

# Benton Hall Academy 2025-2026 Student Handbook

Pride Progress Excellence



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[www.bentonhallacademy.org](http://www.bentonhallacademy.org)

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## **VISION STATEMENT**

The faculty, staff, and students of Benton Hall Academy will provide a safe, caring, and inclusive environment that will advance knowledge and promote integrity.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We believe in Benton Hall Academy where children who learn differently are educated with compassion, where children who struggle academically and socially are inspired to discover their strengths and maximize their potential, and where children who have been on the outside looking in are invited to belong.

## **PREFACE**

This handbook has been prepared as a reference for all stakeholders of the school; it endeavors to acquaint students and parents with Benton Hall Academy traditions, ethos, routines, and rules. This handbook cannot address every potential issue. We are a community sharing a facility among faculty, students, staff, and administration; subsequently, a considerable amount of information is detailed within this document, intended to guide and increase productive collaboration amongst all stakeholders. Students and families are encouraged to read, review, process, and direct inquiries to the Benton Hall Academy administration for further clarification and/or discernment.

**NOTE: Rules may be subject to revisions during the course of the school year.**

We are a small school with integrity, a spirit of camaraderie, and respect for all stakeholders. Our students will discover this prevailing tenet from the moment they enter the building, exemplified via the empathetic mentoring of our staff.

The rules and regulations set forth in this handbook are applicable to all students under Benton Hall Academy jurisdiction, including any/all school-sponsored trips and/or travel to and from the Benton Hall Academy campus.

## **BENTON HALL HISTORY**

Benton Hall Academy was established in 1977. Its founder, John McLaughlin, envisioned the appeal of a private school focused upon students who, for a variety of reasons, had not previously performed to the best of their abilities in a typical institutional school setting. Since its inception, over 2000 students have attended Benton Hall Academy and have benefited from the school's unique philosophy and structure. The enduring mission of Benton Hall Academy remains steadfastly fixated upon improving the academic and social abilities of its students, thus perpetually enhancing the quality of life for each student and his/her families.

## **BENTON HALL PHILOSOPHY**

Benton Hall Academy's educational philosophy is based upon foundational core beliefs designed and developed to provide instruction and guidance which prepares students academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally to function at the utmost level of their abilities.

Benton Hall Academy strives to enhance the quality of life for each student. At each academic tier level, the lower pupil-teacher ratio, combined with a structured approach to the educational process, provides each student with a dynamic learning environment.

The curriculum is meticulously designed to create a program that will acknowledge and address students' academic diversity and learning styles.

A positive, nurturing, and caring environment affords students the successes and experiences necessary to build confidence and positive self-concepts. The school supports the student's ability to develop the capacity to competently accentuate his or her own personal aptitudes to further advance his or hers' desire to grow and learn, to respect and understand others, and to accept full responsibility for one's personal behavior.

Emphasis is focused upon the development of sensitive, autonomous, critically-thinking individuals who empathize with others, grasp the learning process, and the ability to appropriately apply their intellectual competencies with fidelity, resulting in lifelong, responsible, productive citizens.

Each student should experience success daily within the academic program and interpersonal relationships; however, all students will not encounter identical educational experiences, nor will they achieve equally in all learning situations or activities. Personal standards of achievement will be carefully designed to enhance individual students' physical, social and emotional development to a level commensurate to his or her optimal functioning domains.

Benton Hall Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions, financial aid, athletic and/or other programs.

Benton Hall Academy acknowledges the rights of parents regarding school records as stated in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (Buckley Amendment).

- Parents have the right to examine records, registers of access, and the prerogative to identify any individuals who have reviewed or examined his/her child's cumulative records.
- Parents have the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information.
- Parents have the right to challenge the contents of records and the right to a hearing regarding the records.
- The complete school policy on the rights of parents is available in the school office.



# Benton Hall Academy

## 2025 - 2026 School Calendar

August '25						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

7/31 New Student Open House  
5 First Day of School

September '25						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

1 Labor Day-NO SCHOOL  
4 & 5 Parent-Teacher Conferences (1.5 days: NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS)  
26 Grandparents Lunch: Half Day

October '25						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

2 Prospective Families Open House  
6-10 Fall Break: NO SCHOOL  
13 Start of Quarter 2

November '25						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

11 Veterans Day: NO SCHOOL  
21 Thanksgiving Feast/Half Day  
24-28 Thanksgiving Break: NO SCHOOL

December '25						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

16- 19 HS Midterms (Required)  
19 Last Day of Semester/Half Day  
12/22-1/6 Winter Break  
(Staff Return 1/6 :PD Day)

January '26						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

12/22-1/6 Winter Break  
(Staff Return 1/6 :PD Day)  
7 Students Return to School  
19 MLK Day

February '26						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

5 & 6 Parent-Teacher Conferences (1.5 days: NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS)  
16 Presidents Day: NO SCHOOL

March '26						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

13 Half Day (FFT Staff Training)  
16 Start of Quarter 4  
20 Food for Thought Fundraiser: NO SCHOOL  
3/30-4/3 Spring Break: NO SCHOOL

April '26						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

3/30-4/3 Spring Break: NO SCHOOL  
3 Good Friday: NO SCHOOL  
7 Prospective Families Open House  
10 HS Prom

May '26						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

8-13 Senior Finals (Required for Seniors)  
14 Graduation (Required for Seniors)  
19-22 HS Finals (Required)  
22 Last Day of School

	School Closed/ Holidays
	Half Day
	First Day of Semesters and Last Day of School
	Teacher In-Service Day (no school for students)
	Open House
	Start of New Quarter

<https://www.bentonhallacademy.org/>

## **CIVIL CODE**

Benton Hall Academy believes that students enroll with a sincere desire to learn and a willingness to adhere to the precepts of the school. A genuine commitment of purpose, honesty, respect for others, and their property is expected, as well as personal behavior which is exemplified via prudent actions and accountability. The faculty serves as mentors promoting the axioms of the school and advocating personal freedom within reasonable boundaries established for the common good. Benton Hall Academy embraces the following civil code designed as a foundational guide and mechanism necessary to equitably determine allowable freedoms for students:

- Respecting others in the classroom, athletic arenas, dining hall, and during school meetings is a fundamental tenet of our school.
- Within the classroom, students are expected to be attentive, inquisitive, supportive, and polite – one's actions should be conducive to a vibrant, learning environment.
- During interscholastic athletic competitions, and in practice sessions, team members and supporters should be committed to maximum effort, characterized by sportsmanship and honorable play. Disrespectful or inappropriate language, gestures, actions, and/or any play outside of recognized rules is unacceptable.
- In all school settings, including broader social contexts, students must be mindful of others' rights to privacy, sharing of facilities, appropriate language, and respect for one's personal possessions and property. Living in harmony with students from other cultures and backgrounds constitutes a significant dimension of one's education.
- In the dining hall, (a place for fellowship and interaction), proper etiquette and courtesy is expected toward staff and other diners. A cheerful disposition toward helping when asked, and cleaning up after oneself, is a responsibility.
- It is the expectation of all stakeholders, including staff, students, and parents, to promote and uphold the civil code. Deviations from the civil code should be addressed in a respectful, reasonable manner, commensurate with the criteria of the civil code itself.

# **I. ACADEMICS**

## **BENTON HALL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS**

All high school students, effective Fall of 2009, are required to complete twenty-two credits for a diploma. The diploma requirements include:

- 4 Credits - English
- 4 Credits - Algebra I, II, Geometry, fourth higher level math course
- 3 Credits - Biology I, Chemistry or Physics, and a third lab course
- 3 Credits - Social Studies, (must include U.S. History, World History, Econ/Gov't)
- 1.5 Credits- Physical Education/Wellness
- 1 Credit - Performing Arts/Visual Arts
- 2 Credits - Foreign Language
- 3 Credits - Elective Courses
- 0.5 Credit - Personal Finance

## **SENIOR SERVICE REQUIREMENTS**

The Senior Service Program promotes the importance of giving back to the community. Each senior must earn 8 hours of community service prior to May 1<sup>st</sup>, which are required to occur after November 1st, per Tennessee Hope Scholarship guidelines. These hours can be acquired in various ways and will be discussed and approved individually. These intentional, real-world experiences of serving others, is extremely valuable to our students.

## **ACADEMIC HONOR CODE**

Benton Hall Academy believes an important dimension of education is honesty and the independent process of discovery and self-actualization. *Practically and academically, if you as a student compose an essay using another's words, or permit someone to complete your homework, or copy someone else's notes for a take-home test, or collaborate without permission/without stating intentions, you are not independently learning and are benefiting unfairly through the efforts of others.* These are examples of academic dishonesty.

Benton Hall Academy also insists upon proper usage and citation of applicable authors and/or reference materials.

