

**BENZIE CENTRAL ACADEMY**

9300 Homestead Road

Benzonia, MI 49616

Phone (231) 882-4497, Fax (231) 882-7627

**www.benzieschools.net**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2020 - 2021**



This book belongs to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student Email: \_\_\_\_\_@students.benzieschools.net

PowerSchool: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminar Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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### **ADMINISTRATION**

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<b>Interim Principal</b>	<b>Mr. Steve Graetz</b>
<b>Interim Asst Principal</b>	<b>Ms. Cheryl Smith</b>
<b>Interim AD</b>	<b>Mr. Eli Harris</b>

### **COUNSELORS**

<b>6-9th Grade</b>	<b>Ms. Barbara Powell</b>
<b>10-12 Grade</b>	<b>Ms. Emily Burrus</b>

### **LEAD TEACHER**

Elaine Taghon - [taghone@benzieschools.net](mailto:taghone@benzieschools.net)

### **PARAPRO**

Maria Wolowiec - [wolowiecm@benzieschools.net](mailto:wolowiecm@benzieschools.net)

Hours of Operation: 7:30 - 3:00

Student Hours: 7:35 - 2:45

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## INTRODUCTION

Alternative education is designed to meet the needs of at-risk students needing an alternate school setting other than the traditional school setting. Students are provided with a variety of options that can lead to graduation and are supported by services for the student and their immediate family that are essential to success. While each alternative education program is unique, they share characteristics identified in the research as common to successful alternative schools.

- ◆ Maximum teacher/student ratio of 1:15
- ◆ Small student base
- ◆ Caring faculty with continual staff development
- ◆ School staff having high expectations for student achievement
- ◆ Learning program specific to the student's expectations and learning style
- ◆ Flexible school schedule with community involvement and support
- ◆ Total commitment to each student's success

## Athletics and Activities

Benzie Academy Day Program students are eligible to participate in athletics and activities at BCHS. Student athletes will be held to the highest academic and behavioral standards in order to proudly represent themselves, the high school and the Benzie Academy. Students that are in good standings; attendance, academics and behavior will be the criteria used to make this determination.

## Academic Information

While cooperative learning and working as a team are an integral part of the learning environment at Benzie Academy, there are many times when the teaching staff needs to assess INDIVIDUAL achievement. We expect students to be honest in all they do. Plagiarism and cheating are not acceptable practices and are subject to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Lifting non-references passages from other people, publications or the Internet and submitting them as a student's own will be considered plagiarism.

## Diplomas and Certificates

A student must be enrolled as a full-time student at Benzie County Central Schools for at least one year and at Benzie Academy at least one full semester in order to receive a BCHS diploma. In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, seniors must be enrolled and in good standing during their final semester and qualify for a diploma or a certificate of completion. ALL course work must be completed (passing grade/credit) by the given deadline for students to participate in the BCHS graduation ceremony.

*Diploma requirements:* A student receiving a diploma from Benzie Central High School must meet all state and locally established academic requirements for graduation. The same high school diploma shall be awarded to all students meeting the graduation requirements.

## Graduation Credits: 24 Credits

### *Required Classes for Diploma:*

<b>English:</b>	4 credits
<b>Math:</b>	4 credits (including Algebra 1, Algebra 2 and Geometry)
<b>Science:</b>	3 credits (including Biology, Chemistry or Physics and an additional science credit)
<b>Physical Education:</b>	½ credit
<b>Health:</b>	½ credit
<b>Social Studies:</b>	3.5 credit (including US History, World History, Civics and Economics)
<b>Computers:</b>	1 credit
<b>Foreign Language:</b>	2 credits (beginning with the class of 2016)

One credit is earned for passing a full-year course. One-half (1/2) is earned for passing a semester course.

## Four Year Requirement

All students shall expect to take four years to complete graduation requirements. Students finishing earlier or later than four years must have approval from the administration. Grade classification will be determined by the number of credits earned at the end of the school year.

The following credits are needed in order to stay on track for graduation:

9 <sup>th</sup> grade	
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	6 credits
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	12 credits
12 <sup>th</sup> grade	18 credits

State of Michigan Standardized Assessment is the Michigan Merit Exam (SAT and ACT Workkeys) and M-STEP. This is given to certain grades and content areas. All students must take the state mandated assessments before graduating.

