

# ***Belmont Middle School***

***1020 South Point Road***

***Belmont, NC 28012***

***School Phone: 704-836-9611***

***Fax Number: 704-825-6951***

## ***Parent - Student Handbook 2023-2024 School Year***



### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Belmont Middle School is committed to providing a safe environment that promotes learning, academic achievement, and the development of students' strengths and talents.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of Belmont Middle School is to achieve academic excellence through rigorous instruction.

### **OUR BELIEFS**

- Learning is a responsibility that is shared among students, staff and parents.
- Our school will provide a safe and caring environment where the enjoyment of learning is promoted.
- Our school will establish and abide by clear and consistent expectations that promote individual responsibility as well as respect for self and others.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

|                           |                  |                                |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Principal:</b>         | Dr. Josh Bromley | <b>Assistant Principal:</b>    | Sierra. Jennings |
| <b>Data Manager:</b>      | Cherri Johnston  | <b>School Counselor (A-L):</b> | Lindsay Weathers |
| <b>Finance Secretary:</b> | Jada Criswell    | <b>School Counselor (M-Z):</b> | Jennifer Jacobs  |
| <b>Receptionist:</b>      | Samanda Wallace  | <b>Social Worker:</b>          | Meg Richards     |
| <b>Cafeteria Manager:</b> | Lynn Conner      | <b>Nurse:</b>                  | Jessica Absher   |
| <b>Athletic Director:</b> | Carey Galbreath  | <b>Media Specialist:</b>       | Anna Taylor      |
| <b>SRO:</b>               | Officer Reagan   | <b>PTO President:</b>          | Beth Hollars     |



Belmont Middle



<https://www.gaston.k12.nc.us/belmontmiddle>



@thebelmontmiddleschool

Dear Parents and Students,

**Welcome to Belmont Middle School!** Our staff are excited about the upcoming year. At BMS, you will learn new concepts in all academic areas, explore related arts and CTE opportunities, make new friends, and create many unforgettable memories.

Our school will help you grow and develop academically and socially. Students will be assigned to a team of teachers. Students will have two encore classes each day. Encore classes, also known as Lynx, consist of health and physical education, band, chorus, Spanish, art, or CTE.

We encourage our parents to continue to be involved in your student's education throughout their middle school years. Please join the PTO and volunteer at BMS. Our staff values parental involvement and believes your involvement is essential to ensuring your student's success at BMS.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call and make an appointment with your teachers, our assistant principal, or myself. We will be delighted to help assist you and your student. Let's make this the best school year yet!

*Go Wildcats!*

*Dr. Josh Bromley*, Principal

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## ATTENDANCE

**Absences:** Students must be present in class a minimum of 1/2 of the day (**12:00 pm**) to be counted present for the day and for the determination of perfect attendance. Students absent from school are responsible for arranging all make-up work with their teachers. *A note must be brought to the office, signed by the parent, or an email to **Cherri Johnston, ccjohnston@gaston.k12.nc.us**, to explain the absence, within 2 days of the absence, for the absence to be excused.* We recognize county approved reasons for absences as an excused absence from school (illness, court, death in family with documentation). Students are responsible for asking their teachers for make-up work. Please understand that an absence marked “excused” makes the student ineligible to receive “perfect attendance.”

Arrangements to make up work must be made within **three (3) school days** of the absence. Parents requesting homework assignments for students who are absent must give a 24-hour notice to the office prior to picking up these assignments. Students are required to be in attendance at least 94% of each school year (only 12 absences allowed per year) to be eligible to pass to the next grade level.

Our School Social Worker, Meg Richards, **is required** to mail letters to students when they reach 3, 6, and 10 unexcused absences. An additional letter is mailed if a student has excessive tardies. *Please contact her at mrichards@gaston.k12.nc.us for questions, concerns or if assistance is needed.*

The following summary provides key information on ten significant statements from our Gaston County Schools’ Board of Education policy on student attendance. To view the full policy, please visit our GCS website at [www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us)

### School Day Attendance:

- The school year is 180 days. Students must be in attendance at least 168 days. Only 12 absences, including excused and unexcused absences, are permitted each school year.
- In order for students to benefit from the instructional day, it is important for students to arrive on time and remain at school for the entirety of the school day.
- In order to be recorded present, a student must be present at least one-half of the school day (**12:00 pm**).

