

Dear Students,

Welcome to the Arts Academy At Benjamin Rush! For those who are returning, welcome back!

Building a community of learners is the most important piece to any school. We hope that this handbook will be a guide to students and will help create a safe and welcoming learning environment. If you have any concerns or suggestions regarding the guidelines in this handbook, please do not hesitate to speak to your student council representatives, teachers, counselor, climate manager, or principal. We welcome your ideas and encourage careful critique.

There are many pieces to our program that make The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush unique. We are proud that our students are taught to question deeply and participate in a curriculum that is meaningful and related to their world. We have created a set of core values that frame our curriculum and which are explained below.

In order to enrich the Arts Academy curriculum, we connect all disciplines and prepare our graduates for success in the world beyond high school. To this end, the Arts Academy has adopted six core values. These core values shape our ways of thinking and behaving, and they are meant to promote reflection, discipline, and critical questioning. The core values are:

- Imagination: What if?
- Communication: How can I be sure I am understood?
- Empathy: Who is affected?
- Perspective: Through what lens do I examine this? Where does this come from?
- Analysis: How do I know what I know?
- Commitment: What action do I need to take?

Students are introduced to these core values when they are in ninth grade and continue to use them throughout their four years at The Arts Academy. Have a great year!

Sincerely,

Principal and Staff of the Arts Academy At Benjamin Rush

Disclaimer:

This document is subject to change. Updates to the Student Handbook will be provided to the students and changes will be made to the online version of the document and will be included in any subsequent printing or publishing of the document.

Our Mission

Rush Arts is based on the belief that the arts provide an opportunity to develop intellectual growth and personal creativity as part of a rigorous academic curriculum. We emphasize the building of a reflective community of learners who are adaptive critical thinkers and creators while preparing our students for college and professional careers. Transdisciplinary teaching and learning are applied in every classroom. Rush Arts prepares students to become active members of a democratic society by fostering a culture of respect for the various views of our diverse student population and encouraging student voice in the pursuit of social justice.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES

The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush fosters a climate of mutual respect for the rights of all students, teachers and staff. Students shall exercise their rights and responsibilities in compliance with rules established for the orderly conduct of the school's educational mission. Our objective is to promote positive behavior as students assume their responsibilities as citizens in the school community.

Responsibilities of Students

- Be present, punctual, respectful, and involved in school activities.
- Adhere to dress code and all expectations outlined in the Student Handbook.
- Utilize technology and social media responsibly.
- Demonstrate academic integrity and honesty.
- Respect the school and the diverse views of our school community as outlined in the Student Handbook and in the School District of Philadelphia's Student Code of Conduct.
- Communicate in a respectful manner with teachers, peers, and all members of the school community.
- Demonstrate our commitment to our education by completing all school assignments on time with attention to quality, and ask for help when needed.
- Provide all notices and information distributed at school to parents/caregivers.

For more information, student rights and responsibilities as outlined by the School District of Philadelphia are available in the Code of Student Conduct.

Policies and Procedures

IMPORTANT DATES / SCHOOL CALENDAR

Please visit our website: rush.philasd.org and click on "calendar" for all important dates.

TRANSPORTATION

All students who live 1.5 miles or further from our school ***as determined by SEPTA in conjunction with The School District of Philadelphia***, will be issued a free Transpass. Students will receive Transpasses during advisory. Students who are absent from school on Transpass distribution day will

receive their passes during lunch time in the cafeteria upon returning to school.

ATTENDANCE and LATENESS

In order for The Arts Academy graduates to be prepared for higher education and beyond, it is imperative that students realize the value of daily attendance and punctuality, classroom participation, and active engagement.

