

# **BERKLEY ACCELERATED Middle (6-8) and ADVANCED STUDIES (9-10)**

## **STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**

**Effective 2023**

# **BAMS/BASA**



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Berkley Accelerated is committed to inspiring our students to Believe in Better, to encourage them to aspire to higher learning, and challenge them to achieve their maximum individual potential while providing a supportive and safe educational environment.

"Believe in BETTER!"

## Berkley Accelerated-- Important Items to Know

### Character Counts! Be KIND.

Remember to be Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair, Caring, and a good Citizen.

Berkley Accelerated students are expected to:

- show courtesy and respect towards others; use acceptable language at all times, free of name calling, insults or profanity;
- ask staff for help as needed for conflict resolution;
- eat in designated areas only and keep the school clean and free of litter;
- interact with each other safely without pushing or roughness;
- and take care of school grounds, property and equipment.

Berkley Accelerated students take responsibility for the task of learning. Students are expected to:

- come to school and class on time, prepared to work and study;
- listen, follow directions, participate and cooperate;
- have all necessary school supplies;
- walk in a safe and orderly manner while at school;
- and leave toys, games, gum, laser pens and other items at home that distract from learning.

### DRESS CODE

#### 6<sup>TH</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE UNIFORM RULES:

**Uniforms do not allow for clothing with colored trim, stripes, embroidery, decoration.**

**Bottoms: SOLID Colored: Navy, Black, Traditional Denim, or Khaki/Tan Only**

- Walking shorts, slacks, skorts, skirts
- Must be **plain, solid-color navy, black or khaki/tan in color**
- **Must not have frays or holes.**
- Shorts/skirts must be mid-thigh or longer. "Mid-thigh" is determined by extending the arms to the sides of the body and finding the tip of the longest finger (**using normal posture**).

**Tops: Navy, Red or White **with collar** (solid colored)**

- Must have long or shortsleeves with collar
- Knit polo-type, Oxford or woven dress shirts with collar
- School t-shirts are acceptable (available through email orders)

#### 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> GRADE DRESS CODE RULES:

- Shorts/skirts must be mid-thigh or longer. "Mid-thigh" is determined by extending the arms to the sides of the body and finding the tip of the longest finger (**using normal posture**).
- Shirts/blouses/dresses must cover midriff, back and sides at all times; should be fastened with no visible cleavage or undergarments; and may have a small, less than 1 inch logo.
- Clothing must be the appropriate size for the student, not be oversized or undersized.
- The waist of the garment shall be worn so that the waistband is worn at the waist and not below the waist. Students may not wear baggy/saggy pants.
- Clothing that is too tight or too loose is not appropriate for school.
- School administrators will determine if clothing is appropriate for school and complies with school rules.

**Shoes and Socks: Must be safe and appropriate**

- Students may not wear crocs, flip flops, bedroom slippers, platforms or shoes with wheels.
- A manufacturer's logo is acceptable.
- Socks should match, be school appropriate, and may not extend above the knee.
- Students must wear shoes that are closed toe and closed heel at all times. Athletic shoes must be

worn if scheduled in Physical Education and/or Dance. **Changing shoes at school is not allowed.**

### Extreme Weather

On very cold days, students who walk, bike, etc. may need to wear sweatpants, etc over their school clothes on their way to/from school. However, any clothing that doesn't meet dress code requirements must be removed before school begins.

### Outer Garments: Jackets, sweaters, coats, etc...

- Jackets must zip **all the way down the front**.
- **No Hoodies** allowed of any type (Sweatshirts that pull over head and have a hood).
- Long sleeve button up shirts are not to be worn as an outer garment.
- May not be disruptive, distracting, display offensive language/symbols, etc..
- School staff may ask student to remove unacceptable jackets.
- Trench coats are not allowed on campus at any time.

### Students may NOT wear the following:

- Clothing that is not properly fastened
- Clothing or hairstyles that disrupt the orderly learning environment
- Clothing that is unlined sheer or unlined lace
- Clothing that is form fitting, leotard or spandex
- Cut-off pants, jeggings, short-shorts, overalls, or running shorts
- Visible undergarments, sleepwear or outer garments traditionally designed as undergarments such as boxer shorts or bras
- Outer garments or accessories (such as backpacks, jewelry, and purses) which have slogans, signs, symbols that:
  - Promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gang identification, weapons, or sexual behavior
  - Denigrate or promote discrimination for or against an individual or group on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion or gender
- Hats, bandannas, sweat bands, headgear, or other head coverings, inside the school building, except when approved by the principal
- Jewelry or accessories that may be used as weapons, such as chains, spiked jewelry or arm bands
- Combs, curlers, or hair picks
- Sunglasses inside any school building

Clothing and jewelry with writings or designs that depict prejudice, unlawful acts, tobacco, drugs, or alcohol are prohibited.