### Documentation:

- Following any absence(s), a parent or guardian is required to email **Cherri Johnston, ccjohnston@gaston.k12.nc.us**, or to send a written document stating the reason for the absence(s) including your student’s name and date(s) for the absence(s).
- All absences will be coded unexcused in the computer until an e-mail or written documentation is received from the parent or guardian.
- Written documentation or e-mail must be presented **within two (2) school days** after the student returns to school; otherwise, the absence(s) will be recorded as unexcused.

### Communication:

- After each absence, excused or unexcused, the principal or social worker shall inform the parent/guardian/custodian by the way of a personal or computer-generated telephone message.
- Prior to six (6) cumulative absences of any type the school social worker shall notify the parent/guardian by mail for the purpose of sharing information regarding the Gaston County School attendance policy.

### Make-Up Work:

- Upon the student’s return to school, arrangements for make-up for excused or unexcused absences shall be made **within three (3) school days**. Due dates for make-up work will be at the discretion of the teacher.

**Tardiness:** Students must be in class **by 8:30 am**. Students arriving **after 8:30 am will be counted tardy**. A note from their parent or guardian stating the date and reason for the tardy should be given to the front office. There are **excused and unexcused** tardies. **Only medical, legal, dental/orthodontist appointments are considered excused. Please bring a note from your appointment to excuse a tardy.** The note is to be left in the office when checking in. Students checking out early will also be marked as tardy. **Please note that as part of our school safety plan, all early check-outs must occur before 3:15 pm.**

## MORNING ARRIVAL, CHECK-OUT, AND EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

**Morning Arrival:** Students are not to arrive at school prior to 7:45 am. **Our doors will open at 7:45 am.** All students are subject to metal detection as they enter. Students will report to the gym until 8:20 am OR students who choose to eat breakfast will go directly to the cafeteria upon entry to school. Students will eat in the cafeteria then wait to be dismissed to class. Breakfast is served until 8:20 am each day.

**Leaving School:** All students leaving school during the school day must be signed out at the office by a parent/guardian. Students may leave with relatives only if the office talks with a parent or the person is listed on the *Student Information Form*. Students checking out after 12:00 pm will be counted as present for the day. Students checking out before 12:00 pm will be counted absent for the day unless the student returns with a valid excuse. **Please note that as part of our school safety plan, all early check-outs must occur before 3:15 pm as we are preparing for school dismissal between 3:15-3:30 pm.**

**School Closing:** In the event of severely inclement weather or a mechanical breakdown, school may be closed or starting time delayed. School closing, delayed starting time, or early dismissal will be announced over the radio and T.V. stations. These reports will be made in the morning beginning at 6 am and also on the evening newscast at 6 and 11 pm. If no report is heard, it can be assumed that school will be in session. **Please do not call the school. Telephone lines must be kept open for emergencies!**

|                 |                 |  |
|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Daily Schedule: | Doors Open:     | 7:45 AM  |
|                 | Tardy Bell:     | 8:30 AM (tardy if not in class when this bell rings) |
|                 | Dismissal Time: | 3:30 PM  |

## STUDENTS DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP AREA

**Drop Off:** Students arriving by car may be dropped off in the car line adjacent to South Point Road. Please enter the lot using the South Point Road entrance, not via the McKee Farm Road entrance. Doors will open at 7:45 am. **Please stay in the car until 7:45 am.**

**Pick-up:** Car riders and students walking home are dismissed at 3:30 pm. At that time, all students walking or being picked up, are asked to leave campus as quickly as possible as supervision is limited. **Once you have left campus, you should not return unless it is for a supervised extracurricular activity.** Car riders will be picked up in the car line. Please pull into the front lot using the South Point Road entrance. You will travel down the lane that runs between South Point Road and the school building, wrap around the parking lot by the front office, and then exit back onto South Point Road. Students will exit out the side entrance of the school, which is designated for car riders only. For safety reasons, parents should not pick-up students at the back side of our school building, bus lot, nor at the McKee Farm neighborhood entrance. Students who are walkers will be directed to exit the building which has them walk the sidewalk along the football field and through McKee Farm gate. For safety, all walkers should remain on sidewalks and only cross at crosswalks. Drivers should not exceed 15 mph while on school grounds. **While waiting in the car line, please remain in your vehicle.**