*To avoid plagiarism, a student must footnote everything that is not a result of personal thinking, except for what is common knowledge. Direct recitations must be framed in quotation marks and documented. Paraphrasing, or the translation of ideas and facts into one's own words, must also be documented likewise. Online resources must be affirmed as rigorously as any other source of information.* If there are questions or concerns while writing a paper, a student should consult a teacher.

Academic dishonesty will be identified as an academic concern and/or as a disciplinary violation. Any repeated plagiarism offense may jeopardize the student's tenure at Benton Hall Academy.

### **COURSE SELECTION AND DROP/ADD**

If a student determines a change in his/her schedule is necessary, the student should secure the appropriate change form from the Dean of Academics and return the form to the Dean's office, who will then determine whether the change is necessary and should be approved.

### **GRADING PERIODS AND COMMENTS**

The school calendar is divided into four, nine-week grading periods over two semesters; however, a progress report will be posted on Sycamore Education at the three and six-week marks of each of the four grading periods. A supplemental progress report may also accompany any high school student who is presently earning a grade of 64 or below and/or if a teacher feels the student is not performing to his/her abilities academically or behaviorally. The lower/middle and high school will also post a progress report on Sycamore Education at the three and six-week marks of each of the four, nine-week, grading periods. An official report card will be posted on Sycamore Education at the conclusion of each four week marking period.

### **HONOR ROLL**

There are two levels of recognized academic achievement announced following each semester. The Headmaster's List (A Honor Roll) is composed of students with all A's, the Dean's List (A/B Honor Roll) is composed of students with A's and B's. All graded courses account for Honor Roll calculations and subsequent designations.

### **GRADING SCALE (Effective July 22, 2022)**

90 - 100	=	A
80 - 89	=	B
70 - 79	=	C
60 - 69	=	D
59 - Below	=	F
Incomplete	=	I - Due date must be arranged by student with the teacher



## **TESTS and EXAMS**

If a student is scheduled for three tests on a single day, he or she is entitled to reschedule one assessment for another day/time, if such rescheduling is requested/approved a minimum of one day prior to the originally scheduled testing date; this accommodation is solely the student's responsibility. Students should be especially vigilant regarding their upcoming test dates to avoid an overload. A student may enlist the help of the Dean of Students to determine an acceptable solution with the teacher(s) involved.

High school students are expected to be present and available in December and May for scheduled/required midterm and final exams, which accounts for 25% of his/her semester average in each academic course. Any student unable to be present on the date of any scheduled exam will be expected to "make up" that exam in the afternoon/after school of a subsequent day following the date of the originally-scheduled exam. Any student unable to make-up an exam within the aforementioned parameters will receive a "40" on each respective exam.

## **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS/GRADING**

Each student is responsible for his or her learning. All students at Benton Hall have the ability to succeed and earn high grades.

Grades are based upon one's effort in class, homework, classwork, assessments, and/or projects. Homework is necessary to both reinforce concepts taught in that class, as well as providing evidence to the teacher of one's comprehension of that course's standards and objectives. **Extra credit opportunities will not be offered and/or accepted until all required work is completed.**

The minimum requirement for a student to earn a ½ credit for a high school semester course is an overall grade average of 60 or above. Due dates for incomplete grades and assignments must be arranged and approved by/with the affected teacher(s). Anytime a student is absent, it is **the student's** responsibility to communicate with each teacher regarding material missed, request any needed work/materials, and determine specific time parameters regarding the completion/submission of said materials.

## **II. BENTON HALL TECHNOLOGY**

The computers at Benton Hall Academy are all connected to the Benton Hall Local Area Network, (LAN) and the @bentonhallacademy domain. The capabilities of the network place enormous potential at the fingertips of its users; conversely, these capabilities also place enormous responsibility upon its users, as well.

The purpose of this statement is to identify several of the potential ethical issues associated with access to the LAN & domain and to specify Benton Hall's standards for use. The ethical axioms regarding the network correlate directly with those outlined throughout the Benton Hall Academy Student Handbook.

### **GENERAL RULES**

The Student Handbook describes the expectations regarding school conduct, all of which directly correspond to the use of computers. *We expect users to have consideration for the personal and material rights of others, meaning harassing others, destroying property, and/or stealing from others constitutes unacceptable behaviors.*

We expect users to be honest with others in what they say and do. Information is a form of property, and electronic mail (email) is a form of speech. To that end:

- ***Users must access the network with their own account; users must never knowingly permit others access to the network with their personal account; users must never purposely share their password; and, users must log-off when they are finished using the network.*** Obtaining a password or rights to another's directory or email on the network is a form of theft. Taking advantage of a student who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging out is no different from entering his/her unlocked home.
- Using a peer's password, with or without permission, and/or posting a message using another's login is a form of dishonesty.
- Public messages, (either on the Internet or on the school's LAN), must be relevant to the community at large, must not include personal attacks, derogatory or threatening comments, and should follow ordinary rules of appropriate public language. (Since such messages are public, by their nature, they should not contain any language or content which the author would not be willing to share at a school meeting.)
- Benton Hall Academy owns the network and reserves the right to examine and log all files and activities that occur on the network, domain and connected machines. This includes, but is not limited to, Internet browsing patterns, email and associated files.

- No one is to change any system configurations, load software, and/or save files to the local workstations. No one may load software onto the network or download software to the network. The system must never be booted via an external source, (such as a CD-ROM/DVD or thumb drive). If changes need to be made to a system, please contact the office.
- Network users must store their files in their personal account areas or an area specified by a teacher for a class, (i.e., a class-shared folder). Benton Hall reserves the right to limit storage space and to determine appropriate uses of the network.
- Students may not load or run their own software on Benton Hall-owned computers.
- Benton Hall recognizes that technology and respective applications change constantly. Benton Hall reserves the right to update/amend its policy without prior notice to ensure the smooth and secure operation of its network. Questionable uses of the network identified and/or not identified by this document may be subject to discipline. If a student has any question as to the appropriateness of a desired use of the computer, he or she should consult the office and/or his/her teacher.
- Students should expect violations to be reconciled as a disciplinary matter.

### **STUDENT-OWNED COMPUTERS (LAPTOP COMPUTERS)**

Each Benton Hall Academy student will again be assigned a Chromebook within the initial two weeks of the school year; therefore, to further ensure network security and integrity, **students are expressly prohibited from bringing his/her own laptops and/or other personal electronic devices/systems to school. Students will only access the BHA network via school-owned Chromebooks/related electronic devices.** In the event of distance learning, BHA recommends the use of a school issued device but a personal device may be used at home if preferred.

### **INTERNET ACCESS**

The following is a general list of student expectations and guidelines regarding Internet usage:

- Harassing and/or inappropriate language, directed toward individuals on and/or off-campus, is unacceptable and will result in applicable consequences.
- Accessing Benton Hall's computer network system or domain to purposely attempt and/or successfully penetrating/disrupting the school's security firewall and filters, will also be considered a violation of school rules which may/will result in disciplinary consequences up to/including expulsion.
- Students may NOT visit adult sites and/or web pages which feature any inappropriate materials, such as illegal substances, weapons, pornography, violence, etc.
- Students will not attempt and/or access non-academic sites during the regular day.

- Benton Hall reserves the right to limit and/or adjust the types of allowable ports/Internet Applications for students without prior notice. Multiple web sites, such as social media, gaming sites, online radio stations, etc., are automatically blocked by our school's firewall and filters. Support applications are limited to approved web browsing.
- Students will refrain from certain online activities which require extensive bandwidth, thus reducing network speed and efficiency rates for users throughout the building.
- Students will refrain from online activities not applicable to that course/assignment, (such as personal email, streaming music and/or video, etc., during class time, without consent from his/her teacher).
- Students are prohibited from using personal and/or school electronic devices for entertainment purposes during the academic day.
- Students are prohibited from using personal gmail accounts or guest accounts throughout the academic day without permission and supervision from a staff member.
- Accessing and/or altering the files of others is strictly prohibited.
- Computer vandalism ("hacking") is a deliberate attempt to circumvent protective firewalls and filters, gain access to unauthorized files or computers or any attempt to alter or disrupt the proper functioning of a computer system. Such intentional behavior will be addressed emphatically, even if the intent is not malicious, or if the system was not adequately protected. Deliberate attempts to access sites/files that are restricted will result in disciplinary action. **This is against the law and police may be called to investigate.**

It should be noted that each student and parent/guardian must sign an agreement/acknowledgement of the Acceptable Electronics Usage Policy, understanding potential consequences for violations of the policies included therein, prior to a student accessing and/or using a school computer and/or personal electronic device on the Benton Hall Academy campus.