- Students must scan in every day before 7:50 am with their school issued ID card. Students who do not have their ID card will be charged \$1.00 for a temporary ID. All students must have a school ID in their possession at all times. If the student does not have \$1.00, that fee is recorded and must be paid prior to graduation. Notices will be sent home at the end of each year for any student who owes temporary ID fines.
- On the day of any absence or lateness, the parent/guardian of the student should call the main office at 215-400-3030 to alert the school of the intended absence. In addition, the parent/guardian must provide the required excuse note upon the student's return.
- Students are expected to present valid absence excuse notes upon their return to school after any absence and must submit those notes to their advisor. The advisor will submit notes to the main office to be coded in the system.
- Students absent more than 3 consecutive days should present an excuse note from a medical doctor within three days of their absence. No more than 9 excuse notes written by parents / caregivers will be accepted in one school year. After 9 absences, the notes must come from a doctor.
- Any student with 3 or more unexcused absences will receive a legal notice regarding absences. 6 or more unexcused absences will result in the development of a truancy elimination plan. Parents will be expected to attend a meeting to develop this plan. 10 or more unexcused absences will result in loss of school privileges and a referral to truancy court.
- Late students must retrieve a late pass from the scan machine or main office before going to class. Under no circumstances may late students report to a class without getting a "late slip" from the scan machine or the main office. Students are considered late at 7:51am.
- After students are late or absent to school nine times, all extra-curricular activities will be revoked and the student will be required to meet with the Student Eligibility Monitor. The parent/guardian will also be contacted to help create an action plan to ensure punctuality and attendance. During this meeting, a timeline for the reinstatement of privileges will be discussed. Following the reinstatement of privileges, a student who is late or absent to school three more times will become ineligible again. Following a second period of ineligibility, the student and their parent/guardian will meet together with the eligibility monitor to further ensure attendance and punctuality.
- Any and all excused lateness and absences will be subject to review by the Principal.

- Family trips will not be approved as excused absences during instructional days and will be coded as unexcused.

Chronic abuse of the above policy will be handled on an individual case basis involving concerned parties including parent, student, staff and administration, if necessary.

EARLY DISMISSALS

The following procedure must be followed for excused early dismissals to be granted:

- Any student requesting an early dismissal must be picked up by a parent/guardian or designee who is listed on the SIS network with an accompanying note by the legal guardian. The designee has to be a responsible adult over the age of 18 years. If utilizing a designee to pick a student up from school, the parent must be contacted to provide consent.
- According to School District of Philadelphia Policy, students who are leaving early due to illness must be picked up by a parent or designee. Students may not take public transportation or drive their own vehicles home in the event they are ill, regardless of age.
- Some examples of valid reasons for early dismissals are:
 - Participation in religious observances
 - Attendance at a funeral observance
 - A family crisis or emergency
 - Student illness
- Early Dismissals for athletic competitions will be coordinated through the athletic department.

Standard medical and dental appointments should be scheduled after school hours when at all possible.

GRADING SCALE

A:	90 - 100
B:	80 - 89
C:	70 - 79
D:	60 - 69
F:	50 - 59

CLASS SYLLABUS

It is the student's responsibility to review the grading policies and adhere to classroom procedures and expectations outlined in each syllabi for every class on their roster.

GUIDANCE

The office of our counselor is located on the first floor next to the main office and is the primary emotional, academic and college/career support for the student body. Students should be in close contact with the counselor throughout their four years at The Arts Academy, since vital college information concerning financial aid and scholarships is available through this office. Students can visit the counselor's office during lunch or they can make an appointment to see the counselor upon arrival to school at the scan machine or via email. In the case of an emergency, students may ask any teacher to call the counselor during class time.

LOCKERS

Every student is issued a locker. Student lockers are the property of the school. Students who play large instruments may receive an additional instrumental locker. Students who have gym MUST lock their personal items in a locker. Students are responsible for bringing their own locks for gym. Only combination locks are to be used on lockers that are issued to students (no key locks.) Lockers may be searched at any time to assure the safety of the student body and staff members. Students should not share lockers for any reason. If you have any issue with a locker, please notify your advisor so that the problem may be resolved.

Students may not draw, write, or decorate their lockers with permanent ink. Also, students may not destroy the paint on their lockers with tape or adhesives. Any decorations on the outside of lockers must be temporary and taken down within two days. Decorations must not interfere with the quality of the exterior paint on the locker.

DRESS CODE PHILOSOPHY

The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush student dress code supports equitable educational access and is designed to prepare students for the future. As such, students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate in most professional settings. To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any student based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Dress Code Expectations

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The school district is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student. Any restrictions to the way a student dresses will be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and will be explained within this dress code.

1. Students Must Wear

- A shirt (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), AND
- Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress or shorts), AND
- Shoes.

2. Students May Wear

- Hats. (They must allow the face to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Ball caps are only permitted if the brim is turned backwards).
- Religious headwear.
- Sweatshirts. If there is a hood, it must remain down.
- Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants and "skinny jeans".
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed.
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps; halter tops.
- Athletic attire.

3. Students Cannot Wear:

- Violent language or images.
 - Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity).
 - Hate speech, racial, ethnic, or religious slurs, profanity, pornography.
 - Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
 - “See-through” clothing that reveals undergarments.
 - Swimsuits or beach attire.
 - Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
 - Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance).
4. **Additional Dress Code expectations** will be outlined for specific classes and activities such as but not limited to Physical Education and Dance classes as needed.
5. **Dress Code Enforcement:**
 These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances and prom. Repeated violations of the dress code may result in disciplinary action.