## BUSES

Students who are riding a bus will be dismissed at 3:30 pm. Students will be called by bus number to report to the bus parking loading area. **Students who leave campus will not be allowed to return to campus and ride the bus. This is part of our safety plan.** We share buses with our feeder area so our buses arrive after the elementary routes are finished. While waiting for their bus to arrive, students will be dismissed to the cafeteria until called to report to the bus loading area. Students will follow the established rules/procedures while waiting for their bus. The rules/procedures will be reviewed with students at the beginning of the school year. While on the bus, students are to remain seated in their seats at all times when the bus is in motion. There is to be no horseplay, unnecessary movement/loud noises or tampering with the bus. No objects shall be thrown within or outside the bus. **At no time should students use electronic devices (cell phones, chromebooks, etc) to take photos or videos while on the bus. All school rules apply on the bus.** Students are to ride only the bus they are assigned and to get off at their assigned stop. Permission for a student to ride a bus other than the assigned bus is not allowed. **Bus riding is a privilege and not a right.** Students who violate the bus rules when riding the bus may be suspended from riding the bus both to and from school. If you need to add your child to the bus after school has started, please note that we have a 24 hour rule for adding bus riders. Please become familiar with your child's bus number and driver's name as it will be helpful should you need to contact the school about a bus matter.

| <b><u>Be Responsible</u></b>   | <b><u>Use Respect</u></b>  | <b><u>Stay Safe</u></b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Follow the Code of Conduct</b></li> <li><b>2. Be on time</b></li> <li><b>3. Keep the bus clean</b></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Talk softly and appropriately</b></li> <li><b>2. Respect yourself, others, and property</b></li> <li><b>3. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</b></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Stay seated, and keep aisle clear</b></li> <li><b>2. Listen to the driver and other adults</b></li> <li><b>3. Get on and off at your assigned stop</b></li> </ol> |

## MEDICAL

**Accidents:** Any accident on or off of the school grounds at a school-sponsored event must be reported immediately to a BMS staff member. Initial claims for insurance **must be filed by the pupil** within thirty (30) days of the accident. **All claims must be sent to the insurance company by the parent.** Forms may be picked up in the main office.

**Medicine:** All medicine that can be given outside of school hours without adversely affecting the health of the student should be given at home. When the student must take medication at school, the following requirements apply:

- Medication must be in the original container or pharmacy bottle and clearly labeled.
- Medication can be given only after the parent has presented the GCS Medication Authorization form signed by the physician and parent/guardian..
- All medications are required to have an authorization form. This includes short-term, long-term, and over-the-counter medications. An authorization form for the physician may be picked up in the office.
- Parents **must** deliver any medication to the school. Students **cannot** bring medication to school. Parents should also pick up any medication remaining after treatment is completed. All medication will be discarded seven (7) days after the last administration.
- Any medication, whether over-the-counter or prescription, must be brought to the office by a parent or guardian. Caffeine pills, sleeping pills, etc. are not allowed on campus. **Possession of medication or any other pill or tablet without permission may result in disciplinary action.**

Please contact ***our school nurse, Jessica Absher at [jabsher@gaston.k12.nc.us](mailto:jabsher@gaston.k12.nc.us) for any questions or concerns.***

**Illness:** If a student becomes ill at school, he/she should notify his/her teacher and come to the office immediately. **Do not go into the restroom and remain there alone.**

## PERSONAL PROPERTY, LOCKS, AND LOCKERS

**Personal Property:** All students' personal property must be labeled with the student's name. Students are encouraged to secure all valuables. Do not walk away and leave your valuables unsecured. Students are asked not to bring large amounts of money, expensive jewelry, and other valuables to school. **Please leave any items not necessary for class at home.**

**Lost and Found:** All found items are placed in a lost and found bin located on the cafeteria stage. Any found electronic items should be brought to the office. We will hold clothing for approximately four weeks. If these items are not claimed, they will be donated to a charity agency. Electronic items are kept until the end of the school year.

**Lockers/Locks (Athletic Locker Rooms only):** Locks may be purchased at any time. **Only Belmont Middle school issued locks (\$7.00) may be used on school lockers.** For security, student athletes may only use the locker assigned to them. Student athletes are not allowed to share lockers with other students. Student athletes are required to lock their lockers. Do not share lock combinations. Only student athletes (in season) are permitted to be in the locker rooms, unless approved by a staff member.

## COMMUNICATION WITH HOME

Teachers will use e-mail, Remind, written notification, and phone calls to communicate with parents on a regular basis. The principal will utilize the ParentLink phone system to announce important news. Be sure to use your Parent Portal account to monitor your student's academic and attendance progress. ***If you wish to receive e-mail, please send your email address to Cherri Johnston, ccjohnston@gaston.k12.nc.us*** at the school. Be sure to check our website at <https://www.gaston.k12.nc.us/belmontmiddle>. We recommend that you use the GCS Mobile App to stay up-to-date on BMS events and happenings. Remember to update your settings within the app to "follow schools" and select Belmont Middle School. This app connects to our Twitter and Facebook accounts and provides parents with easy access to Parent Portal.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS / EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Parents and/or students are responsible for informing the school of changes in address and/or phone numbers at any time during the school year. Two (2) current proofs of address are required to change an address. Emergency phone numbers are needed for prompt notification and handling of accidents or illness.

## TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS

**Transfers:** Students who move out of the Belmont school district and wish to remain for the year must secure transfer approval through the Student Services Office. Please visit the Gaston County Schools Website, specifically "*School Assignment*" or contact the school assignment office at 704-810-7284.

**Withdrawals:** A student cannot be withdrawn from BMS until the new school requests records.

## VISITORS

**Safety** is a top priority at Belmont Middle School. Therefore, anyone not a member of the BMS faculty/staff or student body is considered a visitor. **All visitors must check in at the front office and are subject to metal detection upon entry to school and/or school events.** Visitors are not allowed anywhere in our building without permission from the office. A visitor's sticker must be visible at all times.

## FRONT OFFICE

Students should not come to the office between classes. If it is necessary to come to the office, they need to go to their teacher and receive a hall pass for permission to come to the front office. No student may use the office telephone for personal calls--**only for school business or emergencies**. Parents are asked to help their students remember to bring all supplies, PE and athletic clothes, lunch items, homework, etc. needed for the day with them at the beginning of the day so that parents do not have to drop off items during the day.

## SCHOOL SAFETY EXERCISES

School safety exercises such as fire, lockdown, bus and tornado drills are practiced on a regular basis by the students and by all school personnel. During all drills, students should follow the direction of the teacher and/or BMS staff while moving quickly and quietly. BMS Staff will instruct students as to the procedures of these drills based on their location in the school.

As an additional safety measure, random metal detection will be executed daily. Students and adults may be randomly scanned as they enter school, during the school day, entering athletic events, other school activities, or as needed.

## CAFETERIA

Students may bring lunch from home or purchase one in the cafeteria. **Food from outside vendors (Chick Fil A, McDonalds, Jersey Mike's, Taco-Bell, etc.) are not allowed in the cafeteria. Food may not be delivered to students from outside vendors.** Students are expected to follow all school rules and the cafeteria expectations. **Breakfast is served until 8:20 am each day.**

| Breakfast        |        | Lunch            |        |
|------------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| Paid Student:    | \$1.40 | Paid Student:    | \$3.00 |
| Reduced Student: | \$0.00 | Reduced Student: | \$0.40 |
| Adult:           | \$2.00 | Adult:           | \$4.00 |

*\*Middle School students may not exceed \$6.00 in cafeteria meal charges.*

*\*A la carte items may be available to purchase. These items will be charged to meal accounts.*

### Free and Reduced Meal Applications

- Paper applications are available at the school office, the school cafeteria, the enrollment department at the Central Office, and at the School Nutrition Center in Lowell.
- Online applications are available on the Gaston County Schools website. Links can be found on the School Nutrition department tab.
- Only **one application** is required **per household**
- Applications should be completed online or returned to the school Cafeteria Manager or the School Nutrition Center – 500 Reid Street, Lowell, NC 28098
- Foster children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits, and should be included on the household application (not a separate application).
- Students designated as homeless by Gaston County Schools' homeless liaison are categorically eligible for free meals. No application is required, but documentation must be received from the homeless liaison before benefits begin.

### Special Dietary Needs

- All Students with unique meal time needs must have a new Diet Order form completed. Diet Order forms may be obtained from the Cafeteria Manager, the School Nurse, the School Nutrition Center in Lowell, or on School Nutrition page on Gaston County School website ([www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us))
- The Diet Order form must be signed by a recognized medical authority and returned to the school nurse to submit electronically to the School Nutrition Dietitian [mhcameron@gaston.k12.nc.us](mailto:mhcameron@gaston.k12.nc.us).
- It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that your student's "Diet Order" is up to date each year with the Cafeteria Manager. Diet Orders will remain in effect perpetually until School Nutrition receives written or verbal authorization from a recognized medical authority or parent/guardian to terminate the Diet Order.

### School Accounts:

- Check, Cash, or Money Order can be accepted in the school cafeteria. Parents/Guardians may utilize Family Portal Link to pay <https://linqconnect.com/> with their credit or debit card. Download the LINQ Connect app for easy pay.

## GRADING

| Grading Scale  | Percentage Breakdown  |
|--|---|
| <b>100 - 90 = A</b>  | <b>40 percent</b> - tests (major projects, papers and performances)                   |
| <b>89 - 80 = B</b>   | <b>30 percent</b> - independent work - (quizzes, classwork, common assessments, etc.) |
| <b>79 - 70 = C</b>   | <b>20 percent</b> - guided work - (group activities, teacher led activities, etc) and |
| <b>69 - 60 = D</b>   | <b>10 percent</b> - homework  |
| <b>Below 60 = F</b>  |   |
| Interims will reflect the actual grade, however, the GCS board policy states no grades below 50 may be entered on a report card for any marking periods. |   |

**Report Cards:** Report cards will be issued to students on **October 19, January 11, March 14, and mailed by June 1.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their parent or guardian receives the report card. **Interim reports will be distributed on September 14, November 16, February 8, and April 18.**

**Cheating:** Cheating on school work, tests, projects, etc. will not be permitted. BMS policy on cheating is as follows: All students involved will receive a **zero** on the work in question and the teacher will notify a parent/guardian.



## DISCIPLINE

Belmont Middle School follows the Gaston County Schools Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct is reviewed with all students at the start of the school. All students will complete a Code of Conduct activity in their Canvas. If a student comes to BMS after the start of the year, the Code of Conduct is reviewed with the student at that time. Students sign that they have reviewed the Code of Conduct once this has taken place. The administration reserves the right to handle discipline issues according to GCS policy including consequences such as Redirect and in/out of school suspension. A parent/guardian will be notified by the teacher when assigning consequences from the classroom level (including redirect offenses), and the administration will make contact when assigning consequences from the office.

Belmont Middle School is continuing to implement a *Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS)* this school year. Below is our school-wide expectations for students:

| <div> <div>BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL</div> <div>PBIS SCHOOLWIDE P.A.W.S. MATRIX</div>  </div> |  |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
|   | Practice<br>Respect  | Always<br>Responsible   | Work to<br>Succeed   | Stay Safe   |
| ARRIVAL  | Use kind words<br>Keep conversations to Level 1  | Turn off cell phones and store appropriately before entering<br>Leave No Trace<br>Finish food and drink before entering | Prepare yourself for the day<br>Use your time wisely                   | Stay in your seat in proper section<br>Keep body and belongings to self   |
| HALLWAY/<br>STAIRS   | Transition quietly<br>Keep hands & feet to self<br>Respect all BMS staff                                 | Be efficient<br>Leave No Trace  | Walk with purpose  | Walk on right side of hallways<br>Take stairs one at a time   |
| RESTROOM   | Be quick, clean, and quiet<br>Allow for personal space-keep hands & feet to self                         | Use supplies wisely<br>Leave No Trace   | Observe posted occupancy   | Report problems immediately to nearest adult  |
| ASSEMBLY   | Be polite for presenters   | Ask appropriate questions<br>Leave No Trace   | Watch for attention signal   | Stay seated and silent<br>Hands to self, feet on floor  |
| CAFETERIA  | Keep hands & feet to self<br>Follow outer walls to serving line<br>Follow floor signage for serving area | Eat your own food<br>Get all items before sitting<br>Leave No Trace   | Be positive with social interactions<br>Use an appropriate voice level | Ask staff members on for help<br>Stay seated in assigned area   |
| TRACK /<br>STADIUM   | Keep hands & feet to self<br>Use appropriate and kind language<br>Follow adult instructions              | Preserve nature as you found it<br>Leave No Trace   | Be positive with social interactions<br>Practice good sportsmanship    | Stay in the assigned area<br>Report any issues to a nearby staff member<br>Move in one direction (while on track) |
| DISMISSAL  | Keep hands & feet to self<br>Respect personal space  | Cell phones off and away until you exit building<br>Leave No Trace  | Gather all needed materials<br>Help others<br>Walk with purpose        | Stay in your seat in proper section<br>Keep body and belongings to self<br>Be aware of your surroundings          |



**Redirect:** Teachers may send students to Redirect for behaviors that interrupt the instruction of other students. The teacher will continue with the lesson and the student will report to the Behavior Lab for a period of **20 minutes**. The student will be expected to reflect on their behavior and complete work while in Redirect. Redirect staff will work with the student to correct the behavior. The teacher assigning the Redirect will contact a parent within 24 hours. **When a student has received 3 Redirects, a letter is sent home to notify the parent that the *next* Redirect will result in one day of ISS (In-School-Suspension.) When a student has received 4 Redirects, a letter will be sent home and the student will be assigned to one day of ISS In-School-Suspension).**

**Behavior Lab:** A student who is assigned an in-school suspension by the principal or assistant principal reports to the Behavior Lab teacher.

- The student is counted present for attendance.
- The student receives classroom written assignments and upon satisfactory completion is given credit for the work.
- **If a student is assigned to the Behavior Lab for a Redirect or ISS, administration holds the right to have the student not participate in any after school activities.**
- **Students who cause disruptions while in the Behavior Lab may be assigned OSS.**

**Out-of-School Suspension (OSS):** A student who is assigned an out-of-school suspension by the principal or assistant principal is sent home and is marked absent (excused absence) for the days suspended. Assignments will be posted in Canvas. Students assigned to OSS will not be allowed on any Gaston County School campus during the suspension nor may a student attend any school activity.

### **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to maintain appropriate dress and appearance that will not, in any manner, disturb or disrupt class or any school-related activities. In today's fashion world, there are many styles available to our students and some of them simply are **not** appropriate for school. Please keep this in mind as you guide your student's selection of school attire. Following is a list of examples of prohibited items, however any dress code concerns that school officials deem a disturbance or distraction will not be allowed:

- No tank tops, tube tops, crop tops, mesh shirts, cut-off T-shirts, backless, halter, spaghetti strap or one-shoulder tops. Hem of the shirt must overlap the top of pants/skirt/shorts so not showing stomach or waist. See-through, sheer, and/or lace shirts are not allowed unless layered over another garment that follows dress code. No low/revealing necklines.
- Shorts should be long enough that they are seen when wearing a shirt/sweatshirt.
- All undergarments should be covered at all times (standing and sitting). This includes top and bottom undergarments.
- Shoes or sandals must be worn at all times.
- No pajamas or bedroom (or fuzzy) slippers.
- No clothing with indecent language or pictures containing sex, alcohol, drug, tobacco, or weapons related messages.
- No headwear (hats, hoods, etc.), bandanas, or sunglasses inside the building or on the bus.

In the event that a student is determined to be in violation of the dress code, or dressed in any way that disrupts school, a parent will be notified. Students will be given an opportunity to change using an item from the clothes closet. The majority of dress code violations can be prevented before ever coming to school by reviewing the dress code policies frequently and parental monitoring of student attire.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

**Student Services Department:** Belmont Middle School offers the services of a counselor to assist each student with personal or school-related concerns. The counselor's office is open before school and after school hours for those who may find it difficult to come during class time. You need a note to come to the counselor's office. Do not hesitate to ask to speak with a counselor. Remember, the counselor's primary purpose is to help students. In addition, we have a school social worker and a school nurse to help meet additional needs for students.

**Media Center:** The Media Center provides services for the entire school. The center is fully automated to allow student access to books, reference materials, and the Internet.

Procedures for use of the Media Center are:

- Students must have a hall pass unless they are with a class.
- Gum, food, and drinks are not allowed.
- A limit of two books may be checked out for a two-week period. Each book may be renewed once.
- Books must be returned when they are due.
- Students are responsible for materials checked out in their names. Intentional defacing or damages caused by negligence may result in a charge to the student.

## HOMework

The purpose of the homework is to enhance student achievement by helping students develop good work habits and become self-directed, independent learners. Homework may be assigned to be completed outside the student's day for practice and help in mastering specific skills that have been presented in class.

## ATHLETICS

Belmont Middle School's athletic program is designed to enable students to have a well-rounded middle school experience and to participate in various sports. The goal of the athletic program is to provide opportunities for the development of emotional maturity, discipline, a strong work ethic, respect for the game and all the people involved, basic skills, and enjoyment for the students who choose to participate in inter-school athletics. We encourage our student athletes to play hard, play fair with a desire to win, and respect for their fellow teammates and opponents.

**Rules for Participating in Athletics:** The athletic programs of Belmont Middle School are conducted under the guidelines of Gaston County Schools and the following rules that govern Belmont Athletics. Once a student-athlete has voluntarily given up their position on a team, then he/she will not be eligible to try out for another sport until the former team has completed its season. For example: a student cannot leave the soccer team and join the wrestling team until the soccer season has completed its season. *By state guidelines*, students in grades 6 and above may participate in interscholastic athletic competition, however, **sixth graders may not participate in football**. In order to qualify for middle school participation, a student-athlete must meet the following requirements:

- **Residence:** The student must meet the residence criteria of G.G. 115-366(a) as it appears in the public school laws of North Carolina. **The student may participate only at the school to which the student is assigned by the LEA** or, if over the age requirements, the school at which the student would be assigned at the next higher grade level.
- **Legal Birth and Age Limits:** The principal must have evidence of the legal birth date of the student. A student shall not participate on a middle school team if he/she becomes **15 years of age on or before August 31** of said school year.
- **Medical Examination:** In order to be eligible for practice or participation in interscholastic athletic contests, a player must receive a medical examination once every 395 days by a **duty licensed medical physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant**. A copy of this sports physical must be on file at the school.
- **SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENTS: Local Promotional Policy Code 3420**  
A student must pass 3 of 4 academic subjects, including math and language arts. Students should also maintain a passing average in the combined yearly averages of the elective courses. A passing average in the 4<sup>th</sup> academic class can be substituted for one yearly elective average. **Middle School Eligibility:** To be eligible for the fall semester, a student must pass 3 of 4 core courses from the previous year. The student must also meet local promotional standards for the year. (football, softball, wrestling, boys' soccer, volleyball and golf) To be eligible for the spring semester, a student must pass 3 of 4 core courses from the previous semester. (baseball, track, basketball, and girls' soccer)
- **Attendance Requirements:** A player must have been in **attendance at least 85 percent** of the previous semester. Summer school attendance shall not be counted in determining percentage of attendance of athletic eligibility.
- **Behavior Requirements:**
  - ◆ Students assigned In-School-Suspension (ISS) program may not participate in athletics on the day of the suspension. This non-participation begins immediately upon assignment by the administration and ends when the student athlete has completed the total number of days assigned.
  - ◆ Repeat In-School-Suspension (ISS) placement may result in suspension from the team.
  - ◆ One out-of-school (OSS) suspension may result in suspension from the team. The student may be ineligible to try out for another sport for the duration of the sport from which he/she was suspended.
  - ◆ Coaches have the right to hold their athletes to their own set of established rules and consequences. These are shared with parents at the parent meetings prior to the start of the sports season. The coach will retain authority to suspend any athlete from games or the team based upon the conduct of the athlete while representing Belmont Middle School.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

**HONOR ROLL CELEBRATION:** At the end of the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd nine weeks grading period, each grade level will recognize students with all A's or A's & B's with a treat.

**COOL CAT PROGRAM:** This program is designed to reward all students based on grades and conduct. These cards will be distributed at the end of each nine weeks. The cards are not transferable to other students and are only valid for the current nine weeks.

**STUDENTS OF THE MONTH:** Our Student of the Month program recognizes those who have gone above and beyond. Students of the Month are selected by each team of teachers at each grade level. The recipients are recognized and receive special incentive awards.

**P.B.I.S. (Positive Behavior Incentive Program):** This program is designed to reward individual students for positive behavior that is demonstrated throughout each day. Students earn points over time and then are able to "shop" at the P.B.I.S. store for rewards.

**BETA CLUB:** Students are invited to be members of the National Junior Beta Club who have attained a 90% or above average in all subjects, with no grade of “C” in any subject area, have teacher recommendation based on outstanding qualities in character, honesty, citizenship and attitude. The initiation is held in the spring of each academic year.

**ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC AWARDS CEREMONIES:** These special events will be held to recognize students who have achieved academically or excelled on the playing field. Families will be invited to attend celebrations at the end of the school year.

## GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

**Book Bags:** Book bags will be used to transport all student materials. Bags are subject to metal detection and search at random each day. Students should not have toys or other non-school related items in their book bags. Students at BMS are NOT required to carry a clear bookbag at this time.

**Gum:** Students are not to chew gum at school.

**Deliveries:** The school will not accept special deliveries for individual students. This includes, but is not limited to: balloons, flowers, cupcakes, outside food/drink, etc. Arrangements for class celebration deliveries/materials must be pre-approved with teachers/administration.