If you do not observe the dress/uniform code, your parents will be called to bring a change of clothes to you. If they are unable to bring the appropriate garment to you by 8:30am, students must change into provided school t-shirt and gym shorts from the uniform closet. Additionally, you will receive a minor infraction for not complying with the dress code.

**PIERCINGS:** For your child's safety, facial piercings, of any kind, should not be worn at school. If a parent allows a student to have a piercing, the parent is accepting the risk of injury if worn at school.

### SCHOOL DANCE DRESS CODE: (ALLOWABLE ATTIRE)

Bottoms: pants/jeans, shorts at appropriate length, no holes/rips

Tops: Shirts covering midriff, sleeveless shirts with at least a 2" wide strap

Dresses: appropriate fingertip length, sleeveless with at least 2" strap

**6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade: SHIRT ONLY DRESS-OUT DAYS:** *Fridays* are designated as shirt only dress out days for middle school students. Purchasing a BAMS Bucks Card will enable you to wear a **SHIRT** other than a standard school uniform shirt. No shirts with sayings of any kind are allowed. Some dress-out days are theme based such as sports day, beach day, etc. Students dressed inappropriately must change into school uniforms from the school uniform closet and will receive a dress code infraction.

**SCHOOL PICTURE DRESS CODE:** Middle School students wear school uniforms for traditional school pictures taken in the Fall of the school year as these are used for yearbook and official school business. Students may dress out of uniform for **spring** pictures; however, the dress code must still be observed: covering, appropriate length, etc.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

School attendance is mandatory. The expectation is to attend school every day, to arrive promptly and to remain throughout the scheduled hours of 7:55a.m. to 3:00p.m. All appointments are to be scheduled outside of school hours.

Our attendance policy states:

- **ALL ABSENCES ARE UNEXCUSED UNTIL A PARENT UPLOADS THE EXCUSED ABSENCE TO THE ONLINE REPORTING LINK-** Excuses must be uploaded within one school day of the absence.
- **Attendance Letter emailed home after**
  - 10 excused absences
  - Five (5) **Unexcused** absences
  - 10 unexcused absences in a 90-day calendar period.
- **Mandatory Attendance Parent Meeting** held at 10 unexcused absences in a 90-day period
  - In meeting: parent, student, school counselor
  - Intervention plan developed if needed
  - Attendance Probation Contract reviewed and signed
- School truancy is a serious offense that may result in court action and will be a cause for dismissal from Berkley Accelerated. Truancy is defined as a student that has an accumulative record of tardiness or has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day. Parents have five days from notification to submit documentation to change unexcused to excused absences otherwise students may be withdrawn.

**Notes for excused absences must be completed online via the parent absence reporting link.**

- **A student may be excused for a continued or repeated illness for up to ten (10) attendance days during a school year if parent provides a parent note.**
- After 10 excused parent notes, a doctor's verification will be required for any future excused absences for the remainder of the school year.

### **Excused absences and tardies include:**

- Personal illness, illness or death of immediate family
- funeral of family members
- religious holidays
- court ordered appearances

\*All other absences/tardies are considered unexcused

### **Participation in School Activities:**

**Students must be in attendance for at least the last four periods of school on the day of, or proceeding if event is over the weekend, of any special activity in order to attend the special activity (dance, sporting event, etc.)**

**BERKLEY ACCELERATED DOES NOT ACCEPT LATE WORK FOR CREDIT EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF AN EXCUSED ABSENCE.**

It is the **responsibility of the student** to get missed work on the day they return to class. Students have one day for each day of an **excused** absence to get missed assignments returned for credit.

### **TARDIES:**

Students are considered tardy if not seated in their 1<sup>st</sup> period classroom seat by the 8:00 am bell. The

following are procedures concerning tardies to school:

- Letter emailed home after three (3) **Unexcused** tardies in a semester.
- Parents are allowed to write two (2) notes as excused tardies to school in a semester.
- The criteria for determining an excused tardy shall be the same as an excused absence.
- Students will serve a silent lunch detention after three unexcused tardies in a semester.
- Mandatory parent conference and probation after five (5) **Unexcused** tardies and may be withdrawn after eight (8) **Unexcused** tardies in a semester.

