



A Tribute to Benjamin Chaleki

Once upon a time, on a Tuesday morning in September 2005, a quiet and calm young man named Benjamin Chaleki entered the halls of Grymes. He ventured down to Mrs. Lower's Kindergarten room and began his academic adventure. By the end of the year he made many new friends and "came out of his shell". (Mrs. Lower's exact words – I went and looked at his report card!) Ben progressed from first through fifth grades and was unanimously viewed as a bright and kind child. I asked his former lower school teachers to give me one word to describe Ben, and here are the results:

Shy

Intelligent

Responsible

Serious

Responsible

And here we are at 8th grade. Ben arrives at Mrs. Handlesman's homeroom class ready to start the day. He enjoys just being with the guys and likes to improve his manual dexterity by building anything out of anything and even practicing Ninja kicks! He is careful though, after hitting his head on the class trip. In Ms. Bost's English class he wrote at least 10 speeches before settling on his topic of lessons learned from nature. His speech was enjoyed by all and afterwards I googled tree house designs! He's a good writer who likes stories and is fondly called BenJAMin. Sra. Laub notes that Ben has grown academically and she enjoyed traveling with him over Spring Break. He was shy at first, but then opened up and was happy to provide any extra assistance. She did note that he seemed to worry about losing his passport – he even mentioned that his Mom excels at keeping track of important documents and where is she when you need her? In Mr. McLeod's history class, Ben is a scholar and a gentleman. His paper on Robert Wagner and John L. Lewis showcased his systematic and clear writing. Mrs. Burkett knows that overall, Ben is a great science student. He even has his own Science Blog! Sometimes he seems to be unorganized and a day late. But he's redeemed himself by helping her figure out how to use her microscope. He acts like he doesn't know what's going on, but she knows he really does! Geometry with Ms. Roche provides more opportunities for Ben to quietly acknowledge his understanding of difficult topics. He easily grasps the concepts and tries his best to stay awake after lunch and recess. He tries not to be "tardy pants", but often is. Mrs. Stakem finds Ben to be a strong player who understands notes and rhythms, even while he is being distracted! For the Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* performance, Ben was Sir Andrew, the goofball suitor who doesn't stand a chance with Olivia. His fencing skills were outstanding! In Art class, Mrs. Paschal appreciates Ben's meticulous work – he is careful, gives attention to detail, and is respectful and kind, all at the same time! Coaches Little and Nelson know they can count on Ben in P.E. class. He was an enthusiastic soccer player in the fall and was elected Captain by his peers. His Spirit Award was well deserved. Ben was also a great addition to the winter basketball team.

What is the essence of Ben? Calmness, stability, and balance. Like a balanced equation where we "solve for Ben" instead of "solving for x". In fact, here is my version of "Solving for Ben".

Best wishes to this talented young man and please keep in touch with all of us here at Grymes!

Congrats!
ms. Roche