### **INFORMATION FROM THE INTERNET**

Obtaining material that is explicitly identified/labeled as "not intended for minors" will be considered a form of dishonesty and willful defiance of the "Acceptable Electronics Usage Policy." Furthermore, making public and/or creating/distributing any material(s)/communication(s) that contains Internet addresses/personal information which includes/promotes pornographic, violent, and/or otherwise hurtful content will be considered a sign of disrespect and/or form of harassment and will be determined/classified as a violation of school rules. **School administration reserves the right to examine/monitor any/all Benton Hall Academy user's internet activity, as necessary, especially if compliance issues/alleged violations occur contrary to the "Acceptable Usage Policy for BHA Computers and Internet Access."**

### **ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Benton Hall considers electronic mail as an efficient, acceptable, and appropriate mode of communication with all stakeholders. Email additionally provides a record of correspondence with others, allowing individuals to review/refer immediately from multiple locations/platforms. Benton Hall staff expects all community members to both prudently produce and respect the privacy of email messages within the building. Subsequently, **school administration reserves the right to examine/monitor Benton Hall Academy email correspondences, as necessary, especially if compliance issues/alleged violations occur contrary to the “Acceptable Usage Policy for BHA Computers and Internet Access.”** No one shall access another’s personal email unless that individual grants permission. One shall not share email messages with another/others without prior consent of the author – especially, if the email is inappropriate and/or offensive. Similarly, the contents of one’s files stored electronically on the Benton Hall Academy network/domain and/or “cloud”, should be restricted and private; however, analogous to email, Benton Hall reserves the right to inspect user directories for files which may contain objectionable, offensive elements and delete, if discovered.

### **BLOGS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

Students are prohibited from accessing social networking sites including but not limited to instagram, vine, snapchat, facebook, X, google chat, etc., during the school day unless they have permission from the teacher. Students may not chat or communicate with anyone electronically unless they have permission from the teacher.

Any student or family member inappropriately communicating via any mode of social media networking, whether on or off campus, which defames a student(s) and/or the institution of Benton Hall Academy, (i.e., written comments, photographs, videos, etc.), will be subject to consequences and disciplinary action(s), up to/including expulsion of an offending student(s), at the discretion of Benton Hall Academy administration.

### **GOOGLE MEET**

In the event Benton Hall Academy must instruct students remotely, Google Meet will be the primary livestream/interactive instructional medium utilized by Benton Hall teachers and staff for the 2024-25 school year. Only students currently enrolled in a particular teacher’s classroom will be permitted entry into these “virtual classrooms.” Students will only be allowed “entry” into a “Google Meeting” if/when the instructor has already logged on/initiated the class. (Students will not be able to electronically enter any Benton Hall Academy Google Meet classroom unsupervised/without attendance by a BHA staff member for safety purposes.)

## **INTERNET SAFETY**

Regarding user safety and security, students shall **not** divulge, via the Internet, (including social media networking sites), either his/her personal information and/or like data of peers/others, (i.e., address, phone number, user names, passwords, etc.). It is imperative that all stakeholders limit/eliminate the opportunity for individuals with illicit and/or criminal intent from using the Internet to identify, access, and/or pursue our students because of personal information released, whether intentional/unintentional. Parents are strongly encouraged to view/monitor sites his/her child visits regularly.

## **CELL PHONES/OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

**Students are prohibited from possessing personal cell phones/other electronic devices on their person/inside of their lockers, during the normal instructional day of 8:00 AM thru 3:10 PM.** If a parent determines that it is imperative that his or her child retain a cell phone for after school use, the student is required to submit the phone daily to the office and retrieve it at the end of the school day. Lower and middle school students in grades 3-8 will retrieve their personal electronic devices daily at 2:50pm, while high school students in grades 9-12 will retrieve their personal electronic devices at 3:05pm daily. Each student is required to provide his/her cell phone number. **Cell phones possessed by students or in his/her lockers or backpacks during the school day, will be confiscated and will be held until a parent comes to claim the phone, for a “1<sup>st</sup> Offense.” (A “2<sup>nd</sup> Offense” results in the cell phone being confiscated/held “for one school day”, before a parent may claim the phone AND a 1-Day ISS Penalty, while a “3<sup>rd</sup> Offense” results in the cell phone being confiscated/held for “one school day”, until a parent may claim the phone AND a 1-Day OSS Penalty. A “4<sup>th</sup> cell phone offense” results in a student’s privilege to possess a cell phone on school property being revoked for a minimum of nine weeks.) A student may face disciplinary action if he/she is found texting or photographing while on campus. Any inappropriate text messages, photos or videos displayed or taken on campus may be cause for disciplinary action and may result in expulsion.**

Electronic devices include, but are not limited to I-POD’s, Gaming Systems, Mp3 Players, electronic tablets, digital cameras, cell phone cameras/Go-Pro’s, remote control vehicles/drones, smart watches with mobile service etc., and are prohibited during the school day; therefore, Benton Hall discourages students from ever possessing such items at school. Additionally, due to the potential damage to any student and/or adult’s eyes, **“laser pens” emitting beams of light of any color, are prohibited from being possessed by any student while on campus and will be immediately confiscated upon discovery. The BHA staff is not responsible for lost or stolen personal electronic devices, nor will staff sacrifice instructional time searching for these excluded items.**

## **SCHOOL-ISSUED CHROMEBOOKS**

### **REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be required to have a Student Handbook Form signed by both the student and parent on file. Students are also required to purchase a protective case for the Chromebook (11.6 inch) that they may personalize.

### **TERMS OF USE**

Legal title to the Chromebook and charger belongs to Benton Hall Academy and they are intended for educational use only. The right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon full and complete compliance with this Student Handbook. Possession of the Chromebook terminates no later than the last day of the school year or upon withdrawal from Benton Hall Academy.

### **DAILY ACCESS AND USAGE**

Chromebooks may or may not be specifically required in every class, every day; therefore, **students are required to enter each class, each period of the school day, and place his/her Chromebook in that teacher's "designated holding area", until the teacher directs students to retrieve and access his/her Chromebook for a specific task(s). Students may NOT have their Chromebooks at their desks during class unless instructed to do so by the teacher.**

### **CARE AND MAINTENANCE**

Students are responsible for ensuring that the Chromebook issued to them is not damaged, lost or stolen. It is required that students purchase a protective case to place the Chromebook throughout the day. Students may not write upon, alter or place stickers on the Chromebook without permission from an administrator. Students may not remove any school-issued stickers. Parents, guardians or students may not attempt repairs themselves or contract with any other individual or business for the repair of a BHA Chromebook. Only Benton Hall Academy is authorized to make repairs. A fully charged battery will last 6 to 10 hours, depending on use. Students are responsible for plugging in/recharging their Chromebooks in the cart in their designated spot at the end of every school day.

### **LIABILITY**

In case of damage, loss, or theft, students or parents should notify the school as soon as possible. Parents will be responsible for any repair or replacement cost. The actual amount will depend on the individual circumstances of the loss or damage and will be charged directly to FACTS. If a Chromebook is lost, severely damaged or stolen, up to a **\$275.00** replacement fee will be charged directly to FACTS. If a Chromebook is damaged, the student is responsible for turning it into BHA as soon as possible and they will receive a loaner computer until theirs can be fixed or replaced.

## **TRANSPORT, USAGE AND STORAGE**

Students will retrieve their assigned Chromebook every morning and return them at the end of each day. When using a Chromebook, it should always be sitting at a table. Chromebooks should not be carried by the screen. Cooling vents on the underside of the Chromebook should not be obstructed when the device is on or being charged. Without this cooling, the Chromebook can quickly overheat and be permanently damaged. Chromebooks should never be left unattended.

## **LOANING OR BORROWING**

Students are not to loan their Chromebook to other students without permission from an administrator and students may not borrow a Chromebook from another student without permission from an administrator. Students may also not share passwords or usernames.

## **PRIVACY AND SUPERVISION**

Benton Hall Academy uses a cloud-based, web-filtering system which monitors and controls how the Chromebooks are used, but it is still the responsibility of the student and parent to monitor. Parents, guardians, and students do not have the right to privacy or expectation of purposely misusing any of the school Chromebooks or school network. Benton Hall Academy maintains the right to access all files created/accessed on each Chromebook, as well as all Google Drive files, school email accounts, and any/all actions taken. Parents are responsible for monitoring use of the computer outside of school hours, if the Chromebook is ever approved/permitted for off-campus use.

## **PRINTING**

Students will have access to a cloud printer but are expected to be mindful of school resources, such as paper and ink cartridges and should use them judiciously and should only print with permission.

## **VIDEO AND SOUND**

The Chromebook has an internal microphone and webcam. Webcams must not be used at school at any time unless specifically required by a teacher. Students must always obtain permission before recording a person on video or audio. Sound will be muted during class time unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes. Students may use headphones with permission from the teacher.