### **CLASS OF 2020**

TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED	18 credits
TOTAL ELECTIVES	6 credits
TOTAL REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION	24 credits

*Certificate of Completion:* Certificates of completion may be awarded to qualified special education students. In such circumstances when Michigan Merit Curriculum diploma requirements will not be met,

an individual educational planning committee will decide the requirements for completion and graduation participation.

## Daily Schedule

Benzie Academy Day Program has two sessions of daytime classes Monday through Thursday. The a.m. students are in school from 7:40 to 11:00, the afternoon students are here 11:30 to 2:40. Fridays an open lab is held in which both Virtual Academy students and Day Program students may come into school between 7:30 and 3:00 to work on their classes. Students must provide their own transportation on Fridays.

**It is Benzie Academy's policy that ALL unit tests and final exams must be completed onsite under the supervision of a staff member or scheduled Google Meet for test proctoring.**

## New Students

Attendance and discipline records from a student's previous school are always requested and may be integrated into Benzie Academy attendance and discipline policies.

- Online Class Expectations (On-Site Students and Virtual School Students)
- Benzie Academy uses Edgenuity Learning for online courses. Edgenuity uses Mastery-Based Learning (70%).

## Full-Schedule Requirement

All students will be enrolled in a full schedule of classes each semester at Benzie Academy, unless a special circumstances exception is granted by the administration. Those students attending Career Tech will be required to attend Benzie Academy daily in order to complete their full-schedule requirement.

## Mastery Level

Mastery-Based Learning (MBL) is a Course Setting used to configure a minimum score students must earn on computer-scored assessments to unlock subsequent course content. When Mastery-Based Learning is enabled, [Question Randomization](#) is also enabled and is required.

Mastery Level is the minimum score (percentage) that students must earn on computer-scored assessments to unlock subsequent course content.

- A level set at 70% ensures sequential content access. This can help keep students focused and prevents sneak peeks at future work. Any score will unlock subsequent content.
- A level in the moderate range helps ensure students understand assessed content well enough to earn a passing grade.
- A higher level is appropriate when above-average scores are expected - such as in an Advanced Placement program.

Students will complete both teacher-scored and computer-scored activities. And mastering activities gives students a sense of accomplishment. For these reasons, the Mastery Level should be set a bit lower than the course passing grade.

## Transfer Credit Policy

Benzie Academy will only accept credit from other institutions issuing transcripts. Upon receiving transcripts, credits will be evaluated and an appropriate placement will be made for each student to best ensure his or her success. Non-accredited home-schooled courses will NOT be awarded credit toward graduation from Benzie Academy.

## Transfers and Withdrawals from School

If a student plans to transfer to another school or to withdraw from school, he/she should notify the Benzie Academy office or high school office of their decision. A confirming telephone call will be made to the parents or guardians. *In accordance with revised School Code Section 1135, all disciplinary records, including suspension and expulsion, will be sent to the requesting school district.*

# STUDENT LIFE/CODE OF CONDUCT

Benzie Academy students are expected to be respectful and well-behaved at all times. Our general expectations for students include exhibiting respect to other students, staff members, and members of the community, and to the Benzie Academy facility. The information below is intended to clarify specific policies that affect student life at Benzie Academy.

## **Backpacks**

Book bags and the like are allowed to and from school, but are not to become a distraction.

## **Bussing and Bus Conduct**

Benzie Academy provides free busing services to its students within certain mileage restrictions. Students who are riding to and from school using school transportation or transportation provided by private provider (i.e. Benzie Bus) are required to follow the same rules that the provider has established for any rider.

## **Communication Devices**

The school phone is primarily a business phone and is generally not to be used by students for personal calls.

### **Cell phones and ECDs**

A student may possess a cellular telephone or other electronic communication devices (ECD) on school property, at after-school activities and at school-related functions, provided the device does not disturb the educational process.

This privilege of possession will be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege. In addition, violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action against the student and/or confiscation of the cellular telephone or ECD.

## **Campus Boundaries**

Benzie Academy is a closed campus. Students are to remain in the building during school sessions unless they obtain special permission from staff or are picked up by an approved adult. Students are allowed in the designated parking spots only before and after school session and never in the high school or middle school during school hours.



