



Student/Family Handbook

Bulls Lead the Way!

Mission: Bennett Ranch is committed to a community grounded on positive relationships, high standards, and responsive teaching. Our learners will pursue pathways of passion based on **firm foundations, creativity, and grit.**

Vision: Bennett Ranch will develop independent, confident risk takers who are inspired to solve problems through resourceful thinking and collaboration.

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Parents/Guardians:

**Please review (in detail) the
Falcon Student Conduct and
Discipline Code.**

<https://www.d49.org/Page/497>

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ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Standards and Proficiencies

Falcon School District 49 has written Standards and Benchmarks for each curricular area in accordance with the Colorado Academic Standards. Standards are defined as specific statements about what students should know and be able to do. Standards focus on learning, instead of on teaching -- helping students become more aware of what they are learning and why. Standards and Benchmarks are available from your child's teacher.

Assessment and Feedback - Daily Usage for Student Success

A wide variety of assessment types are used throughout the year to form a "body of evidence" that indicates instructional growth. Assessment of student learning takes place for three reasons.

- **Instruction:** Assessments are used in the classroom to show how well a child is understanding classroom lessons and tasks. Both formal and informal assessments are used on a regular basis along with teacher observations.
- **Monitoring Student Learning:** Some tests help teachers learn about specific student needs so that appropriate instructional decisions can be made. Screening instruments help teachers decide about a child's readiness for advanced learning tasks or about a child's need for academic interventions. The *Acadience* assessment is administered to all kindergarten through third grade students, and Star 360 is administered school-wide.

Technology and Computer Use

As a staff, we continue to develop ways to implement teaching and learning technology to enhance the learning of all our students in alignment with the Falcon Zone's EmpowerFZ model. Our vision is for students:

- to use technology as a tool to direct their own learning
- to use technology to access information, apply it to solve problems, and create imaginative and innovative solutions to those problems
- to use technology and engage in our Learning Management System (Schoology)
- to use connectivity to access and to interact with worldwide information.

Through teaching students to use technology, we provide additional support for students, which enhances their academic achievement, motivation, and self-directed learning.

Colorado School Assessment Program

The Colorado Model Content Standards are the foundation for state assessments in English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies (Grade 4) and Science (Grade 5). These standardized tests were developed jointly by CMAS (Colorado Measures of Academic Success) and PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers).

These standards are expectations that specify what students should know at particular points in their education. As a result, CMAS provides a series of snapshots of student achievement as students move through grades 3-10. For detailed information about CMAS, visit the CDE website at: www.cde.state.co.us and click on assessment.

Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT):

Our third graders take the Cognitive Abilities Test. This test can be an indicator for Gifted Education.

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READ Plans

In Falcon School District 49, a READ Plan is written for students who are not meeting grade-level reading proficiencies in grades K-3. The Colorado Reading To Ensure Academic Development Act (Colorado READ Act) was passed by the Colorado Legislature during the 2012 legislative session. The READ Act focuses on K-3 literacy, assessment, and individual plans for students reading below grade level.

While the classroom teacher initiates this plan, the READ plan is developed and supported by a team—the parents, school administrator, and other staff as needed. Each member of the team has a role to play in supporting the student's literacy success. No member of the team, working alone, can guarantee academic success. By working together, we increase each student's literacy achievement.

MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports)

The MTSS Team is a team of educators and parents who develop strategies and interventions to meet the academic, behavioral, and/or emotional needs of every student in the regular education classroom. The framework of MTSS utilizes high quality evidence-based instruction, intervention, and assessment practices to ensure that every student receives the appropriate level of support to be successful.

Any staff member or parent who has concerns about a student's performance is encouraged to refer the student to MTSS.

Ongoing meetings are held, at least once monthly, where concerns are discussed, progress is monitored, and strategies and interventions are designed.

The MTSS Team may consist of the following:

- Regular Education Teacher
- Principal or Dean of Students
- Counselor
- Parents
- Other Staff that May Provide Unique Insights to Help the Student
 - A Special Education Teacher,
 - Social Worker
 - Speech Therapist
 - School Psychologist
 - School Nurse
 - Other Personnel

Promotion and Retention

Promotion and retention shall be based on all factors that contribute to the benefit of each individual student. The principal will take into consideration teacher and counselor recommendations when determining the need for retention of a student. Additional information regarding district policy on this subject can be found in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

Report Cards

Report cards are sent home after the end of each quarter. Please review report cards with your child and make goals for achievement for the upcoming grading period. Any time you have questions about your child's progress, we will be happy to schedule a conference.