## **SOFTWARE**

Recreational software or websites, especially non-educational games, should not be accessed at school. While in class, the Chromebook is to be used only for school work. Inappropriate media, including videos, pictures, music and/or games, may not be viewed or stored anywhere on the Chromebook. All copyright laws should be observed. Violating copyright laws is forbidden. No software, shareware, or freeware will be brought onto campus and loaded onto any BHA electronic device. Students may not install any pirated software. Use special care when downloading any music and pictures to the Chromebook. Illegal use of copyrighted media is stealing and is subject to criminal prosecution. Use special care when answering any prompt from your computer. Read carefully before clicking a response.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

Any violations of Benton Hall rules and policies, (including the Honor Code), involving the use of the Benton Hall LAN, domain and/or Chromebooks, will result in disciplinary consequences/actions consistent with penalties assessed for violations of the Benton Hall Academy Code of Conduct. Intentional misuse of the Benton Hall LAN, domain and/or Chromebooks may also result in the temporary or permanent loss of Benton Hall LAN, domain and/or Chromebook privileges, as determined at the discretion of Benton Hall Academy administration.

**(Note: Because technology and its applications are fluid/ever-evolving, Benton Hall Academy administration reserves the right to determine if an action not specifically mentioned/described in this document is determined to be inappropriate and/or a violation of the school's code of conduct and, therefore, subject to applicable consequences/discipline.)**

### **III. THE DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM**

Students are wise to learn that honoring our stated rules and expectations at Benton Hall is early preparation for understanding the wider and often unstated rules that govern life. The goal of the disciplinary system is to educate students, better equipping them to embrace appropriate choices and to approach all members of the community with fairness, respect, and understanding. We are a private institution and our guiding principle is to keep the best interest of the Benton Hall community in mind; yet, this consideration is balanced by our understanding of the rights and uniqueness of each individual.

Benton Hall has a deep respect for the welfare of each individual; relationships are characterized by trust, honesty, cooperation, civility, and respect for property. Benton Hall believes that experience is an excellent teacher and that often we learn the most from our mistakes. We believe a student can benefit significantly from working through a disciplinary system that encourages reflection and atonement and hence, we are what is known as a “two-strike” school. It is usually only after a second major offense, (or a succession of offenses that cumulatively equal a second probation), that a student may be separated from the school.

#### **BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

We believe that stakeholders in conflict with one another will best resolve their issues by engaging in productive dialog; therefore, students should be respectful and courteous with staff/peers at all times. If a student is at odds with a staff member, the affected parties should schedule a time to meet, listen, discuss, and rectify their differences. The staff will address the student with civility, and the staff will insist upon equal consideration in return.

Students are prohibited from conducting any form of personal business, i.e. the selling of personal items, food, beverages, etc., anywhere on campus, including on-line electronic merchandising, via email, or from a website, etc.

#### **BULLYING POLICY**

Benton Hall Academy has adopted a policy against bullying in order to ensure our school is a safe and secure environment for all students. Bullying is defined as any intentional act that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities or performance, and has the effect of:

- 1) Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property;
- 2) Knowingly placing the student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student’s property;
- 3) Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or

#### 4) Creating a hostile educational environment.

Bullying may involve, but is not limited to, the following: unwanted teasing, threatening, intimidating behavior, cyberbullying, physical bullying, theft, sexual, religious, or racial harassment and public humiliation.

The staff will closely monitor and advise all students regarding the significance of this policy and that bullying will not be tolerated at Benton Hall Academy. Students will clearly understand that any confirmed instances of bullying will result in swift and appropriate consequences.

We enlist the cooperation of **all** students and parents in this effort to affirm that all stakeholders will feel safe and secure in our school.

### **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

When a student exhibits extremely disruptive behavior in a classroom, the student will be issued a verbal warning and an opportunity to correct the behavior. If the behavior persists, points may be deducted and the student may incur an In-Class Isolation (ICI) penalty. If the behavior persists, the student will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action. If disciplinary consequences prove ineffective and the student's disruptive behaviors persist, school dismissal may be considered.

### **THE DISCIPLINARY LEVELS**

#### **STATUS WARNING (SW)**

Status Warning is an indication that the student has encountered some challenges adjusting to school life and needs to be reminded that there are consequences for inappropriate and/or negligent behavior. The nature of unacceptable behavior(s) may not reach a level requiring interaction with the Dean of Students; however, at a minimum, the teacher may deduct a commensurate number points from the student's daily SIL sheet.

#### **REPEATED VIOLATIONS**

A repeated frequency of Status Warning violations will result in a student's referral to the Dean of Students.

#### **DISCIPLINARY WARNING (DW)**

A Disciplinary Warning is an indication that a student has encountered significantly greater difficulty adjusting to school life, resulting in a more emphatic response. The student will meet immediately with the Dean of Students and the parents may be notified. While under a Disciplinary Warning, a student may be required to complete an assigned community service, In-School Suspension, or Out-of-School Suspension.

Behavior including, but not limited to, the following violations of conduct may result in a student being placed under the auspices of a Disciplinary Warning:

1. Fighting, (“fisticuffs”\*)/physical altercation/assault
2. Disrespectful and/or defiant behavior directed toward a member of the faculty, staff or community\*
3. Inappropriate and/or disruptive classroom, hallway or lunchroom behavior
4. Possession, smoking, or chewing tobacco/smokeless tobacco, (while under Benton Hall jurisdiction)\*
5. Inappropriate behavior in or around vehicles on or off campus
6. Failure to check-out properly:
  - a. leaving campus without signing out and/or without proper permission
  - b. traveling to a destination other than was designated and/or approved without permission
7. Trespassing – i.e., accessing a peer’s locker and/or using another’s property without permission
8. Possession and/or use of weapons\*
9. Illegal use and/or possession of keys to school facilities and/or vehicles
10. Gambling
12. Improper use of computer software/hardware
13. Misrepresentation/colluding with a dishonest act\*

*\* RELATIVE TO THE SEVERITY OF THE OFFENSE(S) COMMITTED AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE OFFENSE(S) OCCUR, THE ILLICIT BEHAVIOR(S) MAY/WILL RESULT IN (A) SEVERE DISCIPLINARY ACTION(S), UP TO/INCLUDING EXPULSION/DISMISSAL FROM BENTON HALL ACADEMY AND/OR INVOLVEMENT OF APPROPRIATE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS.*

## **REPEATED VIOLATIONS**

Repeated rules violations which have involved multiple Disciplinary Warnings reflect a pattern indicative of a more serious nature. A student compiling a Disciplinary Warning status in two consecutive marking periods may not be considered for a re-enrollment contract in the Spring and/or may be subject to a “subsequent school year re-enrollment evaluation” by staff at the conclusion of that academic school year.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION (PRO)**

Disciplinary Probation is the most serious consequence Benton Hall Academy will assess a student, short of expulsion/dismissal. This action denotes a trial period allowing a student the opportunity to choose to fully understand, accept, and comply with the identified precepts of the school; therefore, the intended purpose of Probation is to both preserve and accentuate the cooperative relationship between student and school, intended to result in a transformational modification of the behavior(s) which precipitated the Probationary status. During the Probationary period, the student will meet regularly with the Dean of Students. The Head of School and/or Dean of Students will notify the student's parents when the student is placed on PRO. **Students on Probation for drug and/or alcohol-related offenses may incur a two-day suspension at/or near the time of the incident, may be subject to immediate expulsion/dismissal, and/or recommended to a substance abuse counselor for possible substance abuse issues and/or interventions.** Probationary status may also be extended depending upon student behavior and/or progress/lack thereof, during the assessed Probationary period.

In some serious disciplinary cases not resulting in expulsion/dismissal, the use of suspension may be considered in an effort to convince the student of the serious pattern of his/her cumulative offenses. For drug and alcohol-related offenses, the student may be asked to undergo an evaluation with a substance abuse counselor to determine the extent and nature of the misuse, which may necessitate a formal request for regularly scheduled counseling and/or treatment for a specified period of time.

