



Benton Middle School
Student/Family Handbook
2022-2023

7411 Hoadly Road
Manassas, Virginia 20112
Phone: 703-791-0727
Office Hours: 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM

School Motto: “Better Together”

School Vision Statement: *The best for every child, every day.*

School Mission Statement: *Our school community collaborates to provide an environment that is supportive and inclusive of all students. Our work is centered around preparing our students for a future as critical thinkers, digital citizens, innovators, global collaborators, and resilient citizens in our community.*

Key Staff Members to Know:

Joe Graczyk- Principal, GraczyJR@pwcs.edu
Kathy Erickson- Administrative Intern, 6th Grade, EricksKN@pwcs.edu
Jerri Piacesi- Assistant Principal- 7th Grade, PiacesJL@pwcs.edu
Mary Rehberg- Assistant Principal, 8th Grade, RehberMK@pwcs.edu
Pandita Gerdy- Director of School Counseling, GerdyPB@pwcs.edu
Natalie Baker- Special Education Dept Chair, BakerNK@pwcs.edu
Chris Fuller- Security Specialist, FullerCJ@pwcs.edu
Rheini Gordon ESOL Dept Chair, GordonRA@pwcs.edu
Ruth Kuzemchak- School Nurse, KuzemCRM@pwcs.edu
Kathleen Parrish- Instructional Technology Coach, ParrisKA@pwcs.edu
Geoff Raymond- Athletic Director, RaymonGL@pwcs.edu

Benton Home Page: <https://bentonms.pwcs.edu/>

General Help E-mail Address: btms-helpdesk@pwcs.edu

2022-2023 Key Calendar Dates

8/22- First Day of School!

9/2-9/5- Labor Day Holiday Weekend

9/26- School Holiday

10/5- School Holiday

10/10- Divisionwide Professional Development Day- School closed

10/24- School Holiday

10/28- End of 1st Academic Quarter

10/31-Teacher Professional Development Day/Touch Base Conferences

11/8- Teacher Workday

11/11- Veterans Day Holiday

11/23-11/25- Thanksgiving Day Holiday

12/19-1/2- Winter Break

1/3- School reopens

1/16- Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

1/27- End of 2nd Academic Quarter/1st Semester

1/30- Teacher Workday

2/20- Presidents' Day Holiday

3/31- End of 3rd Academic Quarter

4/3-4/7- Spring Break

4/10- Teacher Workday

4/21- School Holiday

5/29- Memorial Day Holiday

6/15- Last Day of School

Key Athletics Dates

Season	Sports	First Day of Tryouts
Season 1	Football, Soccer (Boys), Track (Girls), Volleyball (Girls)	8/23/22 (Track- 8/24/22)
n/a	Cheerleading	8/31/22
Season 2	Basketball (Boys)	11/2/22
Season 3	Basketball (Girls), Wrestling	1/25/23
Season 4	Baseball, Soccer (Girls), Softball, Track (Boys)	3/27/23 (Track- 3/28/23)

See athletics website for additional information about athletics' eligibility, tryout requirements, season schedules, etc. Please note that all prospective student-athletes must have a recent sports physical form on file with the school in addition to proof of concussion training. All students may complete concussion training online this year. We will also face-to-face training opportunities on the following dates in our gym. All trainings begin promptly at 6:00pm. Late attendees will not be allowed into the gym once the training begins:

- Thursday, 8/18/22
- Wednesday, 10/26/22
- Wednesday, 1/12/23
- Wednesday, 3/14/23

BENTON HONOR CODE

As a member of the Benton Middle School community, I must honor my fellow members by pledging to keep us safe from harm. I am honor bound to tell a staff member any information that I may have concerning any illegal or dangerous activity which could bring harm to anyone.

As a member of the Benton Middle School community, I must refrain from all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, sharing homework, and/or plagiarism. I am responsible for giving due recognition of sources from which material is quoted, summarized, or paraphrased as well as persons from whom assistance has been received.

The ROAR Model- More than an acronym

Respect
Organization
Attitude
Responsibility

Benton Middle School/s faculty and staff are committed to the success of **all** students. Students demonstrating appropriate behavior will be recognized in a variety of ways.

