



**BELMONT RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
*Home of the* **RIVER HAWKS**

**Ryan Hitchman**  
Principal

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Assistant Principal

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**19045 Upper Belmont  
Leesburg, Virginia 20176  
Telephone: (571) 252-2220  
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**School Hours  
8:40 a.m. to 3:28 p.m.**

**Website**  
**<http://www.lcps.org/Page/2105>**

# **River Hawk Code**

**I am Respectful,  
I am Responsible,  
I am Ready to Learn ...  
I am a River Hawk!**



## STUDENT CALENDAR 2012-2013

August 27	First Day of School for Students
September 3	Holiday (Labor Day)
October 8	Holiday (Columbus Day)
November 2	End of the Grading Period
November 5-6	Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Days)
November 21-23	Holiday (Thanksgiving)
December 24-28/31	Winter Break
January 1	Holiday (New Year's) (Classes resume January 2)
January 17	End of Second Grading Period
January 18	Moveable Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
January 21	Holiday (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
February 18	Holiday (Presidents' Day)
March 22	End of Third Grading Period
March 25-29	Spring Break
April 1	Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
May 27	Holiday (Memorial Day)
June 6	Last Day of School for Students/End of Grading Period

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

It is necessary to close schools occasionally because of snow, ice, or emergency conditions. When conditions require schools to be closed for the day or to open late, announcements will be made through local radio and TV stations and posted on our website at <http://www.loudoun.k12.va.us/closings.htm>. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.** It is essential that telephone lines be kept open for emergency calls. When conditions require students to be dismissed early, you will receive an electronic phone or email message, announcements will be made by local stations and posted on the website to notify parents in advance of the time students will be released.

**School Phone Number: 571-252-2220      Absentee Line: 571-252-2222**

## **THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Belmont Ridge Middle School's mission and purpose is to ensure the future success of our students by providing an equitable, engaging environment of educational excellence. Our staff works to support all students in making a positive transition from elementary to high school. The curriculum provides all students the opportunity to strengthen and advance their academic and social skills, while addressing developmental needs and emotional growth.

Belmont Ridge Middle School schedules students on interdisciplinary teams in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. Students work with a team of teachers who provide a rigorous curriculum aligned with the Virginia standards. Academic success is an expectation for all students at Belmont Ridge Middle School.

Students are assigned eight classes over two school days. This type of schedule is called an alternate day block schedule. Each day our students attend four ninety minute classes. A variety of learning activities occur during each class.

Please see the Middle School Program of Studies for additional information.

### **Interims**

All students will receive interims at the midpoint of each nine-week grading period so both students and parents are aware of the status of each student's learning.

### **Semester Examinations and Grades**

Semester examinations will be given to all eighth graders and to any students enrolled in a high school credited course. Semester grades will be determined by combining the two nine-week grades and semester examination.

### **Promotion Guidelines**

To be promoted from grade six to seven and from grade seven to eight, a student must pass a minimum of three of the four basic academic subjects: (1) language arts, (2) social studies, (3) mathematics, and (4) science. To be promoted from grade eight to nine, a student must pass the equivalent of four two-semester courses. Three of the courses must be from the required academic courses: (1) English, (2) mathematics, (3) science, and (4) civics. One of the courses must come from health and physical education or any elective that is a one-year course or two one-semester courses.

### **Make-up Work**

Whenever a student is absent, a reasonable amount of time, usually consistent with the length of the absence, will be given to make up work missed. Absent students may check their teacher's web pages for assignments they have missed. Students need to take the responsibility to initiate immediate action to make up work. Upon such request, the teacher will provide assignments, tests, and other work that must be made up and indicate when it is due. Make-up work turned in within the time allowed will be graded on the same basis as other work.

### **Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged. They are an effective means of communicating. Parents should not hesitate to contact the teacher/counselor and make an appointment for a conference.

### **Standardized Testing**

Each school year all students are administered the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. The results enable the school to evaluate the total school program as well as identify student strengths and weaknesses.

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

### Honesty in Assigned Work

Students at Belmont Ridge Middle School are responsible for their learning; consequently, honesty is one of our pillars of character. Students are expected to do their own work on all tests, papers, projects, and other work unless otherwise directed. Incidents of academic dishonesty shall be reported to the administration and to the parents. Disciplinary action may then be imposed.



