



## A TRUE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL

Our location is perfect – we’re just minutes from Orlando’s downtown cityscape and also share a city block with Boone High School. But, did you know that the student population zoned for Blankner lives within a 2-mile radius of our campus? Yes! Everyone lives so close, there are no daily buses that transport students to our school. Instead, you’ll find our students getting to school the old-fashioned way – either by walking or riding their bikes. That’s why we can call ourselves a true neighborhood school.



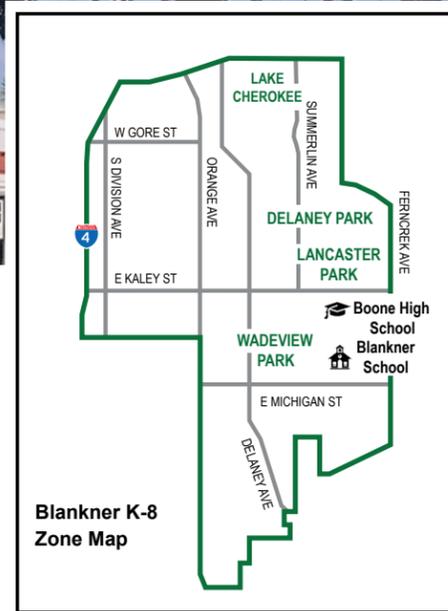
Hello, and welcome to Blankner School. As you can see, I have big shoes to fill as your principal, but I couldn’t be more grateful to be a part of this special community. A little about me...I am an Orlando native, now raising a family of my own in the neighborhood. This school is truly my home away from home; yes, you guessed it, I am an alumni of both Blankner School and Boone High School. That’s why when I was offered the opportunity to return to my alma mater as principal, it was an opportunity I simply could not resist. And I’m not the only familiar face around

here – many of our teachers and staff are also returning Bulldog and Brave alumni, which is a testament to how much these local schools mean to each of us.

Blankner is a multi-generational school, and we’ve worked hard to preserve our traditions here. It is our goal to provide your children with a learning experience that extends well beyond academics – we want it to be one that is rich in values too. I thank you for entrusting us with your children’s education, and we look forward to seeing your family on our campus soon. Until then, Go Bulldogs!

*J. Kreil*

Dr. Junella Kreil, Principal



## BLANKNER BY THE NUMBERS

### Our Stats

Students – 1,058  
Staff – 80

### Our Standards

P – Perseverance  
A – Accountability  
W – Working Hard  
S – Supporting Others

### Advanced Coursework

Physical Science Honors • Earth Space Honors  
Algebra 1 Honors • Geometry Honors  
High School Spanish 1 • High School Spanish 2

### Extracurricular Opportunities

National Junior Honor Society  
Student Government Association • Chess Club  
American Sign Language • Coding Club  
Best Buddies Club • Elementary Chorus  
Elementary Recorder Club • Traffic Patrols  
School Store • Smile Mile Club

# COME BE PART OF OUR STORY

## BLANKNER SCHOOL K-8

In 1956, situated on the corner of Kaley Street and Summerlin Avenue, Francis Blankner Elementary School was born. The school was named after the first woman ever elected to the Orange County School Board (OCPS). Though Blankner began like any other school, it had one memorable differentiator – Eileen Johnson, its founding principal. She was the daughter of an Orlando police officer with a deep compassion for helping children, so much that she dedicated nearly a half century to OCPS. Johnson was often found in her office, sitting in a rocking chair with a handful of students, listening to them read books. She wanted Blankner to feel like home – a place where children felt nurtured and safe.

It was this foundation of great love and respect that helped position Blankner to become one of the most highly-sought after academic institutions in Central Florida. For decades, the school has attracted best-in-class teachers and staff, including another legacy woman – Polly Roper, who was a traditional Southern belle with a pinch of grit. In 1994, when she joined Blankner as principal, she noticed parents were transitioning their children to private schools in the fourth grade to secure middle school placement. At the time, the area’s zoned middle school was located quite a distance away, and for some parents, it lacked the homey environment Blankner families had come to love.

Now, stand-alone middle schools had been prominent across the nation up until the 1990s, when studies began showing declined academic and behavioral performance in these “junior

high” schools. Yet, smaller schools that had maintained a K-8 configuration were posting upward results. The discovery? Students performed better when the transition to junior high was eliminated. They preferred to remain on a familiar campus and continue their existing friendships. Entering sixth grade was viewed as a promotion to “top dog” status, which only boosted their confidence and sense of responsibility. The concept made sense, and that’s when parents began rallying alongside Roper for their own K-8 school. It was no easy endeavor, but in 2000, Blankner was approved as the first fully-zoned K-8 school in Orange County.



