

# Parent Handbook Belmont Elementary School 2024-2025



751 Norwood Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22191

Phone: 703-494-4945

<https://belmontes.pwcs.edu>

## SCHOOL HOURS

8:35 a.m.	Doors open, first bell rings
8:45 a.m.	Tardy bell rings
3:25 p.m.	Dismissal

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**Joy Greene, Principal**  
**Constance Robinson, Assistant Principal**  
**Emmanuelle Hill, Administrative Intern**



## Vision

We are incredibly determined to SOAR because we are **focused**, **passionate**, and **partners** with each other and the greater community.

## Mission

Everyone  
Achieves the  
Goal of  
Lifelong Learning with  
Enthusiasm and  
Success

## Value Statement

We will support the development of all students so that every student will graduate on-time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

# SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Belmont Elementary School, 751 Norwood Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22191

Office: 703-494-4945      FAX: 703-492-0681

Cafeteria: 571-343-5540      Alphabest: 703-453-7128

## OFFICE STAFF

### School Parent Liaison

Gabriella Urbaniak  
*urbanifg@pwcs.edu*

### Registrar

Cynthia Bonilla-Ortiz  
*bonillcs@pwcs.edu*

### Attendance Secretary

Doris Guzman  
*guzmandm@pwcs.edu*

### Financial Specialist

Patricia Pena  
*penapy@pwcs.edu*

### Security Assistant

Sarah Essien  
*essiensa@pwcs.edu*

## SUPPORT STAFF

### Nurse

Audrey Dixon  
*dixonag@pwcs.edu*

### Counselors

Johanna Druen  
*druenjn@pwcs.edu*  
Kareem Jones  
*joneskj1@pwcs.edu*

### Cafeteria Manager

Sandra Portillo  
*portilsm@pwcs.edu*

*Please visit our website to learn more about our team*

**<https://belmontes.pwcs.edu>**



## BELMONT'S HOUSE SYSTEM

We are very excited to implement the House System at Belmont! At Belmont, every student, teacher, and staff member belong to one of four houses. We are **Four Houses and One Family!** The House System is a dynamic, exciting, and proven way to create a positive climate and culture for students and staff. This system has been shown to help students develop positive relationships, increase a sense of belonging, engage students and families, and build a school-wide community. And it is FUN!! Throughout the year, students will earn points for a variety of things including but not limited to effort, helping others, academic achievement, school spirit, and more!

### SOAR 24 Essentials

Students can earn points for their house by modeling our Soar 24 Essentials. These essentials are characteristics of what each student at Belmont should strive to demonstrate each day. When students model an essential, teachers and staff will give their house a point. At the end of each quarter, we will celebrate the winning house. A few of our favorite essentials:

- We are four houses but together we are one family.
- Everyone makes mistakes; learn from them & keep trying.
- No matter what, always be honest.
- Be positive and engaged in your learning. Work hard and be proud of yourself.
- Individually you are important and unique... together we SOAR!

### Réveur

House of Dreamers  
Color: Blue  
House Animal: Wolf  
Hand Signal: Crescent Moons



### Amistad

House of Friendship  
Color: Red  
House Animal: Peacock  
Hand Signal: Heart



### Isibindi

House of Courage  
Color: Green  
House Animal: Lion  
Hand Signal: "Who You With"



### Altruismo

House of Giving  
Color: Black  
House Animal: Griffin  
Hand Signal: Diamond





## **Join Belmont's PTA!**

Belmont's PTA is open to any teacher, parent, grandparent, neighbor, or other community supporters. The goal of the PTA is to support teachers and parents as we work to educate and enhance our Belmont community. Throughout the year, we have community outreach activities, family activities, school fundraisers, and teacher recognitions. There are many opportunities to learn about how to participate in these activities by attending our PTA meetings, which are announced through flyers and emails. On these flyers you will also find out how to become a voting member. Membership directly helps support our school and our family activities. We look forward to seeing you!

Membership dues: \$5



For more information, please contact Belmont's PTA President-  
Brian Hoyle, [bm.hoyle1@gmail.com](mailto:bm.hoyle1@gmail.com)

## **Principal's Advisory Council**

The Principal's Advisory Council function is connected to the Prince William County Schools Strategic Plan, supporting Commitment 3- Family and Community Engagement, Objective 3.1- Prince William County Schools will engage families as authentic partners in education to support academic progress.

The purpose of a Principal's Advisory Council is to provide opportunities for members of the school community to participate in the decision-making process at the local school level. A primary function of the council is to serve as an advisory body to the principal and school leadership team. Members fulfill both representative and advisory roles. While the council does not create a school policy, they play a critical role in helping to shape the continuous improvement plan through feedback and recommendations from the community.

The Principal's Advisory Council meets six times per year. All parents of Belmont students and staff members are welcome to attend the meetings. The meetings will be held in person with the option of participating virtually.

Agenda items include, but are not limited to the following: September- Welcome, Introduction to the School Continuous Improvement Plan; October-Enrollment, Staffing, Approved Budget; December/January- Student Achievement Data, Update on CIP Goals; February- Proposed Budget, Student Achievement Data, Update on CIP Goals; March/April- Update on CIP Goals  
May/June-Adopted Budget, Student Achievement Data, Update on CIP Goals

## **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL**

Arrival and dismissal procedures are designed to ensure the safety of our students, staff, and parents while on campus. Safety is our **Number One** priority! Please follow the guidelines below and the instructions of staff during these times.

### **Arrival Procedures:**

- School doors open at 8:35 a.m. Students may get breakfast and report to their classrooms.
- Students should not arrive before 8:35 a.m. (unless for an approved activity) as staff are not available for proper supervision.
- Parents may go through the Kiss and Ride line or walk their children to the front entrance to tell them goodbye. Staff members will be available to help guide students to classrooms.
- The tardy bell rings at 8:45 a.m. Students will be considered tardy if they arrive after this time. If your child is tardy, please ring the front doorbell and someone will help you. Please have your ID ready.

### **Dismissal Procedures:**

Please let your child's teacher know how your child will dismiss. If there is a change in your child's transportation (one-time or permanent), please call the front office (703-494-4945) or email the office staff with your name, child's name, transportation change, and contact information. **No transportation changes will be accepted after 2:30 p.m.**

- ***Kiss and Ride:*** Kiss and Ride students are dropped off and picked up in the school's back parking lot. Please use Norwood Lane to go around the back of the school near the baseball field to join the Kiss and Ride line. At dismissal, Kiss and Ride students will wait in the gym, and staff



members will call students to meet parents in the rear parking lot. Please adhere to these reminders to ensure a safe and orderly dismissal:

- Parents picking up students in the Kiss and Ride line must have a numbered tag prominently displayed in the front windshield. This lets staff know that the person in the car is authorized to pick up the child. Each family will receive two tags, which will be passed out during the first week of school. For the safety of our students, any person without a numbered tag will be required to park and show valid photo ID, so staff can verify that the child can be dismissed to the person picking up.
  - Please do not get out of your car to pick up your child. This slows the Kiss and Ride process. If you need your child sooner, please contact the front office before 2:30 p.m. to change their transportation for the day.
  - Always follow staff members' instructions to help with a safe and smooth car dismissal. Parents must move quickly out of line after receiving their child. Please do not pass other cars in the line unless directed to do so.
  - Students must exit the RIGHT side of the vehicle only, as getting out on the left side is a safety issue.
- **Bus Dismissal:** Bus riders will be dismissed by bus numbers as buses arrive at the school. Staff members will assist students with loading the correct bus. Please see more bus information below.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Good attendance is an important key to the success of your student at school. Virginia law requires that all children of compulsory school attendance age attend school each day that school is in session unless otherwise provided for by School Board policy or Virginia law. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly (Regulation 724-1).

**Absences:** It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school about their child's absence. Parents should send in a doctor's note, written and signed parent note, or electronic communication stating why their student was absent. Parents also may call (703) 494-4945 to speak with our attendance secretary, Doris Guzman, or any front office staff. If a note or phone call is not received, the absence will be considered unexcused. After five unexcused absences, parents will be contacted by the Principal and School Counselor for an initial intervention conference.

## **BUS INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS**

Our school partners with PWCS Transportation Department to ensure our students' safety to and from school. Several resources are available to parents:

- **Here comes the bus app:** Parents can download the Here Comes the Bus phone app for updates on their child's bus. The app requires a personal email address and the PWCS account code (76348). Parents may also visit the PWCS website (pwcs.edu) and search "bus delays" for information.  
[https://www.pwcs.edu/departments/transportation/here\\_comes\\_the\\_bus](https://www.pwcs.edu/departments/transportation/here_comes_the_bus)
- **Customer Service:** For more information about transportation, parents may contact Transportation Customer Service at 571-402-3940.
- **Kindergarten students:** Kindergarteners must be accompanied to and from the bus stop by a parent, guardian, or other authorized individual. All kindergarten parents/guardians must complete a Kindergarten Authorization Form, and return the completed form to your child's school. Your child will only be released to the authorized person(s) who are:

- Listed on the kindergarten authorization form (please include parents/guardians names); **and**
- Have a valid government/state ID to present to the bus driver each day.
- Your child will be returned to the school if there is no authorized person at the bus stop or the designee does not have a valid government/state ID.

***Riding the bus is a privilege.*** It is very important for students to obey all rules regarding school buses. Please stress to students the importance of following those rules. Failure to do so will result in losing the privilege of riding the bus as well as possible suspension. The following rules have been established by PWCS Transportation Department and must be observed for the safety of all bus students:

1. Be on time; arrive at your bus stop at least 5-10 minutes prior to pick-up.
2. Obey and respect the bus driver.
3. Take a seat immediately and remain seated, facing forward when riding to and from school.
4. Share seats equally.
5. Be courteous and respect school bus property and the property of others.
6. Keep all body parts inside the bus and keep aisles clear.
7. Maintain good conduct. The following are not permitted: smoking, profanity, fire, large objects, eating/drinking, littering, throwing objects, weapons, glass objects, loud noises, fighting, horseplay, vandalism, threats, other violations of the "Code of Behavior"

### **CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

If a student brings a cell phone to school, the cell phone needs to be kept in the student's backpack during the school day and while they are on the bus. All functions must be silenced during the school day. Dual purpose watches may be worn at school, but wireless/cellular features must be turned off during the school day (e.g. must be placed in airplane mode). We do not assume responsibility for the security of devices brought onto school property.

#### **School-Issued Devices**

Each student at Belmont will be issued a Prince William County iPad, complete with case, headphones, and charger. Students and families are responsible for taking care of their devices.

While most problems with devices will be covered by AppleCare, parents/guardians have the option to purchase low-cost student device insurance through the PWCS-approved third-party vendor, Securranty. If purchased, the insurance covers lost or damaged chargers and lost, stolen, or destroyed devices with a zero deductible for one year on a school-issued Apple device. The insurance cost is \$29.95, which may be significantly less than repair or replacement costs without insurance (which could run hundreds of dollars). Visit Securranty website to purchase. <https://securranty.com/pwcs>

### **CODE OF BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE**

Our school is committed to providing a safe and nurturing school environment for learning by following the guidelines outlined in the PWCS Code of Behavior. Our focus is to teach and encourage positive behaviors to students coupled with rules and procedures that will provide an environment that is conducive to learning and help each child develop self-discipline. Most behavioral challenges will be handled by the classroom teacher in accordance with the Code of Behavior. For persistent discipline problems, behavior that results in the interruption of instruction, or presents a safety issue, students

may be referred to administration. It is important for parents, guardians, and students to review and understand the policies, expectations, and consequences outlined in the Code of Behavior. The Code of Behavior can be found online at:

<https://www.pwcs.edu/about-us/code-of-behavior/online-code-of-behavior>

### **ILLNESS**

While we aim to reduce the number of student absences, there will be days when your child needs to stay home due to illness. If your student has a fever of 100.4 F or higher, he/she must remain out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without medication. If you are in doubt about when your child can return to school, consult your physician or PWCS guidelines at

<https://www.pwcs.edu/departments/student-services/attendance/illness>

For more information about Student Health Services,

<https://www.pwcs.edu/departments/student-services/student-health/index>

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER & SCHOOL DELAYS**

Extreme weather conditions may require the closing, delay, or early dismissal of schools. School cancellations or delays will be announced through local media outlets (radio, TV news, etc.). You also may check the Prince William County Schools website or call (703) 791-2776 for a recorded message about school closings.

### **MEALS: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH**

School Food Services offers students nutritious, high-quality meals while at school. As part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Lunch Program, breakfast and lunch will be free for all students this school year. If you have any questions, please contact our cafeteria manager, Sandra Portillo.

### **VISITORS ON CAMPUS**

Visitors to Belmont must report to the school's main office and provide a valid government photo identification to enter the building. The visitor's identification badge shall be worn so that it is visible to students and staff. At the end of the visit, the visitor shall return to the office, turn in the visitor's identification badge, and collect their photo identification before exiting school.