Behavior including, but not limited to, the following violations of conduct may result in a student being placed on Disciplinary Probation:

1. Dishonesty: cheating, plagiarism, untruths, and theft
2. Unlawful use, possession, and/or distribution of any drug including any controlled substance\*\*, legend drug (prescription drug), or synthetic drug would be a violation. This can include, but is not limited to, ketamine, bath salts, and salvia. In addition, any student withholding information and/or willingly choosing to be in the presence of students possessing illegal substances without informing school officials will be subject to commensurate penalties of those students' use, possession, and/or distribution of identified illegal substances. Additionally, the attempt to procure illegal, prescription, and/or synthetic drugs, (i.e., marijuana, alcoholic beverages, and/or prescription/OTC medications containing intoxicants), as well as the use and/or possession of drug paraphernalia, containers retaining residue of illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or any other controlled substance and/or inhalant. Subsequently, providing, supplying, and/or distribution of drugs or alcohol may result in suspension or expulsion.
3. Vandalism of school and/or personal property

4. Use and/or possession of fireworks, explosives, and/or components thereof; creating a fire hazard/jeopardizing student/staff safety, including, but not limited to:
- a. Smoking/vaping in school buildings or on school property
  - b. Pulling fire alarms
  - c. Illegally discharging fire extinguishers
  - d. Setting/creating a fire anywhere on the Benton Hall Academy campus and/or properties, including any Benton Hall Academy-sponsored activity and/or school-provided transportation..

Being a negative, divisive and/or destructive influence in the school. A student may forfeit his/her opportunity to retain enrollment at Benton Hall Academy if the Head of School, administration, and/or faculty consensus determines that a student's deliberate behavior(s) inhibits the safety and security of peers and/or precludes a conducive learning environment for all students.

Use and/or possession of dangerous and/or illegal weapons

Violent misconduct, including threatening gestures, assault, and/or aggravated assault

Bullying and/or hazing – extreme disrespect, (via personal and/or electronic communication)

Illegal use, possession, and/or distribution of psychotropic or performance enhancing drugs.

*\*\* TCA 39-17-403 through 39-17-416 AND 39-17-454 AND 53-10-101 [the statute, 49-6-3401 has been amended to include these additional sections.]*

## **REMOVAL FROM PROBATION**

During any assigned Probationary period, if the student demonstrates sustained, significant improvement relative to all facets of school life and has adhered to the required components of his/her Probation, the student, in most cases, will be released from Probationary constraints at the conclusion of a nine-week Probationary period. The successful fulfillment of specific Probationary mandates exhibits that a student can elicit a dramatic transformation following a formidable disciplinary incident.

Typically, the length of a Probationary consequence is nine weeks. The Dean of Students will outline all expectations and guidelines for behavior for any student assessed Probation prior to its inception. During the eighth week of Probation, a student shall meet with the Dean of Students to discuss his/her progress and any obstacles potentially hindering his/her behavioral maturation.

The Dean, and when appropriate, in cooperation with the Head of School and/or faculty, will then either rescind/extend the student's Probation, or recommend alternate interventions, upon completion of the assigned Probationary period.

### **EXPULSION/DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL**

Any of the previously cited violations of conduct cited as major rules violations may result in immediate expulsion/dismissal from Benton Hall Academy when the severity of the offense warrants especially definitive consequences. The decision to expel/dismiss any student from Benton Hall Academy is the responsibility of either the Head of School or Dean of Students.

***Benton Hall considers each student as a unique individual and his/her's disciplinary consequences will be assessed on a case-by-case basis; therefore, students with similar, (yet not identical), disciplinary offenses, may occasionally merit contrasting responses.*** During the disposition phase of any major disciplinary case, the following factors may be considered when determining the most prudent and applicable consequences for any student: previous disciplinary record; a student's contribution to the Benton Hall community beyond his/her regular academic efforts; extraordinary home/family circumstances; and/or the impact of the disciplinary offense upon all affected stakeholders.

### **NON-ACADEMIC REQUIREMENT FOR A BHA DIPLOMA**

A student who has completed the necessary academic requirements to qualify for a diploma must also be considered a student in good standing to receive his/her diploma. The "student in good standing" clause recognizes that the Head of School has the authority to deny a diploma to any student based upon recent disciplinary misconduct occurring just prior to the completion of the school year and/or the presence of a sustained pattern of unacceptable and/or deplorable citizenship culminating with the graduation ceremony itself.

### **DRUG TESTING**

The school reserves the right to request at random and, with or without discernment, the drug testing of any student, by the Dean of Students, concordant with the Head of School. Upon an officially "failed" first test, the student shall be placed on Probation and may be recommended to interact with a substance abuse counselor. The student may also be subsequently tested, at a future date. *All drug testing will be at parental expense.* Upon a repeated failure of a drug test in the same school year, a student will be required to meet with the Dean of Students. Students in possession of drugs or other substances used illegally, may also be subject to discipline, subsequent testing, a possible request for professional intervention, and/or may be expelled/dismissed from the Benton Hall community.

### **FAILURE TO DISCLOSE**

Benton Hall reserves the right to expel/dismiss a student from school if prior, relevant medical/psychological and/or disciplinary information is purposefully withheld during an application and/or registration process.

### **SEARCHES**

The Head of School or Dean of Students may decide that a search of a student's locker, book bag, and/or vehicle is necessary to ensure the safety and security of the entire Benton Hall Academy community. If reasonably prudent, (although circumstances and time may not always permit), the student may be notified and requested to be present. Students must understand that their expectations of exclusive individual privacy is nullified if/when circumstances associated with the school and/or its stakeholders potentially jeopardize and/or involve personal safety, illegal conduct or activity, and/or violate posted school rules.

### **SENIOR YEAR DISMISSAL**

Benton Hall Academy will notify post-secondary institutions of any change(s) in the status of any senior student expelled/dismissed. It will be the responsibility of the family and student to provide relevant, corresponding details.

### **COUNSELING**

Benton Hall Academy retains relationships with professional therapists and counselors. In consultation with the Dean of Students, Benton Hall may recommend and/or refer students to the appropriate counseling resource(s) available off-campus.

## **IV. ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is a criteria of the Honor System at Benton Hall. One's individual commitment to a range of personal obligations promotes relative civic qualities of responsibility which will prove essential throughout his/her life. Specific rules regarding attendance have been identified to further guide the student's focus and attention along this fundamental path.

### **ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS**

Regular attendance is imperative for student success; however, there is no advantage gained by sending a sick child to school. Benton Hall staff will **not** maintain visibly ill, fevered children and/or sleeping students on campus. It is the parent's responsibility to make alternative arrangements in the event of illness. ***A CHILD MUST BE PICKED UP WITHIN AN HOUR OF THE FIRST CALL TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN.***



Two primary elements critically necessary for sustained student academic achievement are **intensive and deliberate** instruction, which is accomplished via **consistent** attendance in all classes. With our class sizes being smaller, the absence of one or more students can negatively affect the instructional dynamics of an entire class. **Any student accumulating a total of greater than ten (10) absences, (excused or unexcused), from any class PER SEMESTER may result in a failing grade for that course.** BHA recognizes that unique individual student health issues may currently exist and/or arise during a given semester or school year and corresponding, respective attendance waivers derived accordingly.

Additionally, due to recurring instances of concern by staff and administration regarding parental notes excusing student absences, it has been determined that **Benton Hall Academy will accept a maximum of ten (10) days of parental excuse notes per semester.** Any days absent above/beyond ten days per semester will require a doctor's note for the absence to be excused and the student eligible for "make-up work/assignments." ( For example, a student who is absent twice for three days each and once for four days during first semester, the parent may write three excuse notes, but any additional absences the remainder of that semester will require a doctor's note/excuse.)

Punctuality is a prerequisite to successful work habits and learning. The official school hours are 8:00 AM to 3:10 PM. Students are encouraged to arrive on campus by 7:55 AM, but may report as early as 7:30 AM. Upon arrival, high school students report directly to the gymnasium, while lower and middle school students report directly to Ms. Ferguson's and/or Ms. Murphy's classroom. If a student is tardy to school, (entering the building after 8:00 AM), he/she will report to the office, sign-in, and receive a tardy note to present to the teacher upon his/her arrival to the classroom. All 3rd-12th grade students will be afforded a maximum of five (5) tardies per 9-week grading period without penalty. ***Students arriving after 11:36 AM, without a doctor's excuse note, will be distinguished as "absent" for that day, (per state of Tennessee attendance requirements of a minimum of three hours, thirty-six minutes present in school for a seven hour, ten minute official school-length day), and may be ineligible to participate in interscholastic sports and/or Reward activities for that day, per recommendation of the Head of School.***

Any day(s) in which a student will be absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the school via phone or electronically by 9:00 AM. For the purpose of safety, students **may not** report their own absence(s); only communication received by a parent/legal guardian is permissible.

**IN-SCHOOL EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Only the Head of School, Dean of Students, or Dean of Academics has the authority to excuse/exclude students from classes, sports, and/or regularly scheduled activities.

**SUSPENSION**

When a disciplinary infraction(s) requires an out-of-school suspension for any length of time, the student is encouraged and expected to request, complete, and submit any applicable assignments and/or assessments from his/her teacher. Faculty members will collaborate with affected students to determine equitable time frames for final completion and submission of mandated tasks. Credit may be afforded for term papers and/or projects which are researched and/or prepared while home. Students will not be penalized for any assignments and/or assessments requiring attendance on-campus for effectual completion.