### Grading Scale

At the end of each nine-week grading period, report cards are issued to students to be taken home to parents. Reporting symbols and their numerical values are:

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent		Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent
A+	98-100		C	73-76
A	93-97		C-	70-72
A-	90-92		D+	67-69
B+	87-89		D	63-66
B	83-86		D-	60-62
B-	80-82		F	0 -59
C+	77-79			

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE NOTIFICATION

### Attendance

The General Assembly of Virginia has recognized the importance of regular attendance by enacting a compulsory school attendance law for persons of school age. It has also provided penalties for students who decide to be absent without justification, for parents and guardians who do not require their children to attend school, and for others who may encourage or induce students to be absent or who employ or harbor absent students.

Students have a responsibility to attend all scheduled classes and other assigned activities unless excused by the principal. They should never leave the school building or grounds prior to the dismissal bell without official written permission. Students who violate these rules are subject to suspension from school.

### Absences

Recent action by the General Assembly requires Belmont Ridge Middle School to consider any unconfirmed student absence as unexcused. A record of all absences that are not confirmed by the parent must be maintained, with specific legal action required by school administrators. With this in mind, **parents must call the attendance line at (571) 252-2222**. The absentee line is available from 4:00 p.m. until 8:30 a.m. during school days and all hours of the weekend. Otherwise, call the main office during school hours. If it is impossible to call the attendance line or the main office, please send a written excuse or doctor's note to the attendance office upon the child's return to school.

### Excused Absences

There are circumstances that may prevent a student's attendance in school. Such absences, when justifiable, are classified as excused absences for which there is no penalty. The principal will excuse students who are absent for any of the following reasons:

- ❖ personal illness
- ❖ death in the family
- ❖ medical or dental appointments
- ❖ court appearances
- ❖ religious holidays

The principal **may** excuse students who are absent for any of the following reasons:

- ❖ illness in the immediate family which requires the student to be absent
- ❖ emergencies
- ❖ trips or activities which enhance or extend education.

Parents should call the school to report their child being absent for the day and provide the information below. In the event telephone contact has not been made, a student, upon return, must report to the house office with a note containing the following information:

- ❖ full name of the student
- ❖ reason for the absence
- ❖ exact date(s) of the absence
- ❖ signature of the parent or guardian.



### Unexcused Absence

All absences not excused by the principal are classified as unexcused absences.

### Suspension Absence

Absences caused by a student's suspension from school are excused. Students will be allowed to make up missed work in a timely manner.

### Tardiness to School

Student must sign in at the main office and obtain a pass from the secretary. Please have your student bring a note from a doctor's or dentist's appointment. Students then sign in at their house office before proceeding to class.

### Tardiness to Classes

Students are given five minutes between classes and are expected to arrive on time. **Students are expected to be in their seat when the bell rings.** Students who continually fail to comply will be sent to the dean.

### Early Arrival

Students who arrive at school prior to 8:25 AM will report to the school cafeteria.

### Early Dismissal

Students may be officially released to their parents during the school day. A parental note should be taken to the house office at the beginning of the day, indicating the reason for and time of dismissal. Students must sign out in the house office before meeting their parents in the main office. Parents must pick up and sign out their children **in the main office**. Parents/guardians are required to show a valid photo ID to enter the building.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### School Nurse

The school has a registered nurse on duty for administering first aid and prescribed medication. Students who become ill should request permission to see the nurse and sign out in the house office (except for emergencies). The school nurse will determine if a student is unable to return to class, and parents will be notified.

### Prescription Medication

Parents of students who require oral medication are requested to administer such medication at home. If students must take medication while at school, **parents should supply medication in the original container with written instructions from the attending physician stating dosage, type of medication, and how it is to be administered. Students are not permitted to transport medication (prescription or over-the-counter) to/from school.** All medications must be kept in the clinic and are administered by the school nurse.

### **Emergency Evacuation Drills**

Fire drills are held each month during the school year except in September when one is held each week. The proper procedure to be followed in the event the building must be evacuated or locked down will be thoroughly reviewed with students during the first week of school. Evacuation drills from school buses, tornado/hurricane drills, and “Shelter-In-Place” drills are also practiced. Additionally, lock-down and general building evacuation drills will be conducted.

**Responsible student behavior is required when practicing any drill or routine.**

### **Parent Drop Off/Pick Up of Students**

**The driveway in front of the school is reserved for buses and should remain free of automobile traffic.** All visitors should use the parking lot to the left of the school. The Kiss ‘n’ Go area on the left side of the building is designated for dropping off and picking up students. Please follow all staff instructions to ensure the safety of students and staff.

### **Visitors**

All visitors must show a valid photo ID to enter the school. This ID must be displayed to our office staff using the security camera system located on the wall by the front door. Once allowed into the school please report to the main office. All visitors must sign in, and display the *Visitor’s Pass* they receive at all times.

Written approval from the principal is required for any non-Belmont Ridge student to attend a school function or activity.



### **Bikes, Skateboards, and Rollerblades**

Bikes are to be locked in the bike rack during school hours. Students are not permitted to ride skateboards or rollerblades on the school campus.

### **Hall Passes**

Any student excused from a class must have a signed agenda or a written pass, which is dated and signed by the excusing teacher.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

### **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports**

Belmont Ridge Middle School supports one of the foremost advances in school-wide discipline, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. “PBIS has an emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Instead of using a piecemeal approach of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, buses, and restrooms). Positive behavior support is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occurs. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining primary (school-wide), secondary (classroom), and tertiary (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making targeted behaviors less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional.” (PBIS, 2009)

## **Bullying & Harassment**

The success of all students at Belmont Ridge Middle School requires an environment conducive to learning. Bullying or harassment is not conducive to learning because it is a persistent and unwelcome action inflicted on another person with the intent to cause pain, fear, or discomfort. Students and parents are encouraged to report any incident of bullying or harassment to a teacher, dean, counselor or principal. Students may email or personally report incidents. All reports will be investigated.



## **Reference to Division Policy**

The listing of the policies throughout this handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive. Exact wording of specific policies enacted by the Loudoun County School Board may be found in the *Board's Policy Manual* (principal's office and media center) and in the *Student's Rights and Responsibilities* handbook (issued to each student). Violation of school policies may result in the following consequences:

**In-School Restriction:** In-school restriction is the temporary, secluded assignment of a student for disciplinary purposes. Students are expected to complete all assigned work. We expect all students to meet the requirements of in-school restriction.

**Suspension:** Whereas all students benefit from daily instruction in the classroom, students may be suspended for behavior that interferes with the education of others, prevents the orderly operation of school, threatens an individual's physical well-being, or violates a rule. Refer to the *Student Rights and Responsibilities* handbook for examples of conduct that may constitute cause for removal from school.

**Expulsion:** Being expelled means permanent removal from school. Students must be aware of Drug and Weapons Policies for Loudoun County Schools. These policies are discussed at the beginning of each school year during the *Student Rights and Responsibilities* presentations, and are available on the Loudoun County website.

### ***Behavior subject to suspension or expulsion includes, but is not limited to:***

- ❖ Possessing, using, or being under the influence of **alcohol** on school property, including school buses, during any school-sponsored activity at any time.
- ❖ Using, possessing, or distributing **drugs** or **drug-related paraphernalia** or being under the influence of illegal drugs while on school property, on school buses, or in connection with any school activity.
- ❖ Violating the **weapons** policy.
- ❖ Provoking or participating in a **fight**.
- ❖ Participating in **gambling** activities of any kind.
- ❖ Harassing, intimidating, or participating in **gang-type activities**, or **harassment** based upon race, religion, ethnic origin, gender or ability. Using or possessing **tobacco** products.

## **Physical contact**

Physical contact is prohibited.

## DRESS CODE

It is important at Belmont Ridge Middle School that we provide an atmosphere where learning can flourish and the security and dignity of each person is protected. The primary responsibility for proper attire and grooming of students rests with the parent of each student. However, the school has the responsibility to see that students do not present a health or safety risk to themselves or other students. The attire and grooming of students should not prevent them from performing regular required school activities and should not cause a disruption of the orderly functioning of school. **The more casual the attire, the more casual the attitude toward school.** With this in mind, the following rules will be in effect at Belmont Ridge Middle School:

