreation. Measures may contain the following elements:

1. Ways to encourage students to wear protective clothing while outdoors;
2. Ways to encourage students to wear hats that protect the face, neck, and ears whenever they are outside.
3. Ways, such as working with families and the community, to ensure that students have access to and use an SPF 15 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen or lotion and lip balm;

4. Ways to encourage or allow students to apply sunscreen and lip balm before school and before outdoor activities with consideration to sunscreen sensitivities and allergies; and

In addition, all new school construction or renovation projects may include a plan to provide shade for areas where students and staff congregate, such as playgrounds, sports fields, lunch areas, and waiting areas.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The school district/schools shall work with families and the community to support and supplement sun safety efforts at the school. Families may be provided with information about:

1. The causes of skin cancer and the ways that it can be prevented;
2. The school sun safety program;
3. Sunscreen sensitivity and allergies;
4. The importance of children wearing hats to prevent overexposure to the sun, but not sharing hats, which can spread head lice;
5. Ways that families can reinforce the school-based sun safety program with activities at home; and
6. Ways that families can become involved with and support the sun safety school program.

School instructional staff shall collaborate with agencies and groups conducting sun safety education and activities in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families.

EVALUATION

Schools shall evaluate and revise sun safety programs, and address identified shade needs, annually.

Dress Code

- Numerous viewpoints exist regarding the extent to which student dress should be regulated. It is generally felt that the school has a responsibility to assist students in developing an understanding of what constitutes “good taste” and acceptable practice in this area. It is also recognized that this responsibility cannot rest with the school alone. As with many aspects of our society, the home and other community agencies, along with the school, must assume responsibility for the development of positive attitudes and values within a safe environment.

The following items are considered inappropriate for school:

- Clothing that exposes any part of the midriff or that is overly revealing (spaghetti straps, tank tops, halters, exposed shoulders) etc.
- Clothing that is designed for highly physical or out-of-school activities (pajamas, leotards, swimwear, bandanas, headbands, wristbands)
- See-through, ripped, or other clothing that exposes undergarments
- Clothing with offensive/suggestive printing or writing or that makes references to alcohol, drugs, or violence
- Wearing outdoor clothing, in school, such as gloves, hats, and jackets, are prohibited
- Clothing or items that obscure a student's identify such as sunglasses, hoods, masks, etc.

Back to School Night

Back to School Night is an activity designed for parents to obtain a general overview of the organizational culture of the school and their child's individual classroom, as well as to experience what a day in your child's classroom is like. It is not a time for parent-teacher conferencing. During individual teacher presentations the following information will be shared:

- Personal Introduction
- Curriculum i.e.: Balanced Literacy/Journeys
- Key Instructional Strategies i.e.: Manipulatives in Mathematics/Investigations
- Classroom Policies and Procedures
- Homework Policy
- Assessment: Grading/Report Cards/Portfolios/Standardized Tests Academic & Behavioral Expectations
- Parent Communication

CONFERENCES

- Parents are encouraged to confer with teachers during the scheduled conference times in the Fall and Spring. If you would like a conference with a teacher or the principal at another time, call the office or the teacher to make an appointment, or send in a note with your child asking the teacher to contact you to set up a time to meet. Please make sure you provide the correct information for the teacher to do so.
- On scheduled conference days the school will operate on an abbreviated schedule and will dismiss students at 1:30 p.m.
- Conference dates can be found on the district wide calendar.

TESTING DATES

- NJSLA - Gr. 3-5 May 4-7
- NJSLA - Gr. 5 (Science) May 8 & 11

ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS

All students are assessed periodically to monitor their progress in Reading, Writing and Math through a variety of assessments. Students in grades K through 5 will be screened three times a year with an online assessment, STAR. In addition to this assessment, all students in Kindergarten through grade five are continually being assessed formatively by their classroom teacher to provide information that guides their instruction.

Students in **grades 3, 4 and 5** participate in the **New Jersey Student Learning Assessment** in the spring. The purpose of this test is to measure skill and content knowledge proficiency in Language Arts and Mathematics. Grade 4 students are also assessed on their proficiency in Science.