## **Educational Supplies**

According to state requirements, each local school district pays the cost for providing non-consumable supplies to students on a loan basis. Students are expected to exercise reasonable care for Benzie Academy property and to return these materials to the classroom teacher at the close of the school year. Any time the material is not returned in acceptable condition, the student is responsible for its replacement cost. A student who fails to return such materials may be added to the debt list at the high school. All debts must be paid in order to graduate and receive a diploma. Chromebook information, see section Computer and Internet Policy and Procedures.

## **Food Service**

Due to Benzie Academy's small size, food service is contracted with Benzie County Central Schools for breakfast and lunch.

## **Illness or Injury**

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If a minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the school's emergency procedures. A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission from the teacher to call home. The teaching staff will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home based upon previous number absences and the severity of the illness. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

## **Motor Vehicle Regulations**

Students should be aware that the use of a motor vehicle for transportation to and from school is a privilege which can be revoked if unsafe driving occurs in and around school property. Student vehicles must be properly parked only in areas designated for student parking. No vehicle is to have any occupancy during class periods. Students who drive to school will be expected to adhere to all school parking regulations, including handicapped parking.

## **Policy on Drug Free School**

In accordance with federal law, Benzie Academy prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of drugs by students on school grounds, in school or school-approved vehicles, or at any school-related event. Drugs include, but are not limited to alcoholic beverages, anabolic steroid, dangerous controlled substance as defined by state statute, including prescription drugs, or substances that could be considered a "look-a-like" controlled substance. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process and as specified in this student handbook, up to and including expulsion from school. When required by state law, the district will also notify law enforcement officials.

The Benzie County Sheriff's Department has the authority and jurisdiction for impromptu canine searches without prior notification. Areas of search include the classroom, the office, your personal items (backpack, purse, etc.), and any vehicle in the parking lot.

The district is concerned about any student who is a victim of alcohol or drug abuse and will facilitate the process by which s/he receives help through programs and services available in the community. Students and their parents should contact a staff member whenever such help is needed.

## **Policy on Smoking/Tobacco Products/Vaps**

Staff and students have a right to work or attend school in an environment free of second hand smoke. The district has the responsibility to enforce compliance with the law by prohibiting the use of any tobacco product on school property. Benzie Academy will be in compliance with the legal requirements and acknowledge their health responsibility to provide a healthier environment in which students can learn and staff can work, limit the possibility of students seeing adult role models smoke, work cooperatively with the Benzie County Sheriff's Department, and the Michigan State Police, and promote healthier behaviors among staff and students.

Staff, students, or any other persons are not to use tobacco products at any time in any district buildings owned or operated by Benzie County Central Schools. The use of tobacco products by any persons in violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action. The Tobacco-Free Schools Law makes the violation of this policy a misdemeanor with a fine of \$50.00. The above mentioned law enforcement agencies will be notified of an infraction.

## **School Dress**

We believe that student dress is a factor in the establishment of an educational atmosphere and that clothing should be appropriate for school. Standards of dress which clearly deal with the health and safety of students will be upheld. Forms of student dress are acceptable as long as they are neat, clean, and are not distracting from the process of education.

Within this framework, the following specific rules for student dress have been developed:

- ☐ Footwear is required
- ☐ Clothing should be worn as designed
- ☐ The following clothing articles are not appropriate for school and should not be worn: articles with profanity or vulgar suggestions or images, articles advertising illegal substances, bandanas as headwear, conspicuously thin or revealing garments, short shorts
- ☐ Dangerous accessories that could be interpreted as weapons are not allowed
- ☐ Gang related colors, clothing articles or styles of dress are not allowed

*Any student in violation of these guidelines may not be permitted to attend class until the dress violation has been corrected. This would be considered an absence.*

## **Search and Seizure**

To maintain order and discipline in schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student and their belongings under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed on general school property areas like the office, classroom, or parking lot because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. Periodic general inspections of school property may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant.

A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g. purse, book bag, jacket, etc.) may be searched whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

# **ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS POLICY**

## **Philosophy**

Regular school attendance is the first step toward students attaining their goals. It is crucial they acquire the habit of regular attendance while in school so it may be instilled before they enter the workforce.

## **Attendance Procedures**

Students attending the Benzie Central Day Program. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for being familiar with all attendance procedures.

- A. Parents and students should make every effort to schedule vacations, family trips, medical and dental appointments, family related work, and other personal business at times when school is not in session.
- B. The parent or guardian of the student will be contacted when a pattern of absenteeism is noticed. Contact may be phone or email.
- C. When a student is absent, the parent or guardian should call the school on the day the student is absent.
- D. Students are to attend at least 90% of the days in order to have the best chance to acquire the necessary knowledge.
- E. Absences during the marking period are expected to be utilized for:
  - 1. Personal illness
  - 2. Other serious or personal problems
  - 3. Professional appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school.