- 1) Middle school students grow quickly. Please remember that last fall's outfits may be too small! Clothing that is skin-tight or low cut is not permitted.
- 2) All shirts, sweaters, and blouses need to cover the shoulders, midriff, chest area, and underarms. Tank top and spaghetti strap tops are not permitted at school.
- 3) See-through clothing and swim wear are not permitted at school.
- 4) All shorts and skirts should be an appropriate length. Guideline: Shorts and skirts should be no shorter than the length of a student's arms and finger tips when hanging at their sides.
- 5) Pants should be an appropriate length, worn at the waist, and not drag on the ground.
- 6) Underwear exposed or worn as outerwear, pajamas, and sleepwear is not permitted.
- 7) All students are required to place all jackets, coats, and pullovers in their lockers. A sweater or sweatshirt may be worn in classrooms.
- 8) Clothing that degrades or offends any person's, gender, culture, religion, or occupation is not permitted at Belmont Ridge Middle School.
- 9) Clothing that depicts or promotes pornography, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, violence, or cult/gang activities are not permitted at Belmont Ridge Middle School. Clothing with offensive or inappropriate language written or implied on them is not permitted at Belmont Ridge.
- 10) Gang-related articles/dress such as bandannas, chains, headbands, rolled up pants and jewelry are not permitted on the campus of Belmont Ridge Middle School.
- 11) Hats or head coverings may not be worn in the building, unless worn for religious, health-related or cultural purposes.
- 12) Any type of attire including hair color/make-up that is a disruption to the school environment is not permitted at school.

***PARENTS* – We need your help and support to keep our students safe, comfortable and focused on learning. Please assist your student in dressing appropriately for school.**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **After-School Activity**

Students may remain in the building for an activity or work **under the supervision of a teacher**. Activity buses are provided Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday and depart school at 4:30 p.m.



### **Agenda**

The school provides all students with an agenda. Students are expected to bring their agenda to every class and to carry it with them. It will be used as a hall pass for the student and to record homework assignments. Additional agendas may be purchased while supplies last.

### **Authority of Teachers**

Teachers will establish rules for their classrooms and any school-sponsored activities. They will be consistent with the procedures outlined in this publication. Students are expected to abide by them throughout the year.

### **Back Packs**

Backpacks must remain in lockers during the school day.



### **Bus Transportation**

While on the bus, students are under the direct supervision of the bus driver. Students are expected to remain seated, keep arms and heads inside the bus, talk in a manner which does not disturb the driver, and behave in a manner that is expected at school. Inappropriate behavior may result in the loss of transportation privileges. Bus drivers may assign seating.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior while walking to and from any bus stop and while waiting at the bus stop. The school administration may investigate and discipline students for any inappropriate conduct at these locations.

Students who ride to school on a bus are expected to return home on the same bus. Occasionally parents may wish to have their student ride a different bus after school. In this case the student must bring written permission to the house secretary at the beginning of the day. A bus pass will be issued to the student, which the student will present to the bus driver upon boarding.



### **Cafeteria and Food Service**

Our cafeteria provides a wide variety of lunch items each day. **All food and drinks must be consumed in the cafeteria.** Students are responsible for disposing of their own trash and for the cleanliness of their seating area. Students may pay cash for lunches and a la carte items, or they may open an account with the cafeteria. A lunch consists of an entrée, a choice of fruits and vegetables, and milk. Free and reduced-price meals are available to students whose parents qualify. Applications are available in the main office.

### **Change of Address, Telephone Numbers or E-mail Address**

Please notify the main office in **writing** if an address, e-mail address, phone number, or parent's work phone number changes during the school year.

### **Electronic Devices/Phones/Toys**

Students are expected to turn their cell phones off and lock them in their school locker during the school day. Students are prohibited from operating personal communication devices (such as cellular phones), MP3 players, iPods, and gaming systems during the school day. Laser pointers are not permitted at any time on school property. School personnel may confiscate electronic devices. Any violation of this policy may result in student's loss of privileges of possessing such devices or disciplinary action in accordance with our code of conduct.

### **Facilities**

Students are expected to help keep the school clean and furniture in good condition. Students who deface or destroy school property are subject to disciplinary action and are liable for damages.

### **Gum**

Gum is not permitted at Belmont Ridge Middle School.

### **Hall Behavior**

Students are expected to walk quietly on the right side in the hall. Unsafe, disruptive, or endangering conduct will result in disciplinary action.

### **Library (Media Center)**

A limit of five books may be checked out for a two-week period. Students with overdue books will not be allowed to check out additional materials until overdue books are returned. The borrower must pay for lost or damaged materials.

### **Lockers**

Lockers are provided for the purpose of storing clothing, books, backpacks, lunches, and other materials. Defacing the locker (inside or outside) by writing, scratching, or pasting stickers/ pictures is forbidden. Lockers are the property of LCPS.

