

## FRANKLIN PHONETIC SCHOOL

6116 EAST HIGHWAY 69  
PRESCOTT VALLEY, ARIZONA 86314

PHONE (928) 775-6747  
FAX (928) 775-6740  
E-MAIL nilknarf@cableone.net

March 11, 2016

Dear Honorable Mayer Skoog and Prescott Valley Code Enforcement Department:

Franklin Phonetic School received a "Civil Citation and Complaint to Appear before Administrative Hearing Officer" on March 28, 2016 for violation of off-street parking requirements (13-24-050-B.9.a). I am writing you this letter because the allegations are not true and our parking has been approved through meetings and conversations we have had with city officials including Mr. Gonzalez. We believe this action is being pursued because some city officials and employees do not feel that the school is paying its fair share of the cost of the off-street parking because it is exempt from this taxation.

Despite our affirmative statement that there is no violation, in good faith we have taken steps to obtain more parking spaces and clarify the parking issue. This Spring Break, employees at Franklin School have been working hard. During the break we cut down trees, removed foliage, patched asphalt, moved dumpsters, and created 8 more parking spaces. We also have figured out a way to keep the children "almost safe" from unwanted intruders by putting up additional fencing in the Copper Hill parking lot. These improvements will satisfy all of the concerns raised by your code enforcement department.

Since the school's founding in 1996, we have obtained legal building permits for seven major structures; a modular building, a covered eating area, a library-classroom building, art-classroom building, a science-classroom-office building, and two auditoriums. For these projects we had our plans reviewed and approved by code enforcement and met parking requirements or were given variances when occupancy was granted. Our school has plenty of onsite parking and it is ridiculous that we should be penalized for closing a gate during school hours to keep children safe. Nevertheless by April 1<sup>st</sup> additional fencing will be complete that may allow us to leave the Copper Hill Gate unlocked for longer time periods. This will bring the number of continuously available on site parking spaces to well over 100.

While I understand the motive behind what code enforcement is doing, I am greatly disturbed by the allegation that parking requirements for the school have dramatically increased since our 2012 variance meeting. Franklin School enrollment is public record and can be verified on the Arizona Department of Education website. Code enforcement's assertion that the school suddenly expanded to junior high after the 2012 meeting is completely false. The fact is that Junior High was started back in 2001. We also have documents proving that we reported 450 students and between 40 and 50 full time employees to the town of Prescott Valley officials back in 2012 when we reached the variance agreement about parking. Since that time our staff population has only grown by 3-5 full time employees and our student count has only increased by 12 pupils. To accommodate these changes we took over the entire Lynx Creek Plaza commercial Plaza for school use, thus gaining all of the parking spaces. Additionally cutting down trees and unneeded barrier foliage enabled us to create 8 additional spaces. At this point in time public onsite parking spaces total 92 on the highway 69 side apart from those included within the locked gate. These additions should more than compensate for any asserted small number of extra pupils and added staff members.

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Furthermore it is ridiculous for the town to suggest that we leave the campus unlocked during school hours. Ironically the latest letter of complaint from code enforcement was accompanied by a picture showing that at 8:45 A.M on a Friday February 26th, our gates were locked for the protection of the children. By visiting the school website [www.franklinphoneticschool.com](http://www.franklinphoneticschool.com) you can view copies of our school newsletters. These newsletters tell parents that gates will be locked between the hours of 8:45-2:45 when no guards can be posted at the drop off area. However parents and approved visitors are able to request that the gates be opened and closed after them so that they can park in a secured area if they wish. Proof of this fact is clearly stated in the newsletter. The picture taken by town code officials merely proves that we do keep the campus secured as promised and for this we should be commended!

Keeping children safe should be the top priority of any Town or community. The Castle Canyon Neighborhood where our school is located has an exceptionally high crime rate and a high concentration of sex offenders. This forces our school to take child safety very seriously. For this reason during the school hours of 8:45-2:45 when no additional guards are available, all visitors to the campus must sign in at the office building on Highway 69 and are not permitted to enter the campus in any other fashion.

Unfortunately school shootings are now a regular occurrence. In 2013 students at our school were directly threatened with violence. If it was not for the fine actions of the Prescott Valley Police Department, a horrific tragedy could have occurred. This is why the demands to keep our school campus unlocked to satisfy some nonexistent parking requirements are especially offensive. Shame on any public entity for caring more about the parking of a car than the safety of a child! In case that you do not remember the incident a link is listed below. Unfortunately now the perpetrator lives across from the school making the need for security even more important than it was before.  
<https://www.prescottnews.com/.../potential-tragedy-averted-at-franklin-ph..>

Nevertheless in order to clear up any parking issues we have now almost completed the installation of a 5 foot iron fencing onto our existing bollards. This means that unless there is a suspicious person or threat we will be able to keep the gate open during school hours after April 9<sup>th</sup> when AZ Merit Testing is completed. Because of the state mandated achievement testing and lack of available school personnel, we will be unable to attend and if necessary we will be having our school lawyer Leo Condos attend the March 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. Possibly when these facts are verified this meeting will be cancelled as it can be observed that we are acting in good faith and are able to meet all demands of Prescott Valley Code enforcement albeit at a cost to the students, staff and parents at Franklin School.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Cindy Franklin  
President of Franklin Phonetic School Governing Board