The ROAR program recognizes students who:

- Treat others with courtesy and respect
- Take responsibility for their decisions
- Demonstrate character through acts of integrity
- Exercise self-discipline
- Demonstrate appropriate enthusiasm for learning

Staff will recognize students who follow this model with incentives throughout the year. We continue to work closely with our PTO and other partners to recognize our students for doing the right thing every day.



Cougar ROAR Behavior



Classroom		Restroom	
<i>Respect</i>	* Demonstrate appropriate behavior * Appropriately credit sources	<i>Respect</i>	* Use facilities appropriately
<i>Organization</i>	* Arrive to class on time and prepared with materials	<i>Organization</i>	* Remember your belongings
<i>Attitude</i>	* Show respect to staff members, students, and visitors * Protect the rights of other students to learn by setting a positive example	<i>Attitude</i>	* Show respect to staff members, students, and visitors
<i>Responsibility</i>	* Respect school property and the personal property of others * Turn in completed work on time	<i>Responsibility</i>	* Keep restrooms clean and safe * No device use
Hallway		Locker	
<i>Respect</i>	* Use appropriate volume and language * Respect others' space and personal property	<i>Respect</i>	* Be courteous to your neighbors * Respect nearby classes in session
<i>Organization</i>	* Walk on the right side of the hallway	<i>Organization</i>	* Care for your materials * Keep your locker clean
<i>Attitude</i>	* Show respect to staff members, students, and visitors * Be helpful to others	<i>Attitude</i>	* Open and close locker carefully
<i>Responsibility</i>	* Use your time responsibly * Keep hallways clean and safe * No device use	<i>Responsibility</i>	* Do not share your locker combination * Use only your assigned locker
Cafeteria		Library	
<i>Respect</i>	* Be courteous to students and staff	<i>Respect</i>	* Be courteous to students and staff
<i>Organization</i>	* Keep track of your materials	<i>Organization</i>	* Put materials back when they belong before leaving
<i>Attitude</i>	* Wait patiently in line * Let new friends join your table	<i>Attitude</i>	* Enter the library in a quiet and respectful manner
<i>Responsibility</i>	* Clean up after yourself. Leave the cafeteria looking as good as it did when you arrived.	<i>Responsibility</i>	* Return books on time!



Benton MS Bell Schedule 2022-2023



6th Grade		
<i>Class Period</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Length</i>
Advisory/1 st	8:20 a.m. – 9:53 a.m.	63
2 nd	9:27 a.m. – 10:14 a.m.	47
3 rd	10:18 a.m. – 11:33 a.m.	75
4 th	11:37 a.m. – 12:24 p.m.	47
5 th	12:28 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	47
6 th	1:19 p.m. – 2:06 p.m.	47
7 th	2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	50

7th Grade		
<i>Class Period</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Length</i>
Advisory/1 st	8:20 a.m. – 9:23 a.m.	63
2 nd	9:27 a.m. – 10:14 a.m.	47
3 rd	10:18 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.	47
4 th	11:09 a.m. – 12:24 p.m.	75
5 th	12:28 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	47
6 th	1:19 p.m. – 2:06 p.m.	47
7 th	2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	50

8th Grade		
<i>Class Period</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Length</i>
Advisory/1 st	8:20 a.m. – 9:23 a.m.	63
2 nd	9:27 a.m. – 10:14 a.m.	47
3 rd	10:18 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.	47
4 th	11:09 a.m. – 11:56 a.m.	47
5 th	12:00 p.m. – 12:47 p.m.	47
6 th	12:51 p.m. – 2:06 p.m.	75
7 th	2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	50

Lunch Schedule	
<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Time</i>
A (6 th)	10:18 a.m. – 10:43 a.m.
B (6 th)	10:48 a.m. – 11:13 a.m.
C (7 th)	11:30 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.
D (7 th)	11:59 a.m. – 12:24 p.m.
E (8 th)	12:51 p.m. – 1:16 p.m.
F (8 th)	1:21 p.m. – 1:46 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

School Board Regulation

Attendance is in accordance with Prince William County School Regulation 724-1. Absences are classified as excused or unexcused. Excused absences are defined as “illness or death of a family member; medical and dental appointments; emergency conditions in the home; and reasons of extenuating circumstances as judged by the principal.” All other absences are unexcused.