## **V. ATHLETICS**

Benton Hall Academy recognizes that routine physical activity is central to the development of well-rounded, confident, and mature individuals and encourages its students to participate in athletic endeavors of their choice; the ultimate goal will be for each student to establish and employ a healthy lifestyle beyond his/her secondary years at BHA. Benton Hall presently offers athletic opportunities for students in grades nine through twelve in the team sport of basketball, as well as a “spirit team” during basketball season.

Additionally, it is paramount that student-athletes recognize that he/she are “students first and athletes second”; therefore, any students competing interscholastically in any Benton Hall Academy team/club or individual sport identified above, **MUST** be passing **ALL** of his/her courses with a minimum grade of “60” at the date/time of his/her athletic contest/participation or he/she will be ineligible to participate until the course(s) with scores below the minimum threshold of “60” has/have been achieved.

## **VI. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **TUITION**

Unless tuition payment for the entire school year is received in full by August 6, 2024, the following payment options are available and must be remitted via FACTS:

- Two payment plan to be paid on July 1 and January 1.
- Three payment plan to be paid on July 1, December 1 and March 1.
- Eleven month plan with the first payment due in July and each subsequent monthly payment will be completed via automatic bank draft.

Prompt payments are essential to the financial stability of Benton Hall Academy. Report cards, student academic transcripts, and/or high school diplomas will be withheld pending payment in full of any/all outstanding tuition and/or applicable fees. Tuition payments delinquent by 30 calendar days or greater may result in student removal from Benton Hall Academy.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

A limited pool of financial aid resources is available annually to students at Benton Hall Academy. Financial awards to students are granted on the basis of need; therefore, parents are required to submit a Parents' Financial Statement to the School Scholarship Service responsible for processing, analyzing, and submitting comprehensive reports to the Business Office via a "Report of Financial Need." Parents interested in financial aid opportunities are encouraged to complete a Parents' Financial Statement and/or contact the office for more information.

Additionally, consideration for tuition assistance for returning students may be based upon a student and/or parent's consistent compliance with stated school policies/procedures including, but not limited to outlined student code of conduct standards, established attendance/tardy policies, etc., and the Head of School reserves the right to modify and/or terminate internal monetary compensation for any student(s) based upon noncompliance of any Student Handbook criterion.

All requests for consideration of financial assistance for students are strictly confidential.

## **VI. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **ACCIDENTS**

Any accident involving injury or suspected injury must be reported to the office.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

**(NOTE: All of the following "After School Care" designations/offerings for the 2024-25 school year will be dependent upon current Davidson County/CDC Covid-19 guidelines and/or restrictions, as well as the availability of BHA faculty to staff "After School Care" positions.)** An After School Program is available for all students in grades 3-12. The program offers a variety of activities including gym and playground usage, homework/computer time, and a snack. The program operates from dismissal until 5:30 PM, at a rate of \$15.00 per day. Students remaining for the After Care Program must be picked up by 5:30 PM Please call the school immediately, (615-791-6467), if you determine you will be arriving late for pick-up and understand that a minimum \$5.00 late pick-up fee will be assessed beginning at 5:30 PM and an additional charge of \$1.00 per minute from 5:35 PM forward will be assessed, with the late pick-up fees for that evening due in full at the time of pick-up. If the late pick-up fee is unpaid on the day(s) of the occurrence, all outstanding late fees accrued will be affixed to your monthly invoice.

### **BEFORE SCHOOL CARE**

Benton Hall Academy will provide a Before School Program for the 2024-25 school year, beginning at 7:30 AM daily for those students arriving prior to 8:00 AM. Students in grades 3-8 will report to Ms. Ferguson's classroom and students in grade 9-12 will report directly to the gymnasium from 7:30 - 8:00 AM and then immediately to their Homeroom teacher's classroom, from 8:00 - 8:25 AM, who will be supervising during this time. There is no additional fee for the Before School Program.

### **BEHAVIOR OF ADULTS ON CAMPUS**

We recognize that children often emulate the actions and behaviors they readily observe of the adults they view and/or come into contact; therefore, while on the Benton Hall Academy campus and/or attending school-sponsored activities, adults are expected to model conduct and attitudes epitomized by a demeanor characterized by the gracious, respectful, and courteous disposition each of us strives to convey continuously. All stakeholders should be treated respectfully, representative of the diverse and empathetic environment of our school.

### **CAR RIDERS**

Afternoon Pick Up – Lower/Middle School parents will drive to the southeast corner of the church building to pick-up/load students from 2:50-3:05 PM. High school students will dismiss at the same southeast corner of the church building as the Lower/Middle School students from 3:10-3:25 PM. Any LMS students not picked up by 3:05 and/or high school students not picked up by 3:25, will report to Aftercare, at parental expense, inside the building at the daily rate identified above under the heading "After School Care."

### **COLLEGE VISITS FOR SENIORS**

Seniors are permitted/designated two (2) days of excused absences for the purpose of scheduled college visits. It is recommended that whenever possible, the senior schedules a college visit(s) over a weekend, incorporating a Monday or Friday, to visit prospective institutions, thus reducing their amount of instructional time missed. Because of academic and athletic obligations/commitments, seniors are encouraged to target school vacations for college visits. College visitation days are available solely for the purpose of scheduled college appointments. Any senior visiting a college on a normal, Benton Hall Academy instructional day is required to secure a visitation verification note from the college counselor or admissions staff responsible for his/her tour on that particular day and present that verification notice to Ms. Evans upon his/her return..

## **COMMUNICATION**

The Benton Hall Academy main office is staffed daily from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM. If offered and available, the After School Program will have phone availability until 5:30 each day. School office personnel are available to answer any questions regarding tuition and/or other school/business-related matters during the aforementioned hours and may be contacted at 615-791-6467.

If there is an emergency, please contact the office, provide all pertinent information, and the appropriate personnel will be advised and converse with you, as necessary.

If there is no emergency, please contact the office, provide all pertinent information, and the appropriate personnel will be advised and reply with you at his/her earliest convenience.

Always feel free to schedule an appointment with the appropriate staff member.

Due to “potential Covid-19 governmental guidelines and restrictions for the 2024-25 school year”, classroom visits and/or observations must be scheduled in advance and must be approved by the Head of School; however, if a parent needs to meet with a teacher, an appointment should be scheduled to converse during a non-instructional block of time for that teacher. Please understand that during a typical school day, staff members have a maximum of 35/40 minutes for planning/break, thus allowing faculty the remainder of each day to teach/mentor your child in the classroom setting. Therefore, unless there is an immediate emergency, a note or email explaining your concern or a written request for a conference or phone call will be the most efficient and effective means of communicating with your child’s teacher(s). Each teacher has his/her own email address. (See page one of this Handbook for all staff email addresses.)

## **DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Any damage to school property should be immediately reported to the Dean of Students Office by those responsible to ensure proper repairs can commence as soon as possible. No student will be disciplined for accidental damage. Willful and/or unreported damage and/or vandalism to school property is a serious disciplinary offense and will be addressed resolutely. Restitution required for repairing damages, (accidental and/or willful), will be billed to parents.

## **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Benton Hall does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, ethnic origin and/or sexual orientation.

### **DRESS CODE/REQUIRED DRESS POLICY**

It is the expectation that all students attending Benton Hall Academy appropriately represent themselves and their school daily by adhering to the BHA Dress Code, with attire that is properly fitting, modest, clean, untorn and neat.

IT IS PREFERRED THAT SHIRTS ARE TUCKED IN AT ALL TIMES BUT NOT REQUIRED.

School uniforms, including khakis, navy, and/or black-colored pants, shorts, and/or skirts/skorts, may be purchased at any retailer. **(No “denim” permitted, regardless of color.)**

In addition to the traditional Benton Hall collared “logoed shirt”, students may also wear **any solid-colored, (white, navy blue, or forest green), collared, polo shirt**. These “polo shirts” may be long or short-sleeved. **(Solid white or blue button-down collared dress shirts are also acceptable student tops.)** Only solid-colored shirts are to be worn underneath uniform shirts. T-shirts with writing or graphics worn under uniforms are not permitted.

Also, students may wear **“Benton Hall T-Shirts”** any day of the week, as their uniform.

***Hemlines are to be no shorter than three (3) inches above the knee OR hemlines must be longer than the bottom tips of student’s outstretched fingers when arms are at their sides.***

Fastened, closed-toed shoes and appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times. Also, for safety, “heels” on shoes may be no greater/taller than two inches. “High heels” are not appropriate footwear at school; flat-soled shoes are the safest at school.