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ATTENDANCE

School Hours

School officially starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:10 p.m.

Our office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR STUDENT TO SCHOOL BEFORE 7:45 A.M. because THERE IS NO SUPERVISION. Students aren't permitted on school property before 7:45 unless they are in a supervised program with a staff member. At 7:45, children will enter the building through the front doors and go directly to their classrooms. Breakfast is served from 7:30-7:55.

Student Attendance/Tardy Regulations—Board of Education Policy

One criterion of a student's success in school is regular and punctual attendance. Frequent absences may lead to poor academic work, lack of social development, and possible academic failure. Regular attendance is of utmost importance for school interest, social adjustment, and scholastic achievement. No single factor may interfere with a student's progress more quickly than frequent tardiness or absences.

According to state law, it is the obligation of every parent/guardian to ensure that every child under his/her care and supervision receives adequate education and training and, if of compulsory attendance age, attends school.

Each year, the Board establishes the school attendance period by adopting a school calendar. Students are expected to be in attendance in accordance with the district-adopted calendar.

Parents will be expected to take the responsibility for determining whether it is safe to send their child to school due to severe weather.

Continuity in the learning process and social adaptation are seriously disrupted by excessive absences. In most situations, the work missed cannot be made up adequately. Students who have good attendance generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are more employable after leaving school. For these reasons, the Board believes that a student must satisfy two basic requirements in order to earn full class credit: 1) satisfy all academic requirements and 2) exhibit good attendance habits, as stated in this policy.

Absences occur any time a student misses a class, is more than five minutes late to class without permission, is truant, or fails to follow correct check-out/in procedures. In order to deliver the quality education expected by the community, students must attend classes on a regular basis and remain for the entire school day.

Absence Regulations

Elementary students will be allowed **10 excused absences** per year. Absences will be documented in half- or full-day increments. Once students have exceeded the number of excused absences, a doctor's, dentist's, etc. note may be required for subsequent absences or the absence may be considered unexcused. After an accumulation of 3 unexcused or 7 days of absence for elementary students, parents will receive a letter notifying them of the district's attendance concerns, and an administrative review of the student's attendance record and IEP (if applicable) will occur. Students earning more than 4 unexcused absences per month, or 10 unexcused absences per any school year, may be referred for truancy.

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Excused Absences

Excused absences are defined as:

- Absences because of temporary illness or injury.
- A student who is absent for an extended period due to physical, mental, or emotional disability.
- A student who is pursuing a work-study program under the supervision of the school.
- A student who is attending any school-sponsored activity or activities of an educational nature with advance approval from administration.
- Absences by those who are in the custody of court or law enforcement authorities.
- Those determined by school administration to be excusable, such as doctor's appointments or juvenile court appearances

District 49, and Bennett Ranch Elementary, will follow district procedures and guidelines regarding the number of tardies and absences accumulated by a student as deemed appropriate. Phone calls and letters may be utilized as part of our restorative process to help encourage solutions to attendance struggles.

Extensive excused absences may require verification from the appropriate doctor/dentist/ agency/etc. **Parents should notify the appropriate attendance office within 48 hours (excluding weekends) when their child will not be in school.** Students are expected to make up work and will be allowed two school days to make up work for each day of absence (i.e., if a student is absent for 2 days, s/he will be allowed 4 days to make up work). All major projects are due on the day specified.

Family vacations during school time are strongly discouraged, as they may result in the total student absences exceeding the specified limit.

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that is not covered by one of the exceptions listed above. Each unexcused absence shall be entered on the student's record in PowerSchool.

In accordance with the law, the district may impose academic penalties, which relate directly to classes missed while unexcused. The administration shall develop regulations to implement appropriate penalties. Students and parents/guardians may petition the Board of Education for exceptions to this policy or the accompanying regulations, provided that no exception shall be sustained if the student fails to abide by all requirements imposed by the Board as conditions for granting such exception.