### **CLASSROOM PROCEDURE & GENERAL CONDUCT:**

Berkley Accelerated has expectations of behavior that will provide for an orderly and safe school atmosphere. Berkley Accelerated follows the PCSB Code of Conduct. The PCSB Code of Conduct is read to all students and available on our website [Berkleymiddle.net/](http://Berkleymiddle.net/)

- Our goal is to develop students who are self-disciplined and able to make good judgments about acceptable behavior.
- Our philosophy is that no student should be allowed to disrupt the learning of another student.
- Berkley Accelerated utilizes a discipline policy which is explained to students by each individual teacher at the beginning of the school year.
- Rules and expectations for behavior are posted in the classroom.
- It is important for students to recognize they are responsible for their actions to and from school, during school hours, on the bus and at all school sponsored events.

### **GUM CHEWING:**

**Gum chewing is NOT ALLOWED.** Careless disposal of gum and candy in drinking fountains, on furniture and on floors presents sanitation and cleaning problems.

### **BUYING OR SELLING ITEMS:**

No items are to be bought or sold without the consent and approval of the principal's office. Items will be confiscated without consideration for monetary loss.

### **CELL PHONES and TELEPHONE CALLS:**

Telephones are located in the main office and in each classroom for emergency purposes only. Students may use the classroom or office phone to call parents/guardians with the permission of their teacher. Students are not to call parents from the classroom phone for illnesses. Those must be reported to the clinic and the clinic nurse will notify parents.

Parents and students **must not** text each other during school hours. While we allow students to have cell phones and other devices for after school needs at school, **they are to be turned completely off and in book bags at all times and not used at school.**

### **CONDUCT WHILE ON BERKLEY CHARTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAMPUS:**

Berkley Accelerated and Berkley Charter Elementary (BCE) are completely separate schools. Walkers who exit through Berkley Charter Elementary are to observe all BCE rules for conduct. Failure to act appropriately on the BCE campus will result in discipline and possibly being prohibited from their campus. Only walkers who live in adjacent neighborhoods or whose parents work at BCE are allowed to enter or leave via the Berkley Elementary Campus.

### **BACKPACKS:**

Students may carry a backpack and should strive to keep it clean and organized. Backpacks with wheels are only allowed for medical reasons. Backpacks must fit under desk and will not be allowed if they exceed the size requirement. **Only one book bag is allowed. Student items must all fit in their one book bag.** This includes water bottles and lunchboxes. Everything must be contained or attached to the one backpack allowed.

### **CAFETERIA/EATING AREA:**

Students may bring a lunch from home or order a school lunch each day. Lunch money should be paid online or turned in 1<sup>st</sup> period. Students who pay at school, must use an envelope for their lunch money. The student's name and ID number should be printed on the envelope.

**All students are required to either bring a lunch from home or order a school lunch.**

Eating is allowed only in a designated area. Students are expected to act responsibly while at lunch which includes cleaning their area before being dismissed from lunch.

### **FOOD AND DRINK POLICY (ADHERING TO THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH POLICY)**

The Berkley Accelerated Nutrition program has a heartfelt concern for the well-being and health of our students and our community. We believe that good nutrition is critical for maximum student achievement and meeting our student's educational goals. The school nutrition program is committed to serving the most nutritious meals to our students and providing nutrition education that will prepare students to choose a healthy lifestyle now and into the future.

In an effort to create the best options for student success, in order to support the nutrition program and in an effort to comply with USDA school dietary guidelines, Berkley Accelerated has set forth the following basic food and drink guidelines:

- Parents who wish to share a meal with their children at school, may bring outside (commercially prepared) food to share with their children; however, this food cannot be brought in the cafeteria, or any other area where students eat their school-prepared food. Office or administrative staff will direct parents to the area designated for these visits where the outside food can be enjoyed by parents and students. Parents must stay and eat with the student. Food cannot be "dropped off".
- Parents cannot bring outside (commercially prepared) food for any other student other than their child(ren).