LUNCH PROCEDURES

There will be 4 lunch periods. 3rd period will be a special 25 minute lunch period for students who are taking additional courses that were approved by the principal. Periods 4, 5, and 6 will be 53 minute mixed grade lunches. Students will have the option to go the library, sit with friends in designated areas of the first floor hallway, or intern with teachers if there is availability that period in the particular class/course of interest. The hallways and the library are quiet zones. Students who are not quiet in these zones will be politely asked to return to the lunchroom.

NURSE and MEDICATION

Our nurse is assigned to our school 5 days a week. Students are permitted to carry inhalers and EpiPens in school with proper documentation from the doctor. Any other medication must be stored in the health room and administered by the nurse. Please notify the nurse during your lunch period or via email if you have any questions or concerns. For specific information regarding the nurse’s hours and procedures to visit the nurse, please see our website: rushartsonline.org.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The Rush Arts Athletic program includes nine teams that compete in the Philadelphia Public League (PPL) and the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA). In order to compete on a team, a student must have a completed medical examination from a Physician dated after [May 31, 2019](#) on the Current PIAA form only (section 6 of the PIAA permission packet). The form may be filled out by hand or printed out digitally if the Doctor's office has the ability to do that. However, NO other form is acceptable. A Doctor *may* choose to fill out this form using information from a previous physical. In that case, the form is filled out with the date it was filled out AND then a copy of the previous physical (on any form) may be attached if needed.

In addition, pages 1-5 of the PIAA permission packet and the School District of Philadelphia's "EH-80" must be completed in their entirety by the student's parent or legal guardian. There are not exceptions. Please note that students who are already 18 still need their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to sign the

forms.

The school will offer ten Interscholastic sports in 2019-2020:

2019-2020 Interscholastic Athletic teams

SEASON	GIRLS	BOYS
Fall	Soccer Volleyball JV Field Hockey	JV Soccer
Winter	Basketball Bowling	Basketball Bowling
Spring	Softball	Baseball

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETICS

Students must meet specific criteria in order to be able to participate including but not limited to academic and attendance criteria. For the full eligibility criteria as well as several policies specific to Student-Athletes, please visit the athletics page of our school website at <https://rush.philasd.org/athletics/> and click on "student-athlete handbook" .

DOUBLING UP IN MATH

The only reason a student would “double up” in math and take both Algebra 2 and Geometry in the same year is to be eligible to take AP Calculus during senior year. Otherwise, there is no reason to double up in math. For students who double up, the 53-minute lunch period will be used for the additional math class and lunch will be provided during advisory. Students who double up in math during the 10th grade year or who have passed the Algebra 1 Keystones prior to coming to Rush and go directly to Geometry in 9th grade must take Pre-calculus in their junior year. There are no exceptions.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation and commitment to extracurricular activities are extremely important. Many art, academic and athletic activities will take place before and after school. Colleges often place high value on the level of commitment of the applicant by their involvement in extra curricular activities when considered for acceptance. Therefore, students are encouraged to initiate and lead club, academic, and athletic activities. Please approach a faculty member about sponsoring any activities that you would like to see at the school. Our Student Activity Sponsor will speak to any student who would like to start a club. All clubs associated with health, fitness, athletics or wellness should be reviewed by our Athletic Director. All clubs associated with the arts should be reviewed by the specific arts major teacher.

Students wishing to participate in extracurricular clubs before or after school but who are failing a class, may participate in the club as long as it does not interfere with tutoring or academic help for the subject in

which they are failing. This policy does not include Eligibility for Varsity Athletics.

All advertising, fundraising, and distribution and selling of goods/merchandise must be done through a recognized school entity, as well as approved and organized by a staff member or through the Rush Home and School Association. Additionally, no unauthorized use of the Rush logo or the name of the school, the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush, is permitted.

TUTORING

Tutoring in the areas of math, literature, and biology will be available after school by request. Students may ask their teachers when and where tutoring is available. Students who are seeking tutoring in other areas of study may visit the counselor and will be matched with an Honor Society Student.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

School cancellations will be announced on all local news channels. When school will be closed, an announcement will be made on all local news channels that all Philadelphia Public Schools will Be Closed. You may find more information regarding school closings by going to the School District of Philadelphia's website: www.philasd.org.