Prearranged Absences

Absences because of doctor's appointments, juvenile court appearances, or family trips scheduled during the year **MUST** be pre-arranged through the main office whenever possible.

Parents should plan vacation for times when school is not in session.

A written note from the parent/guardian must accompany the student. It should include the length and the reason for the absence. A request for a prearranged absence should be made for at least a period of time equal to the length of time the student will miss school (i.e., one day absent = one day notice).

Tardiness

Tardiness is defined as the appearance of a student without proper excuse after the scheduled time that a class begins. **Because of the disruptive nature of tardiness and the detrimental effect on the rights of the non-tardy student to uninterrupted learning, penalties shall be imposed for excessive tardiness.** Parents/guardians shall be notified of all penalties regarding tardiness.

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Late Pick Up of Students

All students should be picked up from school at the conclusion of our dismissal period. This helps to provide consistency for children and staff.

While we recognize that situations may arise that are outliers, all students should be picked up no later than 3:25 on a consistent basis. Additional communications may occur to help find solutions between the Administration Team, parents, and students if necessary.

COMMUNICATION

Communication Between School & Parents

We love being a part of the team that is helping to fulfill the maximum potential of each student and truly believe that "Bulls Lead the Way!"

To help achieve this motto, we encourage open communication between teachers, staff, and parents at all times. Coordination between all stakeholders, sharing solutions, and making appointments when necessary are all important factors that can positively impact student success.

Reaching Staff by Telephone & Email

In order to speak with a staff member at Bennett Ranch Elementary, we ask that you call 495-5460 and, when prompted, enter the four-digit extension of the person you are trying to reach. You may also contact staff members via email, as this may lead to a faster response.

Please recognize that teachers are spending the vast majority of their day planning for instruction and directly teaching students. Responses will take place in a timely manner as soon as possible. If there is something that requires more immediate attention, please contact our front office directly.

Visiting the School

Parents are an important part of our school. We invite you to visit school at any time. If you would like to see a specific activity or discuss a specific aspect of the school program, the principal or other staff members will be happy to meet with you.

However, classroom teachers are unable to discuss your child's progress during instructional time.

Please make an appointment during non-instructional time should you want to confer with the teacher. If you would like to eat lunch with your child, please notify the cafeteria or office in advance so that you may be included in our morning lunch count. Children not enrolled at Bennett Ranch Elementary may not visit the school unless accompanied by an adult. Since small children, particularly infants, tend to distract students, we ask that parents/guardians not bring them while visiting classrooms.

All visitors are required to check in at the front office with a state issued (non-military) ID before going to learning areas. For the safety of our students and for quick, visual verification, you will be asked to wear a disposable name tag during your time inside the school.

Thursday and Take Home Folders

Students will bring home reminders, school communication, and class work in folders on Thursdays. Please see your child's teacher regarding their system for communication.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

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Two conferences will be held during the school year. The first set of conferences will be in October; the second set of conferences will be in February. These conferences provide an opportunity to discuss your child's progress with the classroom teacher. **All parents are requested to attend.** Feel free to call the school and make an appointment with the teacher, counselor, Dean of Students, or Principal any time the need arises. Only when a child feels that there is understanding, appreciation, and active cooperation between home and school can each student do their best work.

FUNCTIONS AND EVENTS

Parties

We are happy to help your child celebrate their birthday in the classroom! If you would like your child to provide a small gift to the class on their special day, they are welcome to do so. Any edible birthday treats must follow the District Wellness Policy guidelines.

Schools may only have one day per quarter for parties. Therefore, those days are set aside for our Fall, Winter, Spring, and end-of-year parties. You can visit the [Nutrition Services / Wellness Policy Overview](#) website for additional details.

Field Trips

Field trips are educationally sound when they are planned within the objectives of the class. Such trips are encouraged as a means of expanding the educational opportunities for our students. All trips must be approved by the administration. Students participating in a field trip shall at all times be under the supervision of a teacher/chaperone, and acceptable classroom conduct shall be expected of the students at all times. All school regulations will be observed and enforced.

Parents are welcome on field trips as chaperones, but we ask that you leave siblings at home, as they can interfere with your responsibility to supervise the students. Any volunteer must go through the D49 background check process and [fulfill the requirements required by District 49](#). Parents may not transport students to or from any field trips, with exceptions being made by school administration only.