Library/MEDIA CENTER

- Students in grades K-2 come to the library/media center on a regular schedule for 20-40 minute periods once a week and may work on the computers to do research or teacher assigned projects. They are allowed to examine books that they find of interest. Each child may then check out the books that they have chosen as long as they are up to date with the returns of any previously checked out books. Students in grades 3-5 come to the Library/Media Center on a rotation basis that is scheduled through their homeroom teacher.

Physical Education

- Physical Education is a Special that runs on a Day 1 – 5 schedule. Please be advised that this means that the specific day of the week that your child has P.E. can vary based on the Day Schedule that is being followed each week.
- All students must wear sneakers. These sneakers must have a flat bottom and be able to be tightened in some way.
- No jewelry is to be worn during class due to safety reasons. The best procedure to follow is not to wear jewelry on the days that Physical Education is scheduled. If jewelry is taken off at the beginning of class and put in their pocket it may fall out and become lost. If it is taken off and left in the gym, it may be stolen. Jewelry that cannot be removed because of religious or medical reasons is asked to be covered up by something soft like a wristband. If the jewelry that cannot be removed is a necklace, we ask that the student tuck the jewelry into their shirts.
- Clothes which are weather appropriate, comfortable and permit freedom of movement are necessary for participation in our activities. Girls are reminded that skirts and dresses are not appropriate unless a pair of shorts are worn underneath.

MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE

The school nurse is the go to person for all medical concerns, records and individual health management. Chronic health issues, food allergies, medication administration and any other medical issue that requires attention while in school is also managed from the nurse's office.

The State and district health requirements for each student is collected and reviewed in the nurse's office when the child starts school. Each year screenings are done on every student. Height, weight and blood pressure is done on the first days of school. Vision screenings are done on the students in kindergarten, grade two and four, and any student who is referred. Hearing tests are done on all students up to the third grade, and scoliosis screening is done on fifth graders.

Emergency plans and first aid is part of the care provided. Children who are sick are assessed in the health office and a determination is made on whether the child can stay in school based on the findings. Prevention of infectious diseases is a priority and will determine if a child can stay in school.

Medications are only given by the nurse when they are in the proper prescription bottle authorized by a licensed physician with the proper consent forms from the parents or guardian. Even over the counter medications require this paperwork to be completed.

The "Growing Up" program is taught to the girls in the fourth grade by the female P.E. teacher along with the help of the nurse. Other health lessons are often arranged for different grade levels as well as the required health lessons for the faculty. The nurse works with the I&RS team which helps assist the teacher in promoting success in the classroom.

In order to promote a healthy learning environment for all students and staff, please keep your child home if he/she has the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100 degrees F
- Vomiting during the night or morning
- Frequent or persistent coughing or extensive nasal discharge
- Severe headaches, diarrhea, and/or stomach cramps with or without eating
- Complaints or symptoms that interfere with his/her usual functioning
- Sore throat with other symptoms of actual or impending illness
- Significant pain or discomfort of any body part not relieved by medication.
- Skin rash that may be contagious (see physician immediately).
- Significant lack of sleep the night prior to school day.

Please make sure your child eats a good breakfast before school so that he has energy to pay attention to the best of his ability. Please send in an extra change of clothes in the event of an emergency (K-1). Please update all emergency information and health concerns to ensure accurate records.

If you have any health concerns please contact the nurse's office at 732-650-5300 ext. 4.

Thank you for your help in managing your child's health needs in our school.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

BABES

- Beginning Awareness Basic Education Studies (BABES) is a nationally recognized primary prevention program. BABES is an asset building program that teaches important life skills to children between the ages of 5 and 9. Research suggests that effective prevention should be focused on building resiliency and reducing risk. BABES accomplishes this through the use of stories and seven life like puppet characters. Each lesson focuses on a particular concept and skill which the children learn and practice with the help of a trained professional. Students are encouraged to practice these skills in their daily lives through weekly homework assignments. BABES is a classic, present-day application of affirmative life principles. This important program is presented in an entertaining manner to capture the interest of young children. Curriculum skills are taught through the use of songs, worksheets, dramatic role play and other activities. Each lesson is based on actual life experiences. BABES is a six week program taught during a regular classroom period for approximately 40 minutes each week. Weekly homework assignments and educational sheets not only reinforce the lessons between classes but also involve parents in their child's learning experience.