**Food and Drink:** Students are not allowed to eat snacks outside the cafeteria unless teachers/administration give special permission. Students may take a bottle containing plain water only into the classroom. No eating or drinking is allowed in the collaboration rooms, media center, or gym. No sharing or selling of food or drinks. No glass objects/containers are allowed. Energy drinks (Red Bull, Monster, Prime, etc.) are not permissible on Belmont Middle School campus. **Food from outside vendors (Chick Fil A, McDonalds, Jersey Mike's, Taco-Bell, etc.) are not allowed for students.**

**Aerosol/Highly Fragrant Products:** Due to allergies, **aerosol products (and other highly fragrant products) are not permitted at school.** This includes, but is not limited to, spray deodorants, hairspray, perfume, body spray, etc. No glass objects are allowed.

**Cell phones, AirPods/Wireless Headphones, and other Electronic Devices:** Before entering the building, students must turn **OFF** all cell phones and place them in their book bags. **Please note that Belmont Middle, nor Gaston County Schools, is not responsible for lost/stolen/broken personal devices at any time. Cell phones, AirPods/Wireless Headphones, and other electronic devices must stay in the student's book bag during the instructional day, be turned off, and should not be taken out until after school.** Students are not allowed to be connected by bluetooth while at school. Should a cell phone, air pods/headphones, or other electronic device be found with a student during the instructional day the following will occur:

- **First offense:** The student will receive a verbal warning (warning will be documented as a minor offense).
- **Second offense:** The item will be collected and returned to the student at the end of the school day. The teacher will contact the parent to notify (documented as a minor offense).
- **Third offense:** The item will be sent to the office and the parent must pick the item up. The teacher will contact the parent to notify (documented as a minor offense).
- **Fourth offense:** The item will be sent to the office and the parent must pick the item up, and the student will be assigned one day in-school suspension (ISS). An administrator will make contact with the parent (documented as an office referral).
- **Fifth Offense & Beyond:** See fourth offense for specific actions, plus an administrator will make arrangements with parent/guardian to have the student sign the item in/out of the office each day (documented as an office referral).

**Photographs:** Photographs and videos may be taken, by school personnel, of students for internal purposes (end of the year celebration presentations, student of the month, honor roll, etc.), GCS Websites, and other special events. In addition, we may release similar publicity information to the newspapers. **Any parent who does not want his/her child to be photographed or videotaped must indicate so on the Student Enrollment Form and/or notify administration. Students are not allowed to take pictures/videos at any time while at school and/or on the bus, and/or post those pictures to the internet,** unless they have received administration's approval as Yearbook photographers, etc. Students who take pictures/videos at school may be subject to consequences per the Gaston County Schools Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be aware that students engaging in taking pictures/videos of other minor students and posting them to the internet, without consent, as well as building a fake profile/website with the intent to torment/intimidate a minor, can be found in violation of cyber-bullying laws.

**Class Tardy:** Arrival to class on time is each student's responsibility, and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

**Hall Pass:** Any student out of class and not with a teacher must have a hall pass in his/her possession.

**Physical Contact:** Students are expected to keep their hands to themselves. We were “just playing” will not be an acceptable excuse. Physical contact will result in disciplinary action.

**Displays of Affection:** Displays of affection are not appropriate in the school setting and will not be permitted. Students are expected to refrain from all forms of contact. Displays of affection will result in disciplinary action.

**BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL  
PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE  
2023-2024**

Belmont Middle School welcomes you and your family to our learning community! The teachers, staff, and administration at BMS will work diligently to ensure an optimum education for all students. In order to facilitate this, it is important that all students, with a parent/guardian, read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

After reading the Belmont Middle School Parent-Student Handbook AND the Gaston County Schools Student Code of Conduct together, BMS asks that both the student and their parent/guardian sign the acknowledgement below and return this form to your student's Advisory teacher.

Thank you for your cooperation, and we look forward to a rewarding and successful year!

**We, the undersigned, acknowledge that we have read, discussed, and understand the policies and procedures explained in the Belmont Middle School Parent-Student Handbook and Gaston County Schools Student Code of Conduct for 2023-2024 school year. Our signatures indicate our pledge to cooperate between home and school to ensure a safe and effective learning environment for all students and staff at Belmont Middle School.**

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**Student's Printed Name**

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**Parent/Guardian's Printed Name**

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**Student's Signature/Date**

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**Parent/Guardian's Signature/Date**

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**Grade Level**

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**Team Name**