HEALTH SERVICES

Registered Nurses

Due to an increase in enrollment and the number of schools in the district, nursing services will become more consultative. Registered Nurses will only be in the buildings to provide health services mandated by the State of Colorado, such as: immunizations, special education assessments, and staffings. They will coordinate the vision and hearing screenings and be available to teachers, parents, and students when there are specific health concerns that require assistance.

Health Assistants

Each elementary school has a health assistant in the office for seven hours a day. Health assistants are not nurses. They only have received training in basic first aid, CPR, and medication administration.

Medications

If your child must have medication of any type, including over-the-counter medicine given during school hours, you have a few choices:

- You may obtain a school medication form from the school and have your doctor indicate on the

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form the drug, dose, and time to be given. On this form, a signature by you and your child's physician is required. BRES also needs a pharmacy-labeled bottle containing the medication and instructions on how the medication should be given.

- You may come to the school and give the medicine to your child at the pre-approved appropriate time.
- You may discuss with your doctor an alternative schedule for medication, so that it may be given outside of school hours.

Students are not allowed to carry any type of medication with them, or in their backpack, at any time, including for field trips.

Please remember that the only way we can dispense medication at school is with a school medication form filled out and signed by you and your child's physician. The medication must come to school in a prescription-labeled container.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

Volunteer Opportunities

We welcome and appreciate volunteers at Bennett Ranch. Please contact your child's teacher or school office if you can share some time with us. Volunteers are required to go through the district volunteer process. The online volunteer background check can be completed [at this page on the District 49 website](#).

Volunteer opportunities can include, and are not limited to:

- Classroom volunteers coordinated with the classroom teacher.
- Watch D.O.G.S.
- Class presentations coordinated with the classroom teacher.
- Other coordinated events.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

The Bennett Ranch PTA promotes parent/guardian involvement in the education of children and a close relationship between parents/guardians and the school. Your membership supports not only the school, but also your own children. The PTA meets regularly and sponsors many fundraising activities and special events. For membership information, please come by the school office. Look for additional information that will come home with your children throughout the school year about the many wonderful PTA activities for parents as well as students.

School Accountability Committee (SAC)

Our SAC is a group of parents, staff members, and non-parents who represent the community's point of view. The SAC concerns itself with the improvement of education in general, studies the educational needs of our school, monitors the implementation of our Unified Improvement Plan, and advises the principal. The SAC works with the principal and staff members to achieve excellence in education for all of our children. The Firebird Nation Campus SAC meets quarterly. Your involvement is welcomed. For more information, call the school office.

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DISTRICT INFORMATION AND POLICIES

District Office Phone Numbers

You may contact the District 49 Central Office by calling 495-1100. If you wish to talk to somebody in the District 49 Transportation office, you can reach them at 495-1159.

Board of Education

The Falcon School District 49 Board of Education meets on a monthly basis. You can get more information, including meeting dates, Board Policies, and more by going to the [BOE Website](#).

Child Abuse

Any school employee who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect must report this immediately. The school principal or counselor must report the suspected abuse to the El Paso County Department of Human Services. The school is barred from contacting the parents before the authorities are called.

Non-Discrimination

The Board of Education is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in relation to race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex (which includes marital status), sexual orientation (which includes transgender), disability, or need for special education services. Respect for the dignity and worth of each individual shall be paramount in the establishment of all policies by the Board and in the administration of those policies by the administration.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is recognized as a form of sex discrimination, and this is a violation of the laws which prohibit sex discrimination. A learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment shall be maintained. It shall be a violation of policy for any school district employee to harass another staff member, or student, or for students to harass other students, or an employee, through conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

Inclement Weather

Parents may receive emails or texts at home and work regarding school closures and delays. Look for these options when registering through the Parent Portal or via the [D49 Weather Conditions website](#).

School Records

Records for each student enrolled at Bennett Ranch Elementary are maintained in the school office. These confidential records contain test data and achievement test results, and are open to a child's parents upon request.

Cafeteria Procedures

For the 2021-2022 school year, all breakfast and lunch meals are free. However, if a student wants an additional lunch or milk, they must have money in their account to pay for these items. Please see the lunch menu for these additional costs. Adults who wish to eat lunch at the school must pay for their meal.