Parent University

- “The true test of character is not how much you know how to do but how behave when you don't know what to do!” Parent University was started to educate parents about the latest initiatives and changes in curriculum so that they can best help their children at home. Each month Ben Franklin staff present a different topic and strategies that parents can use at home to support the work being done at school. Study skills, websites, Math, Reading, Writing and PARCC strategies are just a few of the topics to be taught this year.

Instrumental Music and Band

- The Instrumental music program and Band are open to all students in grades 4 and 5. Students may rent instruments from the approved school provider or obtain their own instrument. Lessons are offered free of charge during the school day on a rotating pull out schedule. Students who successfully participate in the lesson program are invited to join the school Band. The Band practices weekly during the school day in preparation for the winter and spring concerts. Any student who hopes to play in the Middle School Band should begin instruction at the elementary level.

Strings

- The Strings program is open to students in Grades 4 and 5. Lessons are provided once a week on the violin, viola, and cello. These lessons are offered free of charge, during the school day, on a rotating pull out schedule. The Strings students perform in the concert.

Chorus

- The Benjamin Franklin School Chorus is a performing group that promotes teamwork, gives a sense of belonging, raises school spirit, and is fun! Students are given the opportunity to apply concepts learned in their vocal music class. The chorus meets weekly to prepare for special events inside and outside of school. Any 4th or 5th grader can join. With great direction and strict rules, the high quality of performance has been maintained and the chorus continues to be recognized for its positive role in our school community.

Student Council

- The Student Council is made up of a group of selected 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students. A President, (5th), A Vice President (4th), and Secretary (3rd) are voted upon by the student body in October, and will serve as head of the council for the duration of the school year. The Student Council sponsors many school-wide activities and community services throughout the year that are fostered from students' ideas. The Student Council members create a sense of responsibility, caring, and the idea that everyone's ideas count by attending meetings and reporting the information to their fellow students.

The Bolt

- The Benjamin Franklin School student newspaper, The Bolt, consists of 3 – 4 issues per year for K-5 students to read, enjoy, and be informed. The newspaper staff, about 30 students per issue in grades 3 –5, utilizes technology to create original writings, drawings, and current events. Everyone works as a team to produce an interesting, creative, and newsworthy periodical about Benjamin Franklin students and staff.

Character Education

- Character Education is the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable our children to make informed choices. The six pillars of character education in the “Character Counts” program are trustworthiness, respect, fairness, citizenship, responsibility, and caring. Activities throughout the year will be designed to help children learn to think critically so they can evaluate their own decisions and attitudes. We will focus on different pillars by reading books, finding character traits in literature, social studies, science, etc., and by encouraging children to show that they are using a particular trait in their everyday activities.

Safety Patrols

- The student patrols at Benjamin Franklin Elementary School help to create and maintain a safe environment, both inside and outside of the school building. The patrols are responsible for assisting all students to a safe and orderly entrance and exit. They especially help with the kindergarten bus students by making sure they get to their bus safely. Through their leadership, they act as role models for the rest of the student body.
- During the month of April, a letter goes home to 4th graders interested in being considered for a Safety Patrol position. A set of criteria is outlined for assessing all candidates. Those students recommended for Patrols are trained at various posts by fifth grade patrols and then assume those posts for the next school year. All fourth graders are trained at various posts by the fifth grade patrols. All patrols are taught that safety is most important, not only for their fellow students, but for themselves as well.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Speech

- The purpose of the speech and language program is to remediate deficits in speech and language that adversely affect a student's educational performance. These deficits must not be related to dialect, cultural differences, or influence from a foreign language. Therapy is provided in the areas of articulation, language, fluency, and voice. Children who receive therapy are classified as, "Eligible for Speech-Language Services" or any one of the classifications for students in need of special education.

