



BENJAMIN BANNEKER

Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to Learn **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

14800 Perrywood Drive • Burtonsville, MD 20866-1899 Phone: 240-740-6250 • Fax: 301-879-1032
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bannekerm/



October 7th, 2026



Benjamin Banneker Essay Contest!



SPEAK YOUR MIND & Win up to \$25! (Prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place)

Got strong opinions on school rules or social media? Want to tell a story about AI or reimagine a historical genius in the 21st century? Here is your chance to get heard and get rewarded!

THE CHALLENGE

Write a **400-word essay** responding to **ONE** of the five prompts below:

- 📱 **Phone Policy:** Should our school ban cell phones completely? Write a letter to the principal with your stance and solutions.
- 🚀 **Benjamin Banneker Reimagined:** Imagine Benjamin Banneker alive today, how would his math and tech skills make him a 21st-century innovator?
- 🤖 **Controlled by AI:** Write a story about a day where an AI assistant makes all your decisions. Do you keep it on or shut it down?
- 🌐 **Social Media Verdict:** Is social media helpful or harmful for teens? Take a stand and share your #1 rule for healthy screen time.
- 🎉 **Hispanic Heritage Month:** Highlight an influential Hispanic figure or tradition. Explain their contributions and why celebrating diverse backgrounds makes our community stronger.

CONTEST DETAILS

- **Prize:** \$25 Gift Card awarded to the top entry! \$15 for 2nd place and \$10 for 3rd.
- **Who Can Enter:** Open to all middle school students (Grades 6–8)
- **Word Limit:** Around 400 words (400–425 range)
- **Deadline:** Due by October 21st
- **How to Submit:** Email a copy of your essay as a PDF to Mr. Harrison (Tony_R_Harrison@mcpsmd.org)

HOW TO WIN

Becoming Banneker: Rooted in Legacy. Growing Through Excellence



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Judges will be looking for:

1. **Clear Focus:** Directly answer your chosen prompt.
2. **Strong Arguments & Creativity:** Use great examples and details.
3. **Good Organization:** Clear intro, body, and conclusion.
4. **Clean Writing:** Check your spelling and word count!

Questions? See Mr. Harrison (Tony_R_Harrison@mcpsmd.org) room 225 D