Hair must be clean and combed, with bangs not covering eyes, and not be disruptive or distracting in appearance.

Coats and hats/head coverings are to be worn only outside of the building. Sweatshirts and light jackets, as well as hoodies, which are solid-colors, (with no writing/logos, etc., on the garment), may be worn inside the building; however, students are prohibited from wearing their hoods atop and/or over their heads at any time inside the building, as well as headbands, scarves, hats, caps, “dew rags”, etc.

**Please be sure to mark students' clothing with his/or her name so that if something is lost, it can be returned to the rightful owner. Benton Hall is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.**

Periodically, students will be afforded "Dress Down" days, allowing students to NOT wear uniforms on a designated day(s); however, "non-uniform attire" must always adhere to general, acceptable clothing parameters, including coverage, hemlines, untorn, etc. Benton Hall Academy reserves the right to deem student attire as "acceptable and appropriate", (or its converse), on "Dress Down" days, with the understanding students will be required to change that day's clothing if so directed by BHA administration.

### **NOT ACCEPTABLE**

- Hats, caps, and/or head coverings, unless designated by medical or religious reasons.
- Clothing that is torn, dirty, displays offensive writings/drawings, is ragged/tattered in appearance, and/or fits improperly, (i.e., too tight, short, oversized, low-cut tops, etc.)
- Pant hemlines which "break" below one's shoe sole; hemlines torn, ripped and/or cut-off
- Flip flops, slippers, (house shoes), open-toed shoes and/or steel-toed footwear, as well as heels taller than two inches.
- Studs, chains, pins or other accessories deemed as unsafe
- Tongue rings and other piercings, (excluding appropriate earrings)
- Tattoos are not permitted; any student with a tattoo must cover that tattoo during the regular school day and/or during school-related activities. (This policy refers to permanent and/or temporary tatoos.)
- Coats worn inside the building, (for school security purposes, coats must be retained in the student's locker)
- No blankets should be brought, worn, and/or used at school.

In addition to the previous list, the following clothing items are not acceptable during "Dress Down" days:

- Tank tops
- Stretch/lycra clothing
- Sport or recreational shorts
- Revealing clothing, (i.e., too tight, low cut, too short, exposed cleavage and/or midriff)

Benton Hall Academy recognizes that parents will provide school-approved apparel for their children daily, in accordance with documented, school uniform/dress code requirements; however, BHA also understands and expects each student to respect and conform to the understood dress code by wearing their attire appropriately and within the spirit/intent of the stated policy. ***Students arriving at school with inappropriate clothing/apparel that does not***



*comply with the BHA Dress Code, will be excluded from attending any class until appropriate clothing is secured and substituted for their exceptional attire. (NOTE: There will also be a “uniform checkout station” available in the front lobby. Students need to see Ms. Evans who will accept the student’s inappropriate apparel as collateral for whatever article of clothing he/she needs for the day. The student’s personal article of clothing may be exchanged for the borrowed top or bottom at day’s end. **THE DRESS CODE WILL BE ENFORCED EFFECTIVE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. NON-COMPLIANCE WILL RESULT IN PARENTAL NOTIFICATION.***

**IF A STUDENT AND/OR PARENT HAS QUESTIONS REGARDING ANY CLOTHING SELECTION FOR ANY SCHOOL DAY AND WHETHER OR NOT THAT ATTIRE WILL COMPLY WITH THE BHA DRESS CODE, DO NOT WEAR THAT CLOTHING TO SCHOOL. INSTEAD, ARRIVE AT SCHOOL DAILY DRESSED IN APPAREL THAT UNEQUIVOCALLY CONFORMS WITH THE APPROVED DRESS CODE PARAMETERS.**

### **EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR**

Classes will be available and may be required for re-admittance the following school year, when regular classes are failed and/or if a student is assigned an “incomplete” for a course(s).

### **FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS**

Fire and tornado drills are required by law and are conducted at regular intervals throughout the school year. Remember these basic rules:

- Review and understand the fire drill egress instructions in each classroom, (posted at/near an exit door), indicating evacuation routes exiting the building; also, protocols/positioning for tornado drills and hallway locations deemed sturdiest/safest for students/staff.
- **Walk/Remain Calmly, Quietly, and Attentively.** Move quickly and quietly to your classroom’s designated area, and await further instructions/directives, as necessary, remembering that all emergency practice drills are extremely serious and designed to ensure stakeholder safety in the event of an actual emergency.

### **BOOK BAG STORAGE**

Due to limited space, high school students may not be afforded a locker for his/her book bag/personal storage, etc.; however, Lower/Middle School students will each have access to cubbies/totes in his/her homeroom class where his/her backpacks, lunches and apparel shall be retained, while the high school students shall be assigned a locker/tote along the eastern gymnasium wall, to place his/her backpack, texts, etc., during the academic school day. (If a student chooses to use a “lock” for his/her locker, a “spare key” or combination to that lock

MUST be provided to BHA administration; BHA will NOT provide locks to/for student use.) Students are strongly encouraged to neither transport and/or retain money and/or other “valuables” in his/her backpack/tote. If any occasion arises in which a student must transport/retain any sizable sum of money or “valuables” to/at school, he/she should submit these respective assets to the main office for safekeeping until afternoon dismissal.

Benton Hall Academy recognizes that the conduct of “theft” sabotages the “foundational trust” of affected stakeholders within any community; however, the school likewise acknowledges that the students’ persistent possession of restricted valuables on campus - especially money and/or personal electronic devices - further exacerbates the temptation and/or eventual commission of thievery. BHA considers it both unnecessary and unreasonable to preclude a student’s possession and/or use of cash and/or valuables, yet beneficial educational equipment/resources occasionally on-site, but the school cannot be held liable and/or responsible for any monetary loss and/or theft/damage to one’s personal belongings.

### **LUNCHES**

Students will have the opportunity to order pizza on Mondays and Friday, at a cost of approximately \$6-10.00 each day. **(Effective again for the 2025-26 school year, students will need to “pack a lunch” on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays each week. There will be no restaurant selection offered or available on these three school days.)** Every Friday, a menu will be distributed to all students for parents to review, select, and return by 8:00 AM the succeeding Monday morning. The M-F selections available and applicable pricing will be denoted on each week’s menu and payment is due daily. **(NOTE: Students are prohibited from consuming carbonated/cafeinated drinks and/or “energy drinks”, on campus, beginning with “Before School Care at 7:30 AM, during snack/lunch, and/or after school/After Care time.)** Parents are encouraged to pay for their students’ lunch(es) via FACTS. If the menu form is not returned each Monday morning, students cannot be guaranteed that their desired meals will be available on any given M-F. Additionally, students may purchase no more than two (2) a la carte items, such as chips, cookies, drinks, etc., per day. No student will be allowed to charge or purchase items “on credit.”

***Students are prohibited from ordering “take-out or delivery of food” for lunch for which they will personally pay, unless parental and administrative permission is granted a minimum of 24 hours in advance and only in extraordinary circumstances.***

***Parents are also prohibited from ordering “take-out or delivery of food” for their child’s lunch unless it is an emergency and has been previously approved by administration a minimum of 24 hours in advance, to ensure equitable lunch consistency for all students.***

*Each student is responsible for his/her clean-up after lunch.*

## **MEDICATIONS**

### **Internal Controls & Procedures for Medication Distribution:**

Parents of students who require medication at school must complete and return a Medication Authorization Form allowing school personnel to administer and/or assist students with self-administration. **All medication, whether prescription and/or over-the-counter, will be retained and dispensed from the office. Students who refuse to take prescribed medication may be sent home.** All medications will be maintained and secured in the office including over-the-counter medicine and must be in the original container. Students will only be permitted the prescribed dosage indicated on the container's script. Students must have **written** authorization for any over-the-counter medication to be dispensed.

All prescription medication must be transported and/or retained in the prescription bottle (or box) issued by the pharmacy for that specific medication. BHA personnel are not permitted to accept or dispense any medications which are transported and/or retained in any receptacle other than the original issued by the pharmacy, (i.e. baggies, envelopes, unauthorized bottles, etc.).

All medication must be transported to the school in the original, pharmacy-labeled container.

The container must display:

- a. Student's name
- b. Medication name and dosage
- c. Administration directions
- d. Date
- e. Licensed prescriber's name and phone number

Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs to include lotions, salves, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.:

- a. Must be brought in by an adult
- b. Must be provided in the original unopened container with the manufacturer's original label and ingredients listed. The student's name must be affixed to the container.
- c. Only recommended doses on the OTC labels will be administered by authorized staff unless otherwise authorized by a physician, (a written order from the licensed prescriber).

Medicine will need to be picked up by the last day of school or all medication will be disposed of by authorized staff.