### **DRINKS/CONTAINERS:**

**No glass, cups with straws, or canned drink or soda of any kind** should be brought to school by a student for any reason. All containers that are carried in book bag must stay in bookbag unless permission is given by the individual teacher. If a student brings a thermos in their lunch box, it must stay in their lunch box and not be used at any time except during their lunch time. **Water bottles must fit in a pocket of the student's book bag, may not be "squeezable", or have a straw.**

## SPORTS:

**9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Athletes must follow the FHSAA guidelines and contact the school they will be playing sports at for all deadlines and information. Contact Ms. Tapp for more information.**

### Middle School 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades Sports:

Before tryouts, athletes must have a completed physical **dated after June 1**, for the upcoming school year and the doctor's physical form must be turned in to the office or Athletic Director along with the State mandated concussion form signed by the parent. Each athlete is responsible for their own transportation to and from practices and games. Uniform rental is \$10 and uniforms must be returned at the end of the season or the full cost of the uniform must be paid.

- Students **cannot** make a team if discipline behavior probation is in effect and/or if they do not have a cumulative 2.0 GPA or higher as verified by administration.
- Students will be removed from the team if they are on discipline behavior probation as determined through administration.
- Athletes must be present at school for a minimum of the last four periods on game day.

## CONSEQUENCES OF POOR CHOICES ON CAMPUS, SCHOOL BUS, OR SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES:

Students who fail to meet Berkley Accelerated's positive behavior expectations will face certain consequences. If a student misbehaves, appropriate consequences may include:

- Parental Assistance (Parent Support Phone Calls)
- Office Intervention
- Detention or Work Detail
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of School Suspension or bus suspension - short term/long term
- Possible Law Enforcement Involvement
- Dismissal from Berkley Accelerated due to progressive discipline incidents and/or a serious breach of conduct

## BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Please refer to the **Polk County School Board Code of Conduct** regarding bullying and harassment.

At Berkley Accelerated, we are united to banish bullying. It is imperative to us that your child is provided a learning environment that is safe, secure and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. Our faculty has been trained to recognize the signs of bullying, how to quickly intervene to stop any unwanted behavior and report incidents.

Because bullying behaviors are learned, they can be unlearned. Efforts to make Berkley Accelerated a "bully-free" school include a school-wide character education curriculum that has been incorporated into all subject areas and grade levels and reporting procedures for students on our website and in the school office. Building character will help our students become more self-assured and productive citizens.

Additionally, students are offered a variety of clubs, sports and other activities in which to participate that will enable them to develop their personal skills and build confidence. These efforts and many more are used to make Berkley Accelerated a great school experience for your child..

### **Ways to Report Bullying:**

1. Submit a report on the Berkley Accelerated website: <http://schools.polk-fl.net/BAMS>
2. Report bullying to a teacher, school counselor and/or administrator.

## **STUDENT/PARENT FOCUS GRADE VIEWER**

All families are strongly encouraged to sign up for Student/Parent FOCUS Grade Viewer. This gives students and parents' opportunities to view their child's performance on assignments and assessments. In a nutshell, it gives you direct access to the teacher's grade book. Each student will receive his or her login information the first week of school.

## **HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to reinforce, preview and extend the classroom experience. With the understanding that children will work at different paces when doing homework, the following homework time frames have been developed:

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Up to 60 minutes nightly (Monday –Thursday)  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Up to 70 minutes nightly (Monday –Thursday)  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Up to 80 minutes nightly (Monday –Thursday)  
High School: Up to 90 minutes nightly (Monday –Thursday)

Parent Do's:

- Provide your child a quiet place to work
- Set a regular time for doing homework each day
- Check family email, classroom websites, and FOCUS grade viewer regularly

All parents and students may view the Code of Conduct and Parent Contract online at [berkleymiddle.net](http://berkleymiddle.net)  
A copy of the Parent Contract is also given to enrolling parent at mandatory parent enrollment meetings when enrolling students at Berkley Accelerated.

Please reach out to us with any questions or concerns!  
We are here to help you and make the school experience the best it can be.

### **Contacts:**

**School Phone: 863-984-2400**

**Campus Principal:** Jill Bolender

Email: [Jill.Bolender@weareberkley.net](mailto:Jill.Bolender@weareberkley.net)

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**School Counselor:** Carrie Tapp

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Berkley Accelerated is a "Drug Free Workplace"  
and

"An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer".

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School, except as provided by law.

The School shall comply with all state and federal laws, which prohibit discrimination and are designed to protect the civil rights of applicants, employees, and/or students, or other persons protected by applicable law.

The School shall admit students to programs and classes without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, marital status, disability or handicap or sexual orientation.