Absence Notifications

The school must receive verified contact from a parent/guardian within two school days for an absence to be counted as excused. Verified contact can come in the form of a note delivered to the main office, a call to the Benton attendance line or by submitting the note electronically on our website. A note must contain the student’s name, date(s) of absence, reason for absence and have a parent/guardian signature. Please note the following about the attendance line option:

- **(571)374-6756** will connect you to the **voicemail only** attendance line.
 - The attendance line should only be used to report full-day absences. It should not be used to report tardies, early checkouts, etc.
 - You may receive a call back from our office staff if any additional verification is needed.
- Our [online absence reporting form](#) can be found on the Benton website, under the ‘Our School’ heading. Please note that this form can only be used to report full day absences.

Tardy to Class

Students must be in their assigned advisory/homeroom by the 8:20am bell. Those who arrive after this time are tardy to school and must check in at the main office. Excused tardies to school are defined as illness, medical or dental appointments, emergency conditions in the home, or extenuating circumstances as judged by the administration.

During the day, students have 4 minutes to transition between classes. We understand that the first two weeks of the year are an adjustment period as students learn their schedules and how to best navigate the building. Following that adjustment period, we do have a system for tracking student tardiness to class. Students who are routinely late to individual classes will have communication home and may eventually have disciplinary consequences.

Pre-Arranged Absences of 3 or More Days

Students must bring a note to the office prior to the absence for approval by the administration. Students with pre-arranged absences are responsible for obtaining and completing missed work.

Early Dismissal Policy

Students who need to leave early should bring a note signed by a parent/guardian stating the reason and time of dismissal to the office first thing in the morning. The student will receive a pass allowing them to come to the office at the requested early dismissal time. **Early dismissals end at 2:30pm** as our lot begins to fill with buses preparing for dismissal around this time. Exceptions to this policy will only be made in emergency situations.

Make-Up Work

Students receiving excused absences are responsible for contacting their teachers to arrange for make-up work. Most assignments and instructional materials will be posted on Canvas. Due to the varied demands on teachers for make-up work, teacher discretion shall determine the type/amount of work and when students shall make up work for prearranged absences. Teachers are not required to provide assignments in advance of the absence; however, assignments requested in advance may be provided at the teacher's discretion. A student whose absence is unexcused is still expected to make up all missed assignments and assessments.

PWCS DRESS CODE

Students are urged to dress for success each school day. Their overall appearance, while on school grounds or virtually, should be based on the health and safety of an inclusive school community. It is understood that student dress may reflect outdoor weather conditions throughout the school year, however, students should refrain from wearing any item of clothing which may cause a distraction or disruption to the educational process or compromise the physical and emotional health and safety of the student or others. Students whose appearance disrupts instruction may be asked to change clothing.

Also consistent with Virginia Code §§ 22.1-276.01 and 22.1-279.6, these dress and grooming guidelines were created to maintain gender neutrality by creating equitable standards regardless of gender and to not have a disparate impact on students of a particular gender.

Prohibited items of clothing include:

Clothing items which:

- Reveal bare skin to the extent that they distract or may foreseeably distract other students or staff;
- Reveal or expose undergarments;
- Fit in a manner as to reveal or expose undergarments;
- Contain vulgar, discriminatory, lewd patently offensive or obscene language or images;
- Contain threats or gang symbols;
- Promotes the use of weapons and violence, or the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs, and/or associated paraphernalia;
- Cause or may foreseeably cause a disruption to the learning environment; and
- Accessories which could be regarded as or used as a weapon.

Headwear which covers one's entire head or face with the following exceptions:

- Worn as part of one's religion; or
- Worn for medical reasons; or
- Worn for personal prevention practices as in the case of the spread of infectious diseases; or
- Worn for an approved school event; or
- Worn as an expression of one's cultural or ethnical background.

Jewelry or other items which could be regarded as or used as a weapon.