### **OFFICE TELEPHONES**

The Benton Hall Academy business telephones are always available for students in the event of an emergency. **Students and parents should determine and communicate arrangements for after school rides, activities, and/or appointments, etc., prior to his/her child's arrival at school each day.**

### **PARENTAL ACCESS TO RECORDS**

Parents may review their child's school records by contacting the main office.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the first and third grading periods each Fall and Spring. Students will not report to school on those days to allow BHA staff and parents the appropriate time necessary to conduct these important meetings.

Parents are encouraged to notify the Dean of Academics or the Dean of Students to schedule any additional conference(s), as needed.

### **PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The PTO is a dynamic organization of Benton Hall Academy parents and teachers, established to nurture the stakeholders and programs of Benton Hall. Benton Hall's success is directly proportional to the active participation of its parents, teachers, and students. The PTO provides a forum for positive change and planned growth. All parents will receive information regarding the PTO.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

In accordance with applicable state and federal laws regarding sexual harassment in the workplace and/or in schools, Benton Hall Academy will adhere to the following policy:

Sexual harassment of another individual by a student, faculty member, or staff member is prohibited. This prohibition includes sexual harassment between students. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to the following conduct: suggestive or obscene letters/communications, notes, invitations, slurs, jokes, epithets, gestures, derogatory comments, assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement, leering, displays of sexually suggestive objects; pictures or cartoons; continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome; coercive sexual behavior being used to control, influence or affect the educational opportunities, grades, course admission, performance evaluations, or recommendations, or enhancement or limitation of student benefits or services; inappropriate attention/conduct of a sexual nature by a student toward another student, faculty member or staff

member, regardless of whether the other student is a minor or an adult and gives his/her implicit or explicit consent to such attention/conduct; use of the school's internet or email system to view or display materials with inappropriate sexual content and/or to send such materials to another student, staff member, or faculty member; use of camera telephones or any other electronic device to subject a student, staff member, or faculty member to any unwelcome or unwanted conduct of sexual nature; or engaging in any other sexual conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment.

If a student believes that he/she is being or has been harassed by anyone she/he encounters in the school community, the student should immediately file a complaint with the Dean of Students or the Head of School. The school will endeavor to keep such reports or complaints confidential, sharing them with others only on a need-to-know basis, to enable their investigation and resolution. All reports or complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated.

If, after a thorough investigation, there is reasonable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred, the school shall take all reasonable actions it believes necessary to end the harassment. Disciplinary actions taken in response to harassment complaints may include, but are not limited to appropriate intervention, suspension from school/work, expulsion from school, or termination from employment.

Retaliation against anyone, including a student, for complaining about sexual harassment is prohibited under this policy and is illegal.

**NOTE:** This policy is limited to addressing sexual harassment; however, it **also applies to other types of harassment that are prohibited by state and/or federal law, such as harassment on the basis of sexual orientation, race, color, religious creed, marital status, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, mental retardation, learning disability or physical disability, orientation or age.**

#### **SNACKS/CARBONATED/CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES/GUM**

No snacks or beverages, (other than bottled water), will be permitted outside the cafeteria. ("Energy Drinks" and all caffeinated/carbonated soft drinks of any kind are prohibited on campus, including during lunch.) Non-carbonated beverages are permissible for lunch, but must be retained in the student's locker until lunch time. Chewing gum is prohibited, as well.

## **SNOW DAY/INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURES**

If school will open late/dismiss early or be closed for inclement weather/any other reason, BHA will communicate this information as promptly as possible via television media on **Channels 2, 4, 5, & 17 television stations and their respective web sites. Parents should also receive notifications of weather-related late arrival/early dismissal times, as well as school closures via Benton Hall email and the “REMIND app.”** (Parents may sign up for the “Remind” app at <https://www.remind.com/join/9ekbb9> .)

**Benton Hall Academy is listed under private schools. Do not assume BHA is closed if Williamson County or Davidson County is closed. (Please note that “Benton County” is NOT “Benton Hall Academy.”)**

As a general policy, if BHA is “Open” on any particular day, dismissal will occur at 3:10 PM. If BHA determines that impending weather jeopardizes student safety prior to our regularly scheduled dismissal that day, (i.e., “Early Dismissal” at a specific time such as “12:30 PM” or “Two Hours Early”, etc.), can be found on TV Channels 2, 4, 5, and 17, who will relay this information/post on their respective web sites, a phone call will be placed, as well as a “flash email.” Student drivers, (and any authorized student passengers), will be dismissed immediately to expedite their arrival home/reduce their potential of driving in hazardous road conditions. Parent drivers are requested to arrive for student pick-up as soon as possible.

On any day that Benton Hall Academy is open during or after any inclement weather event, because of the distance many of our families live from school, if parents deem road conditions in their immediate area as especially treacherous, please contact the school office and keep your child at home. Any such discretionary absence(s) will be recorded as “excused.”

## **STUDENT DRIVERS**

Licensed students are welcome to drive to and from school daily. Student vehicles must be safe, in good driving condition, with valid/current license plate, registration, and insurance to be present on campus. The speed limit anywhere on campus is 10 MPH. There will be no unwarranted/purposeful swerving, erratic, or otherwise unsafe driving permitted while operating a vehicle on school/campus property. Student drivers must be buckled/using safety/seat belts while driving on campus. Students may not leave campus for lunch/errands during the school day. Student drivers may NOT transport peers/other students to/from school unless prior authorization has been received/approved by an administrator and confirmed/approved by all involved parents. No vulgar, profane, or inappropriate signage may be present on any student vehicle. (Interpretation and final decisions are at the discretion of school administration.) Student drivers are to park in the upper parking lot area, in the parking spaces facing Franklin Road,

opposite the glass double door entrance to the front lobby. (NOTE: Since our Benton Hall Academy property is “private property”, belonging to the Nashville Korean Presbyterian Church, student driving privileges on campus may be suspended or revoked by school administration and/or the NKPC at any time.)

### **TOBACCO/E-CIGARETTE/VAPE-CIGARETTE USAGE**

The possession and/or usage of tobacco products, (including “E-Cigarettes”, “Vape-Cigarettes”, smokeless tobacco products, and/or any other nicotine commodity), by students is illegal, addictive and a potentially dangerous primary threat to the user’s health, as well as a secondary risk to those nearby. The possession and/or use of E-Cigs/Vape-Cigs/tobacco products described above, is prohibited on campus, (including a student’s personal vehicle). Consequences for violators will vary from a conference to suspension to expulsion..

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are a necessity at BHA. Through the gracious, cooperative involvement and participation of our parents and community volunteers, Benton Hall has progressively increased student achievement and corresponding accomplishments. Depending upon identified, individual student needs, volunteers may tutor/mentor students in specific subject areas and/or assist BHA staff with the implementation of pertinent projects and/or hands-on activities. **(NOTE: Volunteers working directly with a student(s) who is/are not his/her child(ren), must be vetted/cleared via a “background check.” Additionally, volunteer tutor/mentors will be utilized only when Covid-19/CDC guidelines allow for such services to occur safely.)**

Upon arrival on campus, per our security protocols, our visitors and volunteers are required to sign-in with the office.

### **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

- Required to always work under the direct supervision of a BHA staff member
- Exhibit absolute integrity regarding individual student and school confidentiality
- Be prompt and consistent
- Accept children as they are
- Encourage and support students
- Reinforce appropriate behavior
- Mirror the teacher’s instructional examples and/or approaches
- Be firm, but also considerate and polite
- Supervise students attentively

Parents, grandparents, and all family members are encouraged to participate in their child's aggregate school experience, as well as being available for various school-wide initiatives, projects, and events.

### **VISITORS**

All parents, visitors and guests are required to report immediately and register with school office personnel. "Student guests" are prohibited during the regular instructional day unless/without prior, advance, administrative approval. **"Social visits" with students/staff are restricted to times outside school hours.**



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Benton Hall Academy Parent and Student Handbook**  
**Acknowledgement of Awareness and Intent to Abide**

I HAVE RECEIVED/READ/REVIEWED A COPY OF THE STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE BENTON HALL ACADEMY RULES AND REGULATIONS DESCRIBED HEREIN.

**Computer Network and Chromebook Use**

I have read and understand these rules and guidelines as they apply to the use of the computer network of Benton Hall Academy and its Internet access, including the possession and responsibilities associated with each student's school-assigned Chromebook for the school year. I understand that misuse of the computers can come in many forms and can be viewed as, but not limited to, any messages sent or received that indicate or suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism, inappropriate language and/or other issues not specifically described above. I agree to abide by these protocols in letter and in spirit, and understand that violating them will result in a response in accordance with the policy herein stated. I have discussed this policy with the student(s) in my household and certify that they understand it.

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date