At first, the school didn’t have many resources for its middle school students, but as the years progressed, specialized programs and sports teams were slowly added; parents began choosing Blankner over private schools; and soon, their vision materialized with a brand new K-8 facility built on Mills Avenue, adjacent to Boone High School. The location was brilliant. Boone Varsity football

players began reading to 2nd grade students; Blankner eighth grade students were taking AP courses for high school credit; and all of a sudden, children from both schools were now benefiting from a K-12 campus setting.

Our story is one filled with gratitude. Blankner would not be what it is today without the leadership, vision and heart of those generations that came before us. They represent an integral part of our 60-year heritage, and inspire us to continue building upon this great legacy we call BLANKNER.





## ATHLETICS

High fives. Roaring cheers. Sports have the incredible ability of bringing everyone together for the sheer love of the game. The deep bonds created through practices and games are connections that often carry on well through the high school years. Athletics teach our students discipline, character and teamwork – valuable lessons that can be applied both on and off the field.

Blankner offers a variety of competitive sports for its middle school students, specifically: soccer, volleyball, basketball and track. And we don't mean to brag, but we do have a pretty good record. In fact, we've won nearly 25 division championships since our middle school sports programs launched...and our boys volleyball team? Well, they took home the title of Undefeated District Champions three consecutive years. Now that's some Bulldog pride!



## THE ARTS

Though Blankner has a middle school smaller than most, our arts program offerings are actually one of the largest. If you've ever seen our student artwork hanging in the halls, you know just how incredible our artistic talent is. That's why we are able to offer three-tiered levels of art study for our middle school students. Our young artists often feature their work at a variety of juried competitions, including the renown Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival.

We also offer a wide array of music programs – orchestra, band, guitar, chorus and uniquely, steel drums. Sometimes our students even have the opportunity of performing with high school level orchestras. And our drama team? Be sure to keep an eye out for their hit musical performed each Spring. We provide the show as a free performance for our community...and they sure know how to pack out the house and support our students!



## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

### Digital 1:1 Learning

In Fall 2018, Blankner is slated to become a Digital 1:1 school. What does that mean exactly? The initiative aims to provide every middle school student with a laptop; but know that digital learning is more than just providing a laptop. Think of it like a personalized education where students can choose the time, place, method and pace in which they learn.

### AAIM

The Advanced Academic Instruction Model (AAIM) program is designed for gifted students that require educational experiences different from their peers. Its mission is to create programs that better meet the unique cognitive and social needs gifted students have. Blankner is the only educational facility in all of Orange County with a dedicated AAIM program. Eligibility for the AAIM program is based on teacher referral and OCPS's portfolio process.

### Love Pantry

We proudly participate in Central Florida's Love Pantry program, which seeks to provide resources to families in need. Every year, families of Blankner generously donate gently-used backpacks and uniform clothing to support our students with limited resources. We believe by pulling our resources together, all of our students benefit in the end.



## DEDICATED PARENTS

Have you heard the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child?" It's true. Parenting is more than parents and grandparents. It's the extended family, our neighbors, friends and community too. We all play an important role in our children's lives.

That is why Blankner has such an active Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA). From book fairs to campus beautification to a classic talent show, the opportunities to become involved are endless! We have an amazing community of supportive parents that love rolling up their sleeves and getting in the middle of it all...so much, that Blankner has ranked first in Orange County's Southwest Community for logging the most volunteer hours. Whoop!

In addition to volunteer support, Blankner became the first grade school program in Central Florida to establish a private foundation, which helps financially supplement resources for our school. The Blankner School Foundation is our way of ensuring that Blankner has what it needs to deliver an outstanding educational experience for all of our students, regardless of public funding. It has no affiliation to OCPS.

Has it worked? Well, we've raised and funded over \$500,000 in projects since its launch. See those computer labs, SMART boards, athletic uniforms, musical instruments and that awesome elementary playground? Those were all purchased by the Blankner School Foundation.



*Blankner Teachers  
Preparing Breakfast*

## WHY WE THINK UNIFORMS MATTER

Did you know school uniforms have proven to reduce distractions? Even raise test scores? Studies show that uniforms help students take pride in their appearance; and when students feel proud of who they are, we believe they perform better at what they do. Blankner is one of the few schools in Orange County that requires an uniform dress code. It's our way of setting the standard from the minute students wake up to the moment they step on our campus. Every Friday, you'll also see our students showing their school pride by wearing Blankner spirit shirts. It's our way of ending each week as a team, proud of all that we learned together.



*PTSA Campus  
Beautification Weekend*