- ❖ Administrators reserve the right to enter any locker when it is necessary and proper to do so.
- ❖ Locker problems should be reported to the dean or physical education teacher.
- ❖ Locker combinations are confidential and should never be shared with friends.

### **Lost and Found**

Clothing and other items should be clearly labeled with the owner's name. Lost and found items may be claimed in the main office, gym office, and the house offices.



### **Minute of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance**

As we begin each day, students observe a Minute of Silence as mandated by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Following the observance, students stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Most students will be in classrooms for the Minute of Silence and the Pledge. However, students who may be at their lockers or in the hallway should stop what they are doing, remain silent, and then recite the pledge before proceeding to class.

### **Physical Education**

Students are expected to dress in a uniform and participate in physical education. Proper dress includes school uniform, white socks, and tennis shoes. Uniforms are purchased from the physical education department.

### **Pictures**

Early in the school year, student pictures are taken and made available to parents. This is a fund-raising activity for the school as well as a service to parents. Proceeds will be used to purchase materials for the school.

### **Preparation for Class**

Students must be prepared for class. This means coming to class on time with notebooks, textbooks, agenda, paper, pencil, pen and any other required materials.



### **Parent/Teacher/Student Organization**

Belmont Ridge Middle School has a PTSO that holds regular meetings open to parents, students and teachers. PTSO members plan projects and activities that build a positive learning environment. All parents and staff are encouraged to join and participate. Further information is available in the main office and on the school webpage.

### **School Store**

The school store is located in the hallway between the library and main office. Times of operation are posted outside the school store. School supply items and school spirit items are available in the store.

### **Telecommunications Acceptable Use Practice and Policy**

The Internet gives students access to a wide variety of information. When using computers, students will act responsibly. Students are required to sign an *Acceptable Use Practices* agreement and must use appropriate language and behavior on computers and networks. Appropriate use of computers is an expectation.

### **Telephone Calls**

Students will not be called from class to answer telephone calls. Office phones are for official business and are available to students at the discretion of the administration.



### **Textbooks**

Textbooks are issued to students without charge. Students are responsible for textbooks issued. Students are encouraged to use book covers (adhesive covers may not be used) and required to write their name clearly in ink on the inside cover of each textbook. At the end of the year, books will be checked and students will be charged for damaged or lost books.

### **Web Page**

Our school web page has up-to-date information about our school, our students, and our teachers. Belmont Ridge's web address is: <http://www.lcps.org/Page/2105>

Teachers post homework assignments and other class information. Students and parents are encouraged to check the website daily.

### **Yearbook**

Orders for yearbooks are taken in the fall, and yearbooks are delivered to students at the end of the school year. Belmont Ridge Middle School is not responsible for lost or stolen yearbooks once the book has been issued to a student.



## HELPFUL HINTS

Situation, Problem, or Concern	Solution
<b>Your parents bring you to school after school begins.</b>	Sign in at the main office and report to your house secretary.
<b>Your bus is late arriving at school.</b>	Report to the main office.
<b>You must leave early.</b>	Report to the house secretary before school begins and present a note from your parent. The note must be signed by the parent and state the time and reason for the early dismissal.
<b>You become ill during school hours.</b>	Have your teacher sign your agenda, and then obtain a pass from your house secretary and report to the clinic. The nurse will give you further directions.
<b>You are unable to participate in PE.</b>	Present a medical excuse to the nurse before school.
<b>A book or other personal possession is lost.</b>	Before or after school, check with each of your teachers, in the cafeteria, gym/locker room, house offices, and any classroom you may have been in during the day.
<b>You find an item that does not belong to you.</b>	Take the item to your house office.
<b>You have difficulty with friends or peers.</b>	See your guidance counselor or dean.
<b>A teacher keeps you after class and it causes you to be late to the next class.</b>	Ask the teacher for a pass and present it to the teacher of your next class.
<b>You observe damaged equipment or destruction of school property.</b>	Report the damage to your dean.
<b>You observe illegal activity.</b>	Report your observations to an adult.
<b>You want to ride another bus to a friend's house.</b>	Obtain a bus pass by presenting a note from your parents to the house secretary before school begins.
<b>You discover you have inadvertently brought an illegal item to school.</b>	See your dean immediately and hand over the item.