Counseling

- The guidance department consists of a certified teacher, with a Master's Degree in school counseling. The School Counselor helps the children find success in school by counseling the children individually, in topical small groups and in delivering classroom guidance lessons that teach skills such as making good decisions, resolving conflicts peacefully and respecting others. The counselor works collaboratively with students, parents, teachers and administrators to identify and remove barriers that may impede student achievement.
- Counseling is provided on a full time basis. Immediate concerns are addressed and dealt with on a short-term and long-term basis. If you wish to receive counseling services for your child or for yourself to assist you in dealing with your child, please call Mrs. Kole at (732) 650-5300 ext. 6003 and make an appointment to meet with her.

Response to Intervention

- The RTI Program is a service that is provided for extra help in Language Arts Literacy and/or Mathematics. Instruction in the RTI Program takes place during school hours. The focus is to provide support for the students through a variety of means, i.e., Reading Specialist, Math and Literacy Interventionist, specialized materials, and/or small group instruction. A notification letter is sent at the beginning of the school year to the parents/guardians of students who will participate in this program.

Child Study Team

- The school child study team is a part of the Division of Pupil-Special Services. It consists of a school social worker, school psychologist, and learning disabilities teacher consultant. The team has the following primary responsibilities: evaluate students that have been referred to them for having potential disabilities, and case-manage programs for students have been identified as needing special services. Team members may also work with students with disabilities, as well as their parents, and teachers.
- If your child meets the eligibility requirements for special services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed.

Intervention and Referral Services

- The Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) is a state mandated pre-referral committee that is designed to provide assistance to students experiencing academic, social, and emotional difficulty in school. The committee consists of the principal, school nurse, school counselor, speech therapist, reading specialist, a child study team member, our CRT, and one general education teacher and special education teachers. The committee meets once a month to discuss students that are referred by their classroom teacher. During meetings, the committee brainstorms with the classroom teacher, and parent (if requested), and then implements classroom, building and district strategies, not excluding retention, or referral to the child study team for evaluation.

MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

Memory Book

- The Memory Book is published in June for 5th grade students. Pictures are taken throughout the year during their events. Their school pictures are also included in this yearbook.

School Website:

- Visit the Edison Township website at <https://www.edison.k12.nj.us/>
- Visit Ben Franklin's School Website at <https://www.edison.k12.nj.us/Domain/14>
- Visit the PTA website at <http://benjaminfranklin.my-pta.org/>

Channel 118:

- The Edison School Network is on Channel 118. This T.V. channel broadcasts information about all the schools in Edison Township and lists important dates and information according to specific schools.

Clubs and Extra Activities

Dance Fitness Club

- The Dance Fitness Club is open to all fourth graders. The club emphasizes the importance of staying active for a healthy lifestyle. It allows the children to stay active and move around without feeling like they are doing actual exercise. It also encourages the students to explore different cultures by exposing them to dances from other cultures.

Fitness and Nutrition Club (Team Franklin)

- Team Franklin is a student leadership club that focuses on giving the students a voice and a platform to promote positive changes at Benjamin Franklin School for the entire student body. The club utilizes fitness and nutrition as specific areas of interest to direct their efforts of change. Team Franklin also has a community outreach program that tries to build positive relations between our students, their families and community stakeholders. Meetings for Team Franklin are bi-weekly at 8am. Team Franklin also works very closely with the National Program, Fuel Up to Play 60, which promotes the importance of getting 60 minutes of physical activity a day and balancing that with a well-balanced diet. The partnership with this program provides amazing opportunities for the team members to be recognized for their hard work and commitment to the program.

STEM Club (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)

- The club is offered to 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students who meet before school for 45 minutes, once a month for 8 consecutive months. There are two sessions with about 20 students in each session. Students will focus on a particular STEM discipline and conduct experiments with peers to promote social emotional skills. The STEM club will provide students with opportunities to further their knowledge, ask questions and discover new content through inquiry-based learning.

Theatre Arts Club

- The purpose of the Theatre Arts Club is to foster attitudes, understandings, skills and enjoyment so each student's artistic potential may be developed. In developing their potential, students will realize that lifelong participation in the arts is a valuable part of a life fully lived. To achieve this goal, the Theatre Arts Club will perform a play as a culminating activity in the spring.

