

Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School

Accountability Plan

**Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School
201 Main Street
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Accountability Plan

The Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School

Revised Version Approved: January 2003

Supersedes: October 1998

The revised plan submitted to the Department of Education to comply with the requirements of the charter school legislation that requires schools to develop specific standards to measure their progress and effectiveness.

The mission of The Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School is

“To assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children with a classical academic education coupled with sound character development and opportunities for community service.”

As in the original plan, this version continues to focus on evaluating the school’s four primary areas of mission (the Four Pillars):

- 1) the classical curriculum as developed by E. D. Hirsch, Jr. and the Core Knowledge Foundation
- 2) the character education program founded on the four cardinal virtues fortitude, justice, prudence, and temperance
- 3) the community service program, which is an integral part of character education, and which is offered as an authentic program to build self esteem
- 4) the recognition that parents are the primary educators of their children and as such work with the School to promote students’ moral and academic growth.

In addition, the organizational viability objective demonstrates that our school will continue to remain an organization that is trustworthy, responsible, open, and well managed.

In this plan, each phase of the school’s mission and organization is examined separately, and specific goals and means of assessment are established for each area. This plan produces a road map for the school’s development, which is easily understood by parents, faculty, students, and Board members. The school’s specific mission objectives, as articulated in the original charter application, are intricately connected with the assessment standards used in this plan. A variety of assessment tools are employed to measure progress. As much as possible these assessment tools rely on objective evidence of progress, but some subjective measurements are employed, as befitting an elementary school where not all goals are amenable to objective analysis. The intent is to balance the objective and the subjective means of assessment; and when subjective judgement are employed, to support this judgement through the involvement of impartial opinion (committees of non-school evaluators, juried reviews involving outside experts, parent surveys, etc.). The result is a document that is both realistic in terms of its measurement of progress and is a clearly stated articulation of goals for each of the school’s four pillars.

Mission Objective 1: to teach students the enriched classical academic curriculum based on E. D. Hirsch's, JR's Core Knowledge Sequence and through this experience to build a high degree of competence in and a strong command of the content base that will comprise the foundation of their future education.

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
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<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Language Arts:</u></p> <p>1) Students who take the State administered MCAS tests will earn scores above those of their counterparts in the Franklin Public Schools in the language arts section by the grade level scores.</p> <p>2) The mean score for all grades in the language arts section of the California Achievement Test (CAT) will be the eighty-fifth percentile.</p> <p>3) 80% of students in grades 4-8 will write a narrative/expository essay (Educational Record Bureau test) that achieves at grade-level criterion standards or above grade level as compared to suburban school norms.</p> <p>4) 75% of the tested students will score 80% or better on an internally designed grammar test.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grades 1-4 students will receive an enriched program of reading instruction provided through the Open Court series, in conjunction with a demanding literature selection taken from the Core Knowledge Sequence. - Grades 5-8 students will receive an enriched program of reading instruction with demanding literature selections taken from the Core Knowledge Sequence. - Students will participate in a rigorous writing program based on the writing process. - Students will compile a cumulative writing portfolio. - Study of grammar designed for grade level in accordance with the Core Knowledge Sequence. - Frequent use of internal rubrics to articulate to students the expectation of standards to be achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MCAS - CAT - ERB Writing Assessment - Internal grammar test

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Humanities Project:</u></p> <p>1) All students will complete a humanities (language arts and/or history) project within a Core Knowledge content area. Within this projects all students will:</p> <p>a) Perform, present, or recite the ideas or work of an author or of an historic figure or time period.</p> <p>b) Create a piece of writing based upon their studies.</p> <p>c) Present some element of the project to parents or the community.</p> <p>2) 80% of students in each class will master the skill elements articulated by the individual rubrics for each representative project.</p> <p>a) K: reading readiness</p> <p>b) 1-4: Grade-level reading and writing proficiency, including factual comprehension and organization skills, and correct grammatical usage.</p> <p>c) 5-8: Grade-level reading and writing proficiency, including factual and inferential comprehension, literary analysis, point of view, use of supporting detail and correct grammatical usage.</p> <p>3) Annually, the school will prepare a representative sample of these projects for dissemination to other schools and educators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refer to Language Arts and History Strategies - Teachers will present a curriculum that incorporates projects based on Core Knowledge content areas and which includes authentic reading and writing activities. - Students will regularly perform and present their work in class and in school assemblies. - Teachers will design and present appropriate rubrics for the project to articulate expectations. - Teachers will collect representative samples of student work and write a description of the project for dissemination. - Presentations before parents and/or the school community. - Frequent use of internal rubrics to articulate to students the expectation of standards to be achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dissemination of a collection of representative samples of projects to other evaluators and other educational institutions for review and feedback