Permitted head coverings and hairstyles include but are not limited to:

- Hijabs;
- Yarmulkes;
- Headwraps;
- Braids;
- Locs; and
- Cornrows

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE POLICY

Our student device policy has been changed substantively this year. As a reminder, all students are provide a laptop by PWCS to meet any instructional needs during the day. Students should refer to the BYOD zone posters found around the building and in all classrooms to understand expectations around cell phones and other devices brought from home. Please note the following:

- Green Zone- Cafeteria. Appropriate device use is permitted in the cafeteria.
- Red Zone- Classrooms/Library. No personal device use permitted.
- Red Zone- Hallways/Common Areas. No personal device use permitted.
- Red Zone- Bathrooms/Locker Room. Devices must be silent and out of sight in these areas.

Any unauthorized use of any electronic devices during the day may result in disciplinary action.

- First offense- Device may be confiscated by staff and returned to the student at the end of the class period.
- Repeated offenses- Parent/guardian may be asked to come to school to pick up the device.
- Students who bring electronic devices to school are responsible for their own devices. The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen devices.

BUS TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS

Benton students are designated to be bused to school. No students are permitted to walk to school. Should an incident occur on the bus, students should notify their driver/administration immediately.

Riding the school bus ***is a privilege***. Improper conduct on the bus will result in that privilege being revoked.

Parents may transport their children to/from school. Students who wish to ride a bus other than their regularly scheduled bus or who need to disembark at a different stop must follow these steps:

- First thing in the morning, bring a parent signed note requesting a change to the main office before homeroom.
- The following information is required on the note: student's name, friend's name, date of the requested change, and the bus number.
- Bus passes should be picked up during lunch in the cafeteria.
- Present the Benton Bus pass to the bus driver when boarding the bus.
- Please note that any requested change is subject to approval by the school and transportation.
- Questions regarding bus routes and schedules should be directed to the central transportation office at (571)402-3940.

LOCKERS

All students are assigned their own lockers. Locker use is optional for students. Students are responsible for the conditions and up-keep of their lockers should they use them. All students are expected to follow the locker guidelines below:

- Locker sharing is prohibited. Combinations should be kept private.
- Do not put any items in your locker that are prohibited on school grounds.
- No open drink containers or unwrapped food. No glass containers.
- No Flammable liquids to include cologne/perfume.
- Locker damage due to abuse is the responsibility of the student. Kicking, slamming, etc. can result in damage. Students will receive appropriate discipline consequences for engaging in these behaviors.
- If there is a locker problem, a student should report to the next period teacher and follow that teacher's instructions.

SCHOOL SAFETY/SECURITY

A Safe School Environment

- No drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products.
- No weapons.
- No fireworks.
- No odor causing agents such as stink bombs, air freshener, etc.

Class Changes & Hallway Safety

To keep our busy hallways safe and orderly, students are asked to walk on the right side at all times. Students should take care of bathroom and water needs before arriving to the next class.

Fire Drills

State law requires regular fire drills. When the alarm sounds, follow adult instructions, leave your classroom and walk silently in a single file line through the exit to the designated waiting area. Your teacher will call roll to make sure everyone is accounted for when your class is safely outside. An administrator will give a signal to teachers indicating "all clear" to return to the building.

Hall Passes

This year, we will be introducing e-hallpass as our primary pass system. This electronic pass program is secured through Clever. Students will request passes and staff will approve requests using this system. Students will be trained on using the program early in the school year. Yellow hallway passes will serve as backup passes.

Lockdown Drills

State law requires regular lockdown drills. All lockdown drills will be announced in advance to parents and students. When a lockdown drill is announced, follow adult directions and remain silent. An administrator will announce when the drill has ended. Your classroom teacher will provide more detailed instructions during our first lockdown drill of the year.