- F. Absences due to the following are reasonable excuses for missing school:
1. Family emergency as identified by the administration.
  2. Church related
  3. School related
  4. One or more sick days under a doctor's care
  5. Office approved for school business (job shadowing, college visitation, etc.)
  6. Court related appointments
- G. An Academy student must be making adequate progress in their classes (on schedule) and have weekly contact with staff. School staff must be notified of any absence.
- H. 10 days of no contact with Academy staff may result in a referral to the BCSD truancy officer for appropriate action.
- I. Whenever a student leaves the building during the course of the school day, a parent or guardian must contact the school BEFORE the student leaves the building, No student should leave the building without permission. Failure to receive parental permission and signing out prior to leaving the building will result in disciplinary action.
- J. No student shall be charged with an absence if he/she is unable to attend school because bus transportation was suspended due to adverse weather conditions or accident. Class work must be made up.
- K. Students must be in attendance for at least half of the school day in order to participate in or attend an extracurricular activity on the same day. This rule may be waived due to a family emergency or if pre-arranged with the administration.
- L. Students who are serving an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed to participate in or attend extracurricular activities during said suspension.

*Important note: Students are only afforded five (5) absences per nine-week marking period in any class. Any student reaching five (5) will be required to serve a Saturday school at BCHS to make up one day's absence. Any Student exceeding 10 absences at the end of either semester will lose credit for their class(es).*

## Tardy Procedures

Being prompt and on time will be a factor in your daily points.

# DISCIPLINE

## Philosophy on Consequences

Students who choose to show disrespect to themselves, others, or the property should be prepared for said behaviour to result in consequences. Whenever possible, students will be actively involved in creating an appropriate plan for themselves. Behaviors involving violence, drugs, or sexual harassment do not lend themselves to allowing students choices. In these cases, the teachers and/or administration will make the choice of consequences. In these severe cases as well as behavioral issues that are

repeated after several interventions, the student may be brought before the Benzie Academy Advisory Board for consequences.

## Minor Offenses

Minor offenses are typically incidences in which a disturbance does violate the rights of the teacher to teach and the other students to learn. *However*, it does not include a level of intensity which might include directed profanity at staff or student, loud volume, excessive emotional outburst, violence, drug possession, destruction of property, blatant disregard for a staff direction, hate language, gang-related behavior, or other physical acting out.

Minor offenses will be dealt with in the classroom or school setting as often as possible using a variety of teacher interventions, one of which may be a before school detention.

Although typically not dangerous in and of themselves, a series of three (3) minor offenses within one (1) school week will be considered the same as one (1) major offense because of the frequency.

## Major Offenses

Major offenses indicate a pattern of minor offenses or are behaviours that reach a level of severity so that the school's educational climate and safety may be compromised. The discipline for a Major Offense is:

- One (1) to four (4) day suspension depending on the severity
- After four (4) Majors a referral is made to the Benzie Academy Advisory Board

## Mandatory Expulsions

Due to state law, certain behaviours carry an automatic expulsion from schools. They include:

- Physical assault by a student against another student
- Physical assault by a student against a school employee
- Sexual harassment by one student against another student
- Weapons violations
- Rape on school grounds
- Arson on school grounds
- Bomb threat
- False Fire Alarm

# COMPUTER AND INTERNET POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Internet access is available to students in the school district. We are very pleased to bring this access to Benzie Academy and believe the internet offers vast, diverse and unique resources to our students. Our goal in providing this service to students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

The internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. With access to computers and people all over the world comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting, such as profanity, information about illegal drugs, pornography and undesirable communications with adults whose intentions may be harmful. Benzie Academy has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials, and any student may come across some controversial material. Benzie Academy firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the district.

Benzie Academy's purpose in providing access to the Internet is to support research and education by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of the internet must be supportive of education and research while being consistent with the educational objectives of the school district. Sending or receiving of any material in violation of any federal, state or local regulation is prohibited. According to the Children's Internet Protection Act, Benzie Academy will ensure that protection measures are in place to block or filter internet access to pictures that a) are obscene, b) are child pornography, or c) are harmful to minors, for computers that are accessed by minors. Furthermore, Benzie Academy has a policy in place to prevent the use of chat rooms, hacking, dissemination of personal information, and access to materials harmful to minors. Students caught misusing the internet are subject to disciplinary action.