LOST AND FOUND

Any lost items that are found in the building will be returned to the main office.

SECURITY SCANNERS and ID CARDS

All students and visitors entering the school building are required to use only the Knights Road front entrance. All other entrance doors are closed for security purposes. Students may not open exterior doors for any visitor or member of our school community.

Anyone entering the building must have their personal possessions X-rayed and pass through the metal detectors.

In addition, students must carry an ID scan card that must be swiped through a computer immediately upon passing through the detector. The first scan card is issued free of charge. Any student forgetting his/her card on a given day must pay \$1.00 per day for a temporary ID. A replacement ID costs \$5.00.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Safety is our number one priority. All students and visitors enter the building through the ramp and proceed through the metal detector. Any belongings are placed through the scan machine. Our school has carefully crafted a plan for a variety of emergency and or crisis situations. Our safety plan includes lock down, shelter in place, fire, and active shooter drills. Plans will be reviewed in all classrooms with students as part of the instructional plan at the beginning of each year and practiced in the form of drills throughout the school year.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Students are responsible for the care, maintenance, and timely return of all materials and equipment loaned from school including but not limited to textbooks, technology, athletic uniforms, and instruments.

Students and/or parents will be assessed a fee for lost materials and equipment. Students will not be

able to participate in the graduation ceremony until all materials are returned and/or all fees are paid.

TRANSFERING MAJORS

- Students who would like to transfer art majors will be considered on a case by case basis. Students who are interested in changing majors should approach their assigned art teacher to learn more about the process.
- Due to the school's roster, students may need to be re-rostered into new sections of their core subject areas or a different grade level in their art area. This should be considered when requesting to transfer.

WORKING PAPERS

All students under 18 need special documentation (working papers) in order to be employed. Students needing to obtain applications for working papers should see the counselor.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In the age of technology in which we all currently reside, student conduct with regard to the use of school hardware and software, and the responsible use of social media will be strictly enforced. The use of inappropriate websites and abuse of Internet access by students will be considered a severe infringement of the conduct code. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action based upon the School District of Philadelphia's Code of Student Conduct.

DISCRIMINATION POLICY

(Policy 102)

The policy's purpose is to ensure equity and justice for all members of the school community, and society as a whole, and to give those members the skills and knowledge they need to understand and overcome individual biases and institutional barriers to full equality. Federal and state laws prohibit harassment and/or discrimination and as a result the School District of Philadelphia is obligated to investigate and take appropriate action when this policy is violated.

The School District of Philadelphia has created a grievance process for a student who believes he/she has been harassed or discriminated against or been denied the rights guaranteed by this policy. The grievances will be monitored by a School District Title IX Coordinator who will assure that complaints are investigated and resolved. The grievance form can be found in the School District of Philadelphia's Code of Student Conduct.

(Policy 252)

TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING STUDENTS

The purpose of this policy is to ensure safety, equity, and justice for all students regardless of gender identity or gender expression so that they can reach their fullest human and intellectual potential. Please visit the School District of Philadelphia's website for more information regarding policy 252.

STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY GUIDELINES

We ask you to consider and obey the following school codes. Disciplinary action will follow guidelines listed. Consequences not listed can be found in the School District of Philadelphia Code of Student Conduct.

1. Disruption of School or Classroom

Good classroom instruction requires that students be attentive and cooperative. No student shall disrupt the teaching/learning process. Consideration for classmates and neighboring classes must be maintained.

Infractions will be dealt with on an individual basis utilizing student conferences, parent conferences, detention and/or suspension. Students who continuously disrupt the educational process will be referred to the administration by the teacher with documentation of the student's behavior.

2. Tardiness to Class

Tardiness to class creates disruption and prevents all students from learning. Students are required to be in class by the time the second bell rings. (First bell dismisses from the lunchroom or class, second bell announces the beginning of class). Students must use the time between classes wisely. Teachers will conference with students and contact home if tardiness to class becomes an issue. A meeting with the student, counselor, parent, teachers, and principal will be held if tardiness to class continues. Students must serve all detentions issued in order to be eligible to participate in dances, proms, and special events and activities that are not related to the curriculum.

3. Cutting or Skipping Class

If a student is found outside of class without a teacher's permission or is excessively late to class without permission, the student may be considered cutting or skipping. The student will lose credit for that class and a parent meeting may be scheduled by the teacher to discuss consequences and to create an action plan.

4. Unauthorized Leaving of School Grounds

Students who leave school grounds without authorization are subject to disciplinary measures. A parent/guardian must attend a mandatory conference to assist with the development of an action plan to ensure their child's success.