Reporting Safety Concerns- Anonymous Reporting Tool

We always encourage students to report any concerns to a trusted adult. When that is not practical, an anonymous reporting tool exists. PWCS uses the “Say Something” Anonymous Reporting System. This system is specifically designed for students in grade 6-12 and staff to report any serious or potentially violent concerns of unsafe behavior or threats of harm to self or others. All tips receive an immediate response by one of the highly skilled crisis counselors at the Sandy Hook Promise National Crisis Center; this person then determines the necessary support steps. When credible tips are received that are life-threatening and/or involve an imminent threat, the crisis center will immediately contact local 911 dispatch and involve law enforcement, then notify central office staff and school-based representatives, even after hours. Users can submit a tip by calling 1-844-5-SAYNOW or by visiting www.SaySomething.net. The free app is available for download from the App Store and Google Play Store.

School Visitors

All visitors must check in at the main office and have a valid photo ID. Parents wishing to visit their student's classes must submit a request at least 24 hours in advance to the school.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Standards-Based Grading/Grading Regulations

At Benton, we believe that student grades should reflect student progress towards defined standards. Graded work should have a well-communicated purpose, and feedback around assignments should be timely. Grades are assigned using the requirements and grading scales set forth in PWCS [Regulation 661-2](#). All high school level courses taken at the middle level adhere to the requirements set forth in PWCS [Regulation 661-3](#).

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times a year. Final quarter grades are posted in StudentVUE and ParentVUE and a hard copy is mailed home. A NG or 'No Grade' is given in cases where a student has been unable to complete enough assignments to adequately show their progress against the required standards. A NG must be changed to a letter grade for the quarter prior to the end of the year.

Conduct/Effort Grades

Rubrics for conduct and effort grades can be found at the end of this document. These rubrics are designed to provide common language around these grades for students, teachers and parents to refer to. Communication should occur in advance if a teacher plans on assigning a 'U' for a conduct or effort grade.

Honor Roll

Honor roll lists will be published at the end of each nine-week grading period.

- **Principal's Honor Roll:**

A student must earn an "A" in achievement in each class in which he/she is enrolled.

- **Honor Roll:**

The student must have a "B" average with no more than one "C" in achievement. There must be at least one "A" to bring the "C" to a "B" average.

Misc. Info

1:1 Device Information

All Benton students are provided with a PWCS-owned laptop, charger, and carrying sleeve at the beginning of the year. Students are responsible for the upkeep of these devices. Parents are encouraged to purchase optional device insurance to protect against loss or significant damage. Please visit the PWCS [Parent/Student Digital Device Handbook](#) for more information on this program.

Clubs/Activities

Clubs/ Activities are announced as sponsors become available. Most clubs begin in late September. Please check the school website for this information.

Front Office Item Dropoff

The following items can be dropped off for students during the school day. All other items will not be accepted:

- Health-related items (eyeglasses, medication for the clinic, etc.)
- Lunches

- PWCS-owned laptops
- Items needed for after school activities. Students will not be able to pick these up until dismissal at 3:00pm.

Lost and Found

- Label or mark all personal items with permanent ink.
- Lost clothing and agendas are kept in the cafeteria.
- Lost valuables -- purses, wallets, retainers, and glasses -- are kept in the office.
- Students should see their PE teacher for items lost during PE.

Medication

If a student needs to take medication, it must be in the original container and kept in the school clinic. A Medication Authorization Form (available on our website) must be on file. All medication must be administered through the clinic. See [PWCS Regulation 757-4](#) for additional information.

School Counseling

Counseling services are available to every student in the school. Our counselors offer a variety of academic and social/emotional supports. Students are assigned to a counselor based on the student's last name. Ms. Esteban will assist students in making an appointment with their counselor when they stop by the counseling office. Counseling team members:

- Director of School Counseling: Ms. Pandita Gerdy
- Registrar: Ms. Sabrina Esteban
- School Counselor, Last Names A-E: Ms. Michelle Atkins
- School Counselor, Last Names F-K: Ms. Aaliyah Green
- School Counselor, Last Names L-P: Ms. Erin McKibben
- School Counselor, Last Names Q-Z: Ms. Tammi Bailey-Case
- Social Worker- Ms. Christina Devers

School Library

The library is available to all Benton students for class work, reference, research, and leisure reading. The following rules apply:

- During class time, a student needs a pass from the classroom teacher to use the library.
- Students may borrow books for up to two weeks.
- Students may renew a book if no one else has reserved it.
- Student may check a total of three books at any one time.
- Students are required to pay for lost or damaged books.