The use of the internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of this privilege. The administration and staff of Benzie Academy may deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges. Parents also have the option of denying their child individual access to the internet.

## *A. Computer Use/Network Etiquette*

- a. Each student and staff member will be given a unique username and a password, The password must be kept secret. Users are responsible for any activity performed using his or her account.
- b. Students should save into their personal folder on the network server.

- ## *B. Internet Use:*
- Access to the internet is a privilege granted by the school, not a right. Unless the teaching staff is otherwise advised, all students will have access to the internet while at school. Any parent who prefers that his or her child not use the school's network and/or the internet

should notify the teaching staff of the intent in writing. Although we cannot guarantee that the student will never violate his/her parents' wishes, the school will do its best to ensure that these wishes are followed at all times.

- C. *Webpages*: Postings of school activities, including photos and first or last names of students may appear on the school website. The first and last names of students are not to be used together. Any parent who does not want their student's picture or name to appear on the web site must notify the teaching staff in writing.
- D. *Internet Access Policy*: In short, students are not allowed to view, download, or create internet pages of other online material that contain information that is in violation of the school's behavior policies. This material includes , but is not limited to: violences, pornography, weapons, bomb making, making threats, computer "hacking", or is offensive racially, ethnically, or sexually. Any student activity that is detected which is illegal will be reported to law enforcement officials at once
- E. Other activities that are not allowed are the use of chat rooms, any games, email, or bulletin boards/forums (facebook/myspace/twitter/instagram) during the school day, unless specifically approved by a staff member
- F. Students may not download or save games or applications to either the computers or the file server.
- G. No music is permitted to be played on, or downloaded to the computers without specific teacher permission and for educational purposes. No music may be saved to either the computers or the file server by any student without specific teacher permission.
- H. *Outside Software*: Because of licensing problems and the risk of spreading computer viruses, students and staff will not be allowed to bring in outside software to use on the school computers unless approved by the IT specialist. Anybody found installing unapproved software, vandalizing any computer or tampering the computer security will be subject to the consequences listed below.
- I. Students are reminded to follow copyright laws. Plagiarism includes such practices as copying information or papers from the internet without proper documentation, using other people's work and claiming it as your own, cutting and pasting another's work and using it for your own. Outside sources must be cited correctly using MLA format.
- J. Students logging in using another's password may be removed from all computer privileges for a period of time.
- K. Some computer violations will violate other sections of the school handbook and will be disciplined under both sections. For example, a student downloading pornography will receive a suspension for Indecency/Obscenity and will lose computer privileges. A student violating copyright laws while using a computer or the internet will be disciplined for plagiarism and will lose computer privileges
- L. Consequences for misuse of the internet, the network, or any school computer will occur and may include loss of computer privileges.
- M. Nothing on the computers is private and can be deleted by staff members when it is deemed inappropriate informations. Student files may periodically be viewed by staff members.



**BENZIE COUNTY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**BENZIE ACADEMY**

## USE OF DISTRICT-PROVIDED TECHNOLOGY

By taking possession of district-provided technology equipment, I understand that it belongs to the district and is intended for use with school work only. District-provided equipment will comply with Internet filtering that is required by law for public schools. (Children's Internet Protection Act - CIPA)

As parent/guardian and student participants in the Benzie Academy program, we understand and agree to the terms and conditions listed below by initialing each statement			
		Student Initial	Parent Initial
1	I will not attempt to uninstall or bypass the Internet filtering system on this device.		
2	I agree to take proper care of this equipment and abide by the acceptable use guidelines established by the district.		
3	I agree to return this equipment by the end of this school year or when I leave the program (drop/graduate), whichever comes first. If equipment is not returned to Benzie County Central Schools (Benzie Academy) either at school year end or drop/graduation date, I understand that I will be billed for the cost of equipment.		
4	If equipment is damaged; I understand that I will be billed for the cost of replacement.		
5	Approximate replacement cost of borrowed equipment_____.		

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

Student signature:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature:\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number(s)\_\_\_\_\_

~~~~~

For district use only:

Computer/device:

Type:\_\_\_\_\_ Identification #:\_\_\_\_\_

Date returned:\_\_\_\_\_