Even though meals are free for this school year, the school continues to strongly encourage families to complete "Free and Reduced Lunch" forms if they qualify. This helps our district to maintain an accurate picture of the needs of our neighborhood families and adjust funding as needed. You can easily obtain more information about the Free and Reduced Lunch Program on their website and/or sign up for the

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program by going to PaySchool Central at www.payschoolcentral.com.

SAFETY

Address, Phone & Other Emergency Information

It is vital that every child have on file **current emergency phone numbers where parents can be reached**. Please designate an individual for the school to call in the event of an emergency if a parent cannot be reached. Contact the school office if your address or phone, or the name and phone of the person you want contacted in an emergency, changes during the school year. A change of student information form is available for your convenience in the office should you need to update information.

Child Custody

In most cases, when parents are divorced, both Mom and Dad continue to have equal rights where their children are concerned. If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please bring a copy to the office. **Unless your court order is on file with us, we must provide equal rights to both parents.**

Emergency Procedure Drills

Fire drills, tornado drills, and lock-down drills will be conducted throughout the school year. Please remind your student that the purpose of these drills is to ensure the safety of all students, staff, and visitors, and appropriate behavior is expected at all times.

Injuries

If a student is injured, it shall be his/her responsibility to inform a teacher or the office of the injury as soon as it occurs. **All head injuries, of any consequence, and illness at school will be reported to parents.** An attempt to contact parents/guardians will be made first. If there is no response, the emergency number will be called, followed by the hospital if necessary. Please ensure expedient and proper care for your child by keeping your work and home telephone numbers current in the school office.

Playground Rules

Children will generally participate in recess daily, unless there is precipitation or the windchill temperature is extreme. Children should dress appropriately for cold/wet weather. Other playground rules include:

- Respect and obey adults in charge.
- Play constructively and respectfully with others.
- Activities prohibited on the playground for safety reasons are:
 - Fighting
 - Deliberate injury to another
 - Leaving the designated playground area without permission from an adult on duty
 - Unsafe use of playground equipment
 - Improper language, name-calling, or harassing

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Behavior Standards

We ask that every parent/guardian review in detail the Falcon Student Conduct and Discipline Code. <https://www.d49.org/Page/49>

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Homework

Bennett Ranch views homework as an integral part of the school experience. Regular homework assignments help students learn good study habits, such as responsibility, perseverance, self-discipline, and time management.

There are three basic types of homework:

- Daily reading - may include silent, oral, or shared family reading
- Daily practice and review - may include drill, practice, and review in spelling, math, or other content area
- Assignments and projects - may include a variety of assignments by the classroom teacher in addition to the completion of unfinished regular classroom work

When a child is home ill for more than one day, please feel free to communicate with your child's teacher. Students will have two days to make up work for every one day of excused absence.

Pets

For safety reasons, animals are **not permitted** on school grounds. Dogs and other small animals may be gentle at home but unpredictable at school when confronted by a large number of unfamiliar children. Parents/guardians, we ask that you do not bring dogs to school events, such as track day, or when dropping off or picking up children.

Lost and Found

Please clearly label all items of clothing, lunch boxes, backpacks, and school supplies. A lost and found section is located near our commons. Small items, such as glasses, keys, jewelry, etc. are kept with the office secretary. If you cannot find an item, please check the lost and found area. Unclaimed items are donated to a charitable organization at the end of each quarter.

Textbooks and School Supplies

Textbooks are furnished by the school district. It is the responsibility of the student to take good care of these books. A fine will be assessed for lost or unreasonably damaged books. A list of suggested school supplies for students is available in the school office or online at www.d49.org/BRES. These supplies are listed by grade level. Individual teachers may have additional items needed for their respective classes throughout the school year.

Toys and Personal Items

Students should not bring toys or other personal items to school. Items will be confiscated if they cause problems or distractions and disrupt the overall educational process. These items will be held by the teacher, or sent to the main office, until picked up by a parent. If it is necessary to bring a cell phone to school, the phone should be turned off and in the student's backpack, and only used before and after school.

Bikes, Skates, Skateboards

Students may ride bikes to and from school, but **not on school grounds**. Once on school grounds, bikes must be walked by students to the bike rack and locked up.