



Loudoun County Public Schools Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ASHBURN, Va. - Five Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) middle schools – Belmont Ridge, Brambleton, Farmwell Station, River Bend and Smart’s Mill – have been honored by the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) as Schools of Distinction.

These recognitions were awarded in 2022 and 2023. (Belmont Ridge, River Bend and Smart’s Mill were honored in 2022, Brambleton and Farmwell Station this year.) Only 23 Schools of Distinction were recognized nationwide. These exceptional schools serve as model middle schools, providing valuable professional learning opportunities and best practices for other middle schools.

AMLE's Schools of Distinction Program was established in 2022 to celebrate and acknowledge schools that go above and beyond in creating an environment that nurtures middle school students. Each honored school undergoes a rigorous application process, including self-reflection, school evaluation, a virtual site visit by middle school experts and the development of a strategic vision for continued growth and improvement. This distinction is not a one-time achievement; schools must engage in continuous school improvement and reapply for this honor every four years.

The key practices that AMLE highlighted in honoring LCPS schools included:

- A comprehensive professional development framework;
- A daily advisory;
- Project-based learning;
- Interdisciplinary teaming;
- Embedded practices to promote equity;
- A unified mental health team;
- Community partnