

Belmont Central Elementary Parent/Student Handbook

2024-2025



Welcome from Administration

Welcome to Belmont Central Elementary School! It is with great enthusiasm and pride that I introduce myself as the new principal of this remarkable school. I am Kristin Kiser, and it is both an honor and a privilege to work alongside you all in such an outstanding school community.

As we prepare for the 2024-25 school year, I want to extend a warm welcome to all our returning students and families, as well as those joining us for the first time. At Belmont Central, our commitment is to provide quality instruction in every classroom, every day. We are dedicated to engaging our students in meaningful learning experiences that encourage critical thinking, creativity, and leadership skills.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure that every student who walks through our doors leaves Belmont Central with a strong foundation to become exemplary citizens of our community and beyond. At the heart of our efforts lies our mission statement:
"Together we will provide opportunities to be role models who inspire and facilitate the development of diverse students as 21st Century learners."

Throughout the year, we will work tirelessly to uphold this mission, fostering an environment where your children can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Collaboration between school and home is crucial to a child's success, and we look forward to partnering with you to create a supportive and enriching educational experience for each student.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or our dedicated staff with any questions, concerns, or ideas you may have. Together, we will make this school year a memorable and successful one for your children.

Thank you for entrusting us with the privilege of educating your child. Here's to a fantastic year ahead filled with growth, achievement, and joy.

Warm regards,

Kristin Kiser
Principal



About Belmont Central

School Hours

7:30 - 2:15

Bus Rider/Walker Dismissal - 2:10

Car Rider Dismissal - Begins at 2:15

Enrollment

700 students

Vision

Our students will be lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and responsible leaders in a global society.

Mission

Together we will provide opportunities to be role models who inspire and facilitate the development of diverse students as 21st century learners.

Colors

Red and White

Mascot

Eagle

Belmont Central Office Staff

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Principal | Kristin Kiser | ktkiser@gaston.k12.nc.us |
| Assistant Principal | Chelsea Elmore | cnelmore@gaston.k12.nc.us |
| School Resource Officer | Officer Ben Henderson | bahenderson@cityofbelmont.org |
| Financial Secretary/Data Manager | Teresa Whitesides | twwhitesides@gaston.k12.nc.us |
| Receptionist | Melisa Herron | mdherron@gaston.k12.nc.us |
| School Counselors | Meghan Arnold (grades 2-3) Francina Newby (grades 4-5) | mlarnold@gaston.k12.nc.us fnewby@gaston.k12.nc.us |
| Nurse | Veronica Martinez | vemartinez@gaston.k12.nc.us |
| Social Worker | Madison Faile | mnfaile@gaston.k12.nc.us |
| Cafeteria Manager | Jessie Maltba | jmmaltba@gaston.k12.nc.us |

Communication

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Parent Conferences | Parent Conference Days are currently scheduled for October 12th and March 7th. More information will be coming about procedures for Parent Conference Days. Throughout the school year, parents can schedule a conference with a teacher as necessary to discuss academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. |
| PowerSchool | The Power School Parent Module provides students and parents a secure website to access grades and attendance. For information or assistance with setting up PowerSchool Parent Access, please see the receptionist. |
| Schoology | Schoology is Gaston County Schools's Learning Management System (LMS) and is accessible by parents to view assignments, grades, and lesson material. |
| Parent Link Phone Calls | Automated phone calls will be sent home weekly to update parents about news at Belmont Central. |
| School Website | Our school website is frequently updated to keep students, parents, and the community in the loop on important announcements, news, and events at BCE. Please visit our website at www.gaston.k12.nc.us/belmontcentral |
| Social Media | Our Facebook page is updated regularly. Please visit it at www.facebook.com/BelmontCentralElementary |
| Monthly Newsletter | A monthly newsletter from the assistant principal's office will be shared via email. Paper copies are available upon request. |
| Bus Information | Information about bus changes (delayed route times, driver substitutions, etc.) will be sent via Blackboard messaging texts as well as emails and Facebook posts. |

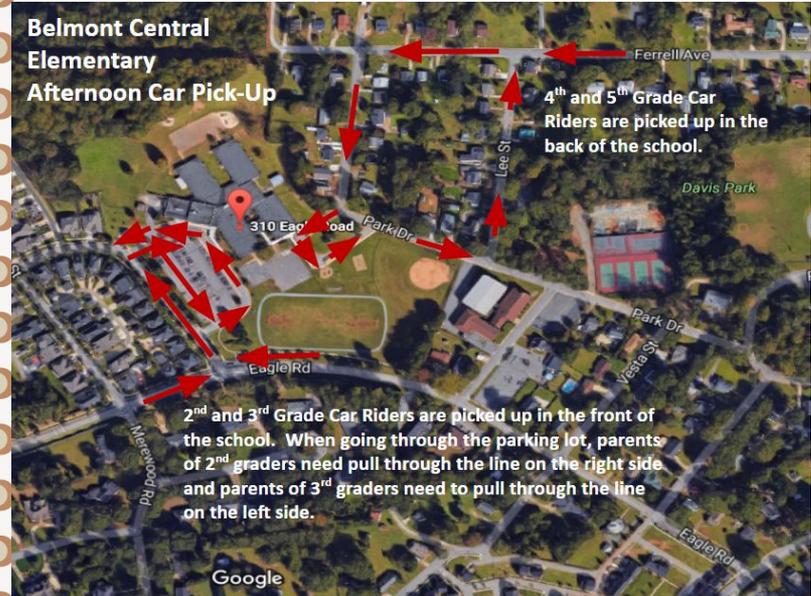
Arrival and Dismissal

Student drop-off begins at 7:10 AM via the front parking lot. We strongly encourage all students to arrive by 7:25 AM to ensure that they have time to get settled and so that instruction can begin on time. Breakfast is served from 7:10 - 7:25. The tardy bell rings at 7:30, and instruction begins.

After 7:30, students are tardy and parents must come into the school to sign-in their child.

At the end of the day, bus riders and walkers will be dismissed first, with car riders last. A "walker" is a student who lives near the school campus and is walking to their residence. We strongly discourage students from walking to meet their transportation at a location other than our school grounds or at FourSquare Church. It is a safety issue because no one is supervising your child once they leave our school grounds. This also applies to dropping students off at a location other than our school grounds or the church.

Second and Third grade car riders will be picked up at the front circle. Fourth and Fifth grade car riders will be picked up at the bus circle. All families will be given car tags for the dismissal line. This tag must be visible on the dashboard in order to pick up your student at dismissal. See the image below for instructions:



Any changes to afternoon dismissal must be submitted in writing to the teacher. If we do not receive notice in writing, we will have to send your student home according to how they normally leave school each day. If you fail to send in a note about changes, please call by **1:00 pm** so that the message can be delivered to the teacher.

Bus Transportation

Belmont Central Elementary School provides morning and afternoon bus transportation in conjunction with the other schools in the feeder area. Our buses are coordinated by BCE/Page administration and South Point High School Business Manager Ericka Garris. 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 issue.

To have a student added to a bus route during the school year, a written note must be sent to the office with the student's name, grade, and teacher name along with address information. **A 24 hour notice is required to be added to a bus route.**



Students are expected to follow bus safety rules while they are riding the bus. If a student is not following the expectations for riding a bus, a student will receive the following disciplinary action steps:

1. Conference with Administration
2. Lunch Detention
3. Bus Suspension

| Be Responsible | Use Respect | Stay Safe |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Follow code of conduct | 1. Talk softly and appropriately | 1. Stay seated and keep aisle clear. |
| 2. Be on time. | 2. Respect yourself, others, and property | 2. Listen to the driver and other adults. |
| 3. Keep the bus clean | 3. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself | 3. Get on and off at your assigned stop. |

Attendance



At Belmont Central, we believe that going to school is a student's job. We feel that a day missed in school is comparable to a parent missing a day of work. It is logical to assume that academic material covered in a school day would never again be re-taught in as much detail.

According to the Gaston County School Attendance Policy, after 12 absences, the student does not meet the 94% attendance requirement for promotion to the next grade level. Students must be in attendance at least 168 days. Only 12 absences, including excused and unexcused absences, are permitted each school year.

We will use the Parent Link calling program to contact parents when absences occur. Please contact the school if phone numbers change, so that we may contact you.

Please observe the following procedures regarding necessary absences:

- All absences are coded unexcused until a note is brought to school.
- Bring a note to the teacher WITHIN 3 days of absence stating: child's first and last name, date(s) & reason for absence.
- Excused absences include: personal illness, death in the family, court, educational opportunity, doctor appointment and religious holidays.
- Check with the office for requests for educational opportunity absences. By GCS policy, they must be requested in advance of the absence. Please note that requests for educational opportunity absences must be learning opportunities for students that are related to standards. Family vacations will not be approved.
- Students are not authorized to leave campus at any time during the school day without permission of school officials.
- Parents may write notes up through the 10th absence or tardy. After that, parents will need to provide doctors' notes. After 7 unexcused absences, the school social worker may seek legal mediation through the court system.
- Gaston County Schools sends home letters informing parents after students have missed 3, 6 and 10 days of school.

Academic Information

Standards Based Grading: Grades 2 and 3

Students in second and third grade receive report cards that are standards-based and show how they are progressing in the curriculum. Grades for second and third grade students can be accessed via Schoology. For more information, please see the Standards-Based Grading handout sent home with this handbook to second and third graders.

Grades 4 and 5

Students in fourth and fifth grade receive letter grade report cards each nine weeks. Teachers enter their grades online on PowerSchool. Parents can obtain log-in information from the office about how to access their child's grades online. Our teachers follow the Gaston County Schools Grading Policy, which has a ten point grading scale:

| | | |
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| A | = | 100 – 90 |
| B | = | 89 – 80 |
| C | = | 79 – 70 |
| D | = | 69 – 60 |
| F | = | 59 and below |

Honor roll is also recognized at the end of the school year for those students in grades 4 and 5 who have maintained their grades for the entire year. A child that receives all As for the year is on "A Honor Roll." A child that receives a combination of As and Bs for the year is on the "A/B Honor Roll."

Cafeteria and School Nutrition

Breakfast and Lunch are offered daily in all schools.

A complete school breakfast consists of: an entree made with grain and/or protein, fat free or 1% milk, and fruit and/or juice.

A complete school lunch consists of: an entree made with protein and/or grain, fat free or 1% milk, vegetable, and fruit.

Gaston County Schools maintains a computer system that accounts for students and their cafeteria spending. Check, cash, or money order can be accepted in the school cafeteria. Parents/Guardians may utilize Family Portal Link <https://linqconnect.com> to pay with their credit or debit card.

Gaston County Schools follows the NC Healthy Schools initiative. Parents are asked to send in healthy snack and lunch options; we recommend that students do not bring sodas or energy drinks for snack or lunch. Students are asked to have a water bottle for their day that contains water.

2024-2025 Meal Prices

| Breakfast | Lunch |
|---|---|
| Paid students at all grade levels - \$1.40 | Paid students in grades K-5 - \$2.90 |
| Reduced price students at all grade levels - \$0.00 | Reduced price students at all grade levels - \$0.00 |
| Adults (staff and visitors) - \$2.00 | Adults (staff and visitors) - \$4.00 |

Gaston County Schools will host holiday meals on Wednesday, November 20 (grades 2 and 4 parents invited to attend) and on December 11 (grades 3 and 5 parents invited to attend). **The adult price for holiday meals is \$5.00**

Students who wish to purchase ice cream must pay Thursday of each week and it will be distributed on Fridays. Ice cream is sold for \$1 or \$25 for the year. Ice cream can be paid for using school cash online link or cash. There is a \$5 savings if ice cream money is paid in full for the year.

Discipline

Please read and discuss the Gaston County Student Code of Conduct with your students. We will not tolerate unsafe behavior which causes a disruption to the learning environment. Students are to respect other students' and staff members' property and privacy.

The administration reserves the right to handle discipline issues in accordance with the GCS Student Code of Conduct, including consequences ranging from an administrative conference to out-of-school suspension.

Dress Code. Students should come dressed according to the guidelines in the Code of Conduct. A student's appearance should not be distracting to other students nor should it be disruptive to the learning environment. Students should wear tennis shoes on days that they have PE.

Cell Phones and Smart Watches. Student cell phones and smart watches must be off and out of sight during the instructional day. Devices that are out at inappropriate times may be confiscated and turned into the office for parent pick-up.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important way to extend the educational experience of students. Throughout the year, grade levels will take field trips to locations in our community and state. Students are required to ride school-provided transportation (bus) to and from field trip locations. Additionally, students are expected to follow the GCS Code of Conduct while on field trips.

Students must have a signed permission slip in order to attend field trips, and parents can pay any fees associated with trips via cash, check, or <https://schoolcashionline.com>. Due to space limitations of groups, only parents who will be acting as chaperones (and have an approved volunteer application on file) will be permitted to attend field trips.

Medication

Medication will be administered to students only if parents have provided written permission on an Authorization of Medication form supplied by Gaston County Schools that is also signed by the student's physician. Medication must be in an updated prescription bottle with the label stating the student's name, dosage, and instructions. Students should never be in possession of medication, even over-the-counter medication, while on school grounds. Authorization of medication forms can be picked up in the front office.

School Safety and Visitors

Keeping students and staff safe at school is our top priority. Therefore, we conduct monthly fire drills, tornado drills as scheduled by the state, metal detecting in accordance with GCS policy, and three lockdowns per year, and have a full-time School Resource Officer on campus. We believe it is important for our students to develop situational awareness and to know what to do in the event of an emergency. All safety drills are conducted in accordance with the Gaston County Schools Emergency Plans.

In order to maintain safety at Belmont Central, all visitors to campus must check in at the front office upon arrival and receive a "Visitor" badge, which is to be worn at all times while on school grounds. To receive a "Visitor" badge, you must present your drivers license for scanning.

Parents may begin eating lunch with their children on August 28 - lunch visitors will not be allowed prior to August 28. Parent visitors at lunch will need to sign in via the front office and then eat with their child in the lobby area. Parents should not leave the lobby area for any reason; students will walk themselves back to class when lunch is over. Due to space limitations, we must limit to 2 guests/student at lunch.

Student Recognition and Celebrations

There will be three planned parties during the school year: Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Treats may be given for other holidays. Parents will be invited to attend the Halloween and Christmas parties. Valentine's Day parties will be for students only.

Students are not allowed to receive flowers or balloons at schools. We are also unable to share student information for birthday party invitations. Teachers are only allowed to distribute invitations for birthday parties if all students in the class are receiving an invitation.

Parents are allowed to send in one treat for a student's birthday. It should be dropped off in the office and will be given to the teacher to give to students after their lunch time. At Belmont Central, we know that birthdays are very exciting and important to students, so we recognize students' birthdays via the morning announcements. We cannot allow deliveries (balloons, flowers, etc.) to students at school on birthdays or other occasions.

Additionally, Belmont Central recognizes students of the month for each class each month. Student incentive celebrations will be held for students who have maintained their academic work and behavior.

Asbestos Management

All Gaston County Schools are required to file an Asbestos Management Plan. This plan outlines areas at school sites where asbestos is located. The Asbestos Management Plan for Belmont Central Elementary School is available for your inspection in the front office, should you wish to review it.

Board Policy

Information regarding specific school system policies can be found on the GCS website (www.gaston.k12.nc.us) by hovering over the Board of Education tab. Then click on the Policies link displayed.

Important Dates

Fall 2024

August

- 11 - Second Grade Orientation, 2:30 - 3:30 PM
- 12 - Meet the Teacher, 4:15 - 7:30 PM
- 14 - 🎉FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL 🎉
- 20- RtA and Standards-Based Learning Parent Information Sessions, 5:30
- 23 - First Ice Cream Friday
- 28- Grade 3 Reading BOG
- 29 - Parent Visitors at Lunch Begin

September

- 4 - Labor Day Holiday
- 19- Interim Reports
- 23 - Fall Picture Day

October

- 10 - Early Dismissal (11:30) and Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 11 - No School for Students
- 17- Report Cards
- 28 - 5th Grade Halloween Parties
- 29 - 4th Grade Halloween Parties
- 30 - 3rd Grade Halloween Parties
- 31 - 2nd Grade Halloween Parties

November

- 5-Student Holiday
- 11 - Veterans Day Holiday
- 12 - Make-Up Picture Day
- 20 - Thanksgiving Meal (grades 2/4 parents invited)
- 21-- Interim Reports
- 27-29 - Thanksgiving Break

December

- 3 - Belmont Christmas Parade
- 11- Holiday Meal (grades 3/5 parents invited)
- 16 - 2nd Grade Holiday Parties
- 17 - 3rd Grade Holiday Parties
- 18 - 4th Grade Holiday Parties
- 19 - 5th Grade Holiday Parties
- 20 - 31 - Winter Break

Spring 2025

January

- 1-3 - Winter Break
- 6 - Start of Second Semester
- 9 - Report Cards Distributed
- 20 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

February

- 13-Interim Reports
- 14 - Class Valentine's Day Parties (students only)
- 17 - Student Holiday

March

- 2-6 - Read Across America Week
- 6- Spring Picture Day
- 13 - Early Dismissal (11:30) and Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 14 - Student Holiday
- 20 - Report Cards Distributed

April

- 16-Interim Reports
- 18-Holiday
- 21-25 - Spring Break

May

- 8 - Reading EOG (grades 3 - 5)
- 13 - Math EOG (grades 3 - 5)
- 15 - Science EOG (grade 5)
- 16 - Reading EOG Retest (grade 3)
- 21 - Last Day of School
- 30 - Report Cards Mailed

TBD:

- Field Day
- PTO Fundraiser
- Awards Day Ceremonies



THANK YOU
for all of
your
cooperation
and support!



QUESTIONS,
please call the
office @
704-836-9137