5. Cheating

The Arts Academy takes cheating, plagiarism, and all forms of academic dishonesty very seriously. Cheating is any act that can give unfair academic advantage to a student, her grades, or her records.

This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Sharing or copying homework,
- Sharing or copying test or quiz answers,
- Taking credit for another person's work,
- Using someone else's writing or work without giving credit,
- Cutting and pasting from the internet or other someone else's work,
- Using any resource to gain information or get answers without doing your homework (i.e. SparkNotes),
- Utilizing or holding a cell phone in hand during testing,
- Communicating during a test or quiz in any way unless permitted by the teacher,

- Talking to others about an assignment, test or quiz before all students have taken it. Cheating or helping someone else cheat will result in academic consequences, to be determined by the teacher.

6. Suspensions

- Please consult the School District's Student Code of Conduct (which can be found at www.philasd.org) for information regarding infractions that can result in suspension.
- Students who are suspended may not participate in activities during their time of suspension.
- If students are suspended during the days of prom, senior trip, or any special event all money that was paid by that student will be refunded.

7. Homework

The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush believes that homework and/or independent practice enhances long term and meaningful learning. Therefore, all teachers will regularly assign work aligned with daily objectives that is to be done by students independently. Students are responsible for submitting all homework and other independent work to their teachers and are expected to set aside time to complete independent assignments. Homework is expected to be submitted by the student on the due date designated by the teacher in order to obtain maximum credit. Homework and independent work contribute to the overall grade point average in each subject area. Please refer to the class syllabi for each teacher's homework policy.

8. Breakfast / Lunch

Breakfast and lunch are free to all students. Students may never leave the building for lunch or have lunch delivered from outsider vendors. While students may bring their own lunch to school, we will not accept deliveries of lunch from parents, family members, and friends during the school day as it is a disruption to our instructional program. If a student forgets to bring lunch, lunch can be obtained free of cost in the lunchroom.

The library will be available to students during the lunch period on most days. Computers are available in the library for student use. No food will be allowed in the library.

9. Smoking

Students are not permitted to smoke regular or electronic cigarettes on campus at any time before, during, or after school.

10. Cell Phones

The School District of Philadelphia supports appropriate use of cell phones in all Philadelphia schools. Because many of our students travel on buses and use cell phones for safety, we allow students to carry phones into the building.

Cell phones must be turned off and put away during class, unless the teacher specifies cell phone use for a specific purpose and/or lesson. The cafeteria and library, during lunch periods, are the cell phone tech zones. Students will be permitted to utilize their cell phones during their specific lunch period, the cafeteria, library, and lunch zones. **When in tech zones, students must obtain verbal permission/consent prior to taking pictures of any student or staff member with a camera, cell phone, or any other device.**

The principal reserves the right to remove a cell phone or any electronic device from a student's possession if it is reported and determined that a student is utilizing the device inappropriately or irresponsibly. The phone will be returned to the parents/guardians during a mandatory conference that

will be scheduled after the phone is confiscated.

11. Harassment and Bullying

The Arts Academy faculty and community take harassment and bullying very seriously. All students are expected to behave with respect toward peers and to treat each other kindly.

12. Graffiti

Destruction of any part of the school by this means will be dealt with most severely on an individual basis in relation to the level of the offense and the destruction caused. The staff and students take pride in their environment and those who infringe on our commitment to safe and pleasant surroundings may have their special admission status rescinded.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying: Repeated intentional conduct that is directed at another student or students, in or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive, and that either (1) substantially interferes with a student's education, or (2) creates a hostile learning environment, or (3) substantially disrupts school operation. Bullying occurs with an interpersonal relationship where there is an imbalance of power (e.g., one person is physically larger, stronger, mentally quicker, or socially more powerful.) The conduct may be physical, psychological, verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic.

Cyber-bullying: Bullying that occurs through electronic communication devices, messages, tweets, blogs, photo and video sharing, chat rooms, dashboards, or websites.

Harassment: Unwelcome verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to a student or school community member's gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation, (known or perceived,) gender identity expression (known or perceived,) national origin, religion, disability, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status, and/or political beliefs. Harassment does not have to include the intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Any student who feels that he or she is being bullied or harassed verbally, sexually, physically, or online should report the incident to the climate manager, principal, counselor, or trusted teacher immediately. Faculty members are obligated to investigate any incident. Any student found guilty of bullying and harassment will face disciplinary consequences as defined by the School District of Philadelphia Code of Conduct.