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Mathematics:</u></p> <p>1) Students who take the State administered MCAS tests will achieve a grade level score above that of their counterparts in the Franklin Public Schools in the mathematics section.</p> <p>2) At the end of sixth, seventh, and eighth grades there will be a test on core topics (as indicated in our math outlines) and 80% of students will earn a grade of 80% or better.</p> <p>3) At least 50% of all 8th grade students will complete a full credit Algebra I course and will be eligible to gain a secondary school credit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through the exploration of a text and supplementary materials, students K-8 will experience an enriched mathematics program offering a challenging sequential mathematics curriculum that provides open-ended questions, basic manipulations, and problem solving strategies. - The school's math program will be designed to ready all eighth graders for the Algebra I requirement; all seventh graders will take a strong pre-algebra program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MCAS - CAT - Alumni Survey - Internal data collection

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Science:</u></p> <p>1) Students who take the State administered MCAS tests will achieve a median score at or above that of their counterparts in the Franklin Public Schools in the science section.</p> <p>2) All students in grades 5-8 will prepare and present a science research project with a formal lab report, as appropriate for each grade, based on individual hypotheses formed by the students. Projects will be assessed using a rubric based on the scientific method, and 80% of students will demonstrate mastery of the skills delineated in this rubric.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students K-8 will study challenging science content as outlined in the Core Knowledge Sequence. – Students K-4 specifically will be introduced to the scientific process with emphasis on observation and hands-on experience. – Internal rubrics will be used to articulate to students the expectation of standards to be achieved. – Science specialists both from within and outside of the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School community will supplement school programs. – Science fair projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – MCAS – Internal assessment of students' projects will be reviewed by the science teacher in the grade level above them (5th grade science projects will be assessed by the sixth grade teacher.) – Critique completed by outside evaluators who will review the projects and consult with the teachers about the design and success of the assignment

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Latin:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students will develop reading ability in Latin. 2) Students will develop the ability to comprehend Latin text 3) Students will be able to express themselves in Latin orally and in writing 4) Students will demonstrate an understanding of ancient Roman culture 5) Students will recognize elements of Latin in the English language 6) Students will use their knowledge of Latin to expand their knowledge of other Core Knowledge Sequence topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students in grades 6-8 will study Latin emphasizing speaking, translation, reading comprehension, culture, history, and grammar. • Etymology and recognizing Latin root words will be integrated in the students' study of vocabulary. • Ancient Roman history and culture will be imbedded in the texts translated and in the class designed projects. – Latin words and root words will be emphasized in integrated lesson on grade-specific Core Knowledge Sequence topics. – Projects and presentations in English and Latin will be made to the school community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Text book unit tests – In-house Teacher assessment

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<u>French:</u>		
1) 80% of students who take French in each grade will master the basics of French vocabulary, culture and grammar as appropriate for each grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – K-2 students will be exposed to the basics of French pronunciation, vocabulary, and culture. – Grade 1-2 students receive French instruction lessons emphasizing speaking, listening, and song. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Grade 3-6 In-house teacher assessment. – Grade 7-8 French exam.
2) 80% of students who take French will complete the grade 8 curriculum and be eligible to obtain a French I secondary school credit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Grades 3-5 students study French lessons emphasizing speaking, listening comprehension, culture, history, and grammar. – Grades 6-8 students study French lessons emphasizing speaking, listening, reading comprehension, culture, history, and grammar as appropriate for each grade level. – Presentations will be made to the school community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentations to the community. – Alumni Survey – Next school survey

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Core Knowledge Art</u></p> <p>1) 100% of students in grades K–5 through active participation will experience the various art elements including line, shape, form, space, light, texture, and color.</p> <p>2) 80% of students in grades 6–8 will be able to identify the salient features of the art periods outlined in the Core Knowledge Sequence</p> <p>3) 80% of Fine Arts Elective: Students in grades 6-8 who elect to take the semi-weekly course will develop a small portfolio of their own artwork and participate in a collaborative piece.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students will be introduced to the concepts of various artists, works of art, and the process of making and appreciating art as indicated by grade level guidelines in the Core Knowledge Sequence – In their weekly art class, students will be introduced to art concepts in sequential lessons that build on prior knowledge. . – Students in grades 6-8 will write a biography of an artist, examining, among other topics, what character traits helped that artist succeed. – Students in grades 6-8 will study essential art history information in their semester-long course and will research selected artists. – Students will participate in art exhibitions within the school community and selected works will be exhibited outside of the school community (e.g. town halls, town libraries). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students will be evaluated through informal art critiques, creation of visual art pieces, art journals, in-house quizzes, presentations, and visual arts pieces. – Portfolios will be evaluated by teachers on line, value, color, and composition.