Textbooks

Textbooks are issued to each student for academic courses. Many of our courses now use online textbooks. Physical copies of online textbooks are available for students upon request. Students are responsible for keeping textbooks in good condition.

STUDENT PICK UP AND PARKING

Student pick up and parking procedures are implemented to provide a safe environment for our students and an effective traffic flow for emergency vehicles, school buses, parents, and visitors.

ALL DRIVERS NEED TO FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES:

- **Morning and afternoon drop off or pick up**
Drivers should turn right into main lot, stay to right and continue around the perimeter driveway in a single file line, and then drop off students at the established drop off point.
- Drivers should not cut through the lot or drop off or pick up students in other locations as this often causes the student to cross active traffic.

Special Event Parking and Traffic Control

During special events, access to the upper parking driveways

and parking lots is limited. Special events include our Back to School Nights, concerts, sports tryouts, field events, and games.

- **Fire lanes shall remain open and shall not be used for standing or parking. Cars parked in fire lanes are likely to be ticketed.**
- Traffic cones will be used to designate the flow of traffic into the main lower parking lot.
- Drivers picking up or dropping off students should use the same procedures established for Morning/Afternoon Student Drop Off explained above.
- Delivery, handicapped or other special needs parking is permitted in the upper lot on a space available basis.
- Overflow parking is available in the parking lot of Coles Elementary School during special events only.





Benton Middle School

Effort Grade Rubric



Outstanding (O)	Satisfactory (S)	Unsatisfactory (U)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student turns in all assignments (homework and classwork) on time.• Student is prepared for class each day.• Student consistently participates in classroom discussions.• Student consistently completes all class work and routinely seeks assistance if clarification is needed.• High quality effort is given on all assignments (quality effort is not determined by letter grade).• Student works effectively in groups.• Student follows up on getting and completing make-up work when absent without prompting from the teacher.• Student consistently completes re-learning plans and takes advantage of re-take opportunities (when applicable).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student routinely turns in assignments (homework and classwork) on time. Students has no more than 3 late assignments or NHIs (2 at interim point).• Student is prepared for class on most days.• Student often participates in classroom discussions• Student consistently completes all class work and occasionally seeks assistance if clarification is needed.• Quality effort is given on assignments (quality effort is not determined by letter grade).• Student works appropriately in groups.• Student follows up on getting and completing make-up work when absent with minimal prompting from the teacher.• Student occasionally completes re-learning plans and takes advantage of re-take opportunities (when applicable).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student fails to consistently turn in assignments (homework and classwork) on time. Students has more than 3 late assignments or NHIs (2 at interim point).• Student is rarely prepared for class.• Student does not participate in classroom discussions.• Student does not consistently complete class work and does not ask for or does not accept assistance when clarification is needed.• Little effort is given on assignments (quality effort is not determined by letter grade).• Student routinely does not work appropriately in groups.• Student does not follow up on getting and completing make-up work when absent even after reminders from the teacher.• Student rarely completes re-learning plans and does not take advantage of re-take opportunities (when applicable).



Benton Middle School

Conduct Grade Rubric



*Conduct grades are not tied to academic grades.

Outstanding (O)	Satisfactory (S)	Unsatisfactory (U)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student consistently arrives on time to class each day.• Student consistently demonstrates respect for him/herself, classmates, and teachers and encourages others to do the same.• Student does not abuse bathroom or hall pass privileges and rarely requests to leave the classroom.• Student rarely requires re-direction.• Student does not cause class disruption and strives to be a positive example for other students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student routinely arrives on time to class.• Student routinely demonstrates respect for him/herself, classmates, and teachers.• Student does not abuse bathroom or hall pass privileges.• Student responds to direction and re-direction appropriately.• Student does not cause class disruption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student is often tardy for class.• Student often does not demonstrate respect for him/herself, classmates, and teachers.• Student routinely abuses bathroom or hall pass privileges.• Student inconsistently responds to direction and re-direction appropriately.• Student often causes class disruptions.