Wingman Club

- The Wingman club is a club composed of selected 4th and 5th grade students that pair with other grade levels to create an inclusive and positive environment in the classrooms. The ambassadors are the Wingman "champions" for the student body. They become a buddy to rely on, someone to look up to. Most importantly, the Wingmen create a sense of community at Benjamin Franklin. The belief that there is always someone at Ben Franklin there for one another. Throughout the year, ambassadors implement team building activities to build a community that cares about the person next to them regardless of age, race or beliefs...where kids are really looking out for each other!

L.A.C.E.S. (Ladies Achieving Cardiovascular Endurance & Self Esteem)

- The L.A.C.E.S. club is an after school running club. This club is for female students in grades 3 through 5 to promote empowerment, self-esteem, body image and maintenance of a healthy lifestyle. Through this club, girls will make and write down their goals for each meeting that they will try to attain. The goals can range from time, distance, making friends to developing a positive self-image. From week to week, students will perform a warm-up and then a gradual running distance that the students will try to complete. The culminating event will be a friendly 5K race with details to follow later in the year.

Kindness Rocks Club

- This club is an opportunity for 350, 4th and 5th graders to spread kindness to each other, the school and community. We will implement kindness initiatives to help improve the school climate at Ben Franklin. There will also be a culminating school wide Kindness activity for parents, staff and students to be held in the Spring.

Vocal Ensemble Club

- The Vocal Ensemble will be composed of 15 - 20 Fifth Grade students who go above and beyond the choral expectations of other students in their grade. These students will take on the musical leadership role in the school community. They will lead the BOLT school song, sing the National Anthem at school events, as well as sing higher level music than the general music chorus class at the annual Winter and Spring concerts.

School Bus Safety

School bus safety is a matter for parent and pupil cooperation. Safety on the school bus is not solely the responsibility of the administration and bus driver. Safety is a matter of teamwork and requires the constant support and attention of the pupils and the parents as well as the school's personnel. Statistics show that the majority of school bus accidents are caused by human error rather than a mechanical failure.

The purpose of these guidelines is to clarify for the parent and pupil their responsibility in contributing to the safety of the school program.

Chapter 175, Laws of 1969, read in part, "The driver shall be in full charge of the school bus at all times and shall be responsible for order; he/she may never exclude a pupil from the bus. If unable to manage any pupil, the driver shall report the unmanageable pupil to the principal or the school which he attends".

"A PUPIL MAY BE EXCLUDED FROM THE BUS FOR DISCIPLINARY REASONS by the Principal, and his parents shall provide for his transportation to and from school during the time of his exclusion". Title 18A:25-2.

Bus Rules

1. Any damage to a bus should be reported immediately to the driver.
2. In any case of a road emergency, remain in your seat until instructions are given by the driver.
3. Keep your books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisles. Your life may depend on a clear passage to the emergency door.
4. Do not open or close windows without permission of the driver.
5. Never throw articles from the bus windows.
6. Be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
7. Learn how to get off the bus quickly in case of an emergency.
8. Do not switch buses for any reason.
9. Be courteous and considerate. Use of profane language is prohibited.
10. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
11. Keep the bus clean.
12. Cooperate with the driver.
13. Do not damage bus or equipment.
14. Stay in your seat and wear your seat belt at all times.
15. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
16. Do not fight, push or shove. No horseplay.
17. Do not tamper with bus equipment.
18. Do not bring items prohibited by the school on the school bus such as animals, pets, radios, tape players, walkman, water pistols, weapons of any type, skateboards, etc.
19. Do not bring flammable material on the bus. 20. The bus driver is authorized to assign seats.

Good, Better, Best.

Never let it rest.....

**Till our good becomes our better
and our better becomes our best.**

**We're the Ben Franklin Bolts and
we will never settle for less.**

**Strong bodies, minds and character
determine our success.**

WE ARE THE BEN FRANKLIN B.O.L.T.S

Be respectful

Own your choices

Lead with a kind heart

Time to listen and learn

Safety first

District Policy

**[Click here to View the Districts:
Elementary Discipline Policy](#)**