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Core Knowledge Music:</u></p> <p>1) 80% of students in grades K-2 will be able to recognize and discuss musicians and sing musical selections as indicated in the Core Knowledge Sequence.</p> <p>2) 80% of students in grades 3-5 will be able to recognize and discuss musicians, songs, and musical terms as indicated in the Core Knowledge Sequence and will describe and analyze music of others using appropriate vocabulary.</p> <p>3) 80% of students in grades 6-8 will be able to identify the following as outlined in the Core Knowledge Sequence:</p> <p>a) Music periods</p> <p>b) Composers</p> <p>c) Musical forms and styles</p> <p>d) Count and play basic rhythms</p> <p>e) Describe and analyze the music of others.</p>	<p>– Students will explore elements of music through creating, writing, singing, improvising, dancing, and playing Orff and percussion instruments.</p> <p>– Students in grade 3 will be introduced to instrumental music by learning to play the recorder. They will practice this instrument at home and at school and will perform in a year-end assembly.</p> <p>– Students in grades 6-8 will participate in a weekly “Core Music” class one semester each year.</p>	<p>– In-House Teacher assessment</p> <p>– Students will be evaluated through performance in classroom and/or assemblies.</p>

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Physical Education:</u></p> <p>1) Students will demonstrate proper technique of stretching, strengthening, and warm-up activities as it pertains to becoming a physically fit and healthy person.</p> <p>2) Students will learn basic skills, techniques, strategies, and rules to a variety of activities and games throughout the school year.</p> <p>3) Students will be able to function in a team or as part of a group while demonstrating cooperation, listening skills, and respect for others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students will participate in a warm-up routine each class that will enhance overall fitness. These warm-ups will include flexibility, strengthening and cardiovascular activities. – Students will participate in a variety of drills, lead-up games and activities involving these skills, techniques, strategies, and rules allowing ample time to practice them. – Students will be exposed to a variety of group challenges and problem solving activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In-house personal best fitness test – Teacher assessment

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Choral Music:*</u></p> <p>1) All chorus elective students in grades 6-8 will be able to:</p> <p>a) Sing independently and in small and large groups</p> <p>b) Sing a repertoire of music representing diverse periods and cultures</p> <p>c) Sing music written in two and three-parts</p> <p>d) Sight-read music accurately and expressively</p>	<p>– Chorus students will meet as a vocal ensemble.</p> <p>– Perform in concerts at least twice per year.</p> <p>– Performances before the school community and outside the school community.</p>	<p>– Critique by outside music educators at a festival of the music director’s choice.</p>
<p><u>Instrumental Music:*</u></p> <p>1) All instrumental elective students in grades 6-8 will be able to:</p> <p>a) read music written in standard notation</p> <p>b) sight-read music accurately and expressively</p> <p>c) perform on at least one wind or percussion instrument accurately and independently with appropriate posture, playing position, and technique</p> <p>d) compose short pieces for instruments within teacher-specified guidelines</p>	<p>– Instrumental music programs will be provided to students in grades 4-8, including Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, and Marching Band.</p> <p>– Students will attend group instrument lessons.</p> <p>– The band teachers will employ the “Standards of Excellence” Band Method and use music technology programs as available.</p> <p>– Students will perform concerts at least twice annually.</p>	<p>– Critique by outside music educators at a festival of the music director’s choice.</p>

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Drama:</u>*</p> <p>1) All Drama elective students in grades 6-8 will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) integrate direction into individual and group work b) interpret and identify basic literary structure in scripted material c) tell a story using vocal, physical, and presentation skills d) understand improvisation e) identify basic theatre terms <p>* Students in grades 6-8 are required to take one fine art elective per term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students in grades 6-8 who elect to take drama will be introduced to improvisation work, leading into scripted monologues and scenes. Scenes will be chosen to compliment the Core Knowledge Curriculum. Students will work on theatre terminology in-class and as homework. – Performances will be given before the school community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In-house teacher evaluation

Mission Objective 2: to foster the development of a virtuous life through a program of character education based on the four cardinal virtues.

