



Ben Gamla Charter, an "A" School

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Sharon Miller, Principal

Dear Parents of 5th and 6th Grade Students:

Toward the end of the 2016-2017 school year, we invited all prospective parents to learn about the increased rigor of curriculum and the expectations the District, the State, and our Board have for our upper grade students. The greatest change will be for the 6th grade students as their course work now carries a credit in each of the core subjects. If a student fails any core subject for the year (2 quarters or more), he or she will be required to remediate the course online. He or she cannot matriculate (within a public school) to the next grade in that particular subject until such time as the course has been successfully remediated (earning a passing grade).

Following the presentations, parents from the 5th and 6th grades approached me with strong interest for a trip to Washington D.C. We have made this trip many, many times over the years and have enjoyed providing our students with a live view of history. To that end, I am most happy to extend my efforts and attempt to make this a possibility. In order to maintain a feasible and equitable cost, we need at least 50 students to attend. Obviously, this will be an elective opportunity. The cost has never exceeded \$1500. It includes transportation to and from our school, the roundtrip flight, a coach touring bus in D.C., all meals, each museum/attraction entrance ticket, and the hotel room (4 students per hotel room; they will make a list of 4 others with whom they prefer to room). We will ensure that one of the names your child lists will be in his or her room. Those who attend will be exempt from the homework assigned during their trip. Please be mindful that the meals are not kosher and we are unable to network with kosher purveyors due to our busy, packed days. There is always, however, a vegetarian choice and a pasta that our students can order.

Parents and/or family members are not permitted to chaperone overnight trips. Our school personnel and one or two administrators will accompany the students. This may be your child's first extended time away from home. No doubt, the students have an amazing time. We use a company that is approved by the District. It is Sonshine Tours. They have worked with us over the years and they have arranged our 4th grade trip to St. Augustine trip each year. Safety is number 1! Our students are grouped beautifully and our staff does not leave their side. While on the tour bus, our guide will provide a wealth of information for our students. During this time, the students can elect to sit with any friend they so desire. In addition, we do permit the students shopping time the last 15-20 minutes in the museums/attractions we visit, and once again, our personnel is placed in and out of said areas.

Please be mindful that our discipline policy applies to the D.C. trip just as it does for any of our field trips. It behooves you as parents to read the policy and have a frank and serious discussion with your child. We never want to see one of our families lose money. Still, we will not take a child out of town if he or she is unable to behave appropriately. Trust is key. Students are encouraged to bring their cellular phones and their cameras if desired, but we are not responsible for the loss or breakage of either.

For now, we can safely say that we will travel during the second half of May. This trip is a fabulous opportunity for our students and one they will remember for a lifetime. They will be mesmerized with the plethora of exciting events, famous institutions, and our American History which our guide will share as we tour statues, museums, and other areas of interest. We will also spend a half a day at the Holocaust Museum. Updates will be forthcoming; deposits and fee schedules will be included as well. I will share the aforementioned just as soon as I receive the same. Please be patient. For the time being, if you plan to send your child, start saving a little each week. It will ease the burden as we near the adventure.

Warmest Regards,

Sharon Miller,

Principal, Ben Gamla Charter School