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p>1) All students in K-8 will understand the meaning of the four cardinal virtues (justice, temperance, prudence, and fortitude) and recognize these virtues in themselves, in others, and in appropriate stories and other curriculum materials.</p> <p>2) All students in grades 6-8 will set personal and academic goals each term and review these goals with their parents and homeroom teacher.</p> <p>3) All 8th grade students will write a personal narrative that reflects on their intellectual and moral development in their years at the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School, and on perceived goals and challenges for future growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teachers will identify moral themes and threads that run through curriculum topics and works of literature and will weave this element of character education into the existing curriculum. – Teachers will help students practice and develop virtue through regularly setting goals and improving personal behavior. – Students will develop an awareness of the Virtues and reflect on them through class meetings, Forest of Virtue* assemblies, character education journals, Stepping Stones reflections (see Mission Objective #3), discipline reflection forms and other writing and art activities. <p style="text-align: center;">*A program in which faculty and younger students recognize acts of virtue performed by students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – All students K-4 will keep character journals as inspired by Ben Franklin’s own daily reflections and the entries in his journal. 	<p>Surveys will be given to a random representative of visitors with questions designed to assess the tone of the school, including student behavior.</p>

Mission Objective 3: to build self-esteem and the ethic of giving to others through a program of regular community service at all levels.

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Evidence</i>
<p>1) All students in grades K-5 will perform monthly community service with their homeroom classes and will, as developmentally appropriate reflect on their work through art and writing.</p> <p>2) All students in grades 6-7 will perform individual service monthly, and will reflect on this service in their Stepping Stones manual. Students will perform monthly group service for the school and local community.</p> <p>3) All students in grade 8 will choose, design, and conduct long-term service projects, which will include a project proposal, a final reflective essay, and a final presentation to parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students perform regular community service and discuss with their teachers their efforts. - Students in grades 6-8 meet in service teams composed of 8-12 students advised by a faculty member; a parents signature is required for all service, including project proposals, ensuring parental involvement in the students' service efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compilation of the 8th grade students' final essays as part of the school's historical records. Those essays will be available for review by evaluators. - Presentations of 8th grade Capstone projects to the community. - Compilation of a yearly list that will include: complete service projects, representative photos, sampling of student reflections. - Alumni Survey

Mission Objective 4: to recognize parents as children’s primary educators who work with the School to develop students academically and morally.

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Evidence</i>
<p>1) The Parent Enrichment Committee of the Board will provide yearly focus group meeting(s) for parents.</p> <p>2) 100% of parents will sign the Family Pledge each year.</p> <p>3) The school will support the parents as they work on their children’s academic and moral development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Parent Enrichment and other program meetings will strengthen and define parents’ roles as primary educators. – The Family Pledge will be introduced to parents at the pre-admission Open House meeting. – The school will orient new parents through parent information nights by providing host families, welcoming new families to summer and school-year social events. – Teachers will send home the monthly curriculum scope and sequence. – The school will keep parents informed about events and opportunities for involvement and mutual support through regular communication media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Each year’s Scope and Sequences and newsletters will be collected and preserved as part of the school’s on-going history. – A variety of surveys designed to measure the school’s effectiveness in recognizing parents as primary educators. – The Family Pledge will be maintained on file.

Mission Objective 5: To remain a thriving organization that is trustworthy, responsible, open, and well managed.

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>School Performance:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The school will receive 100% more applications than there are available openings. 2) Fewer than 5% of students will leave the school for other school choice options. 3) The average annual attendance rate will be 90%. 4) The school will develop long term academic and organizational plans. 5) Parents will form an active partnership by performing extensive service to the school via in-school and at-home volunteer opportunities. <p><u>Finance:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A budget will be prepared and reviewed annually by the school Board of Trustees. 2) The school will develop a long-term financial plan. 3) The school will prepare books on records in accordance with GAAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Periodic review of the Accountability plan – 100% of the faculty will participate in a least one professional development activity each year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – An independent audit – The Annual Report – Periodic record surveys – Family and faculty exit interviews – Eligibility for Charter Renewal – Published Board Minutes

<i>Standards to be Achieved</i>	<i>Strategy for Attainment</i>	<i>Measurement Tool</i>
<p><u>Quality of Governance:</u></p> <p>1) The Board of Trustees will review 50% of all Policies and Procedures on an annual basis.</p> <p>2) The Board of Trustees will publish all agendas and minutes and follow open meeting law.</p> <p>3) The Board will commit itself to preserving the Mission of the School and putting into place the strategies by which the mission will be achieved.</p> <p>a) Dissemination of best practices.</p>	<p>All Board members will be given a Board Handbook.</p> <p>All Board members will agree to review materials sent to them in advance of board meetings.</p> <p>All Board members will serve on a least one Board committee or serve as a board officer.</p>	<p>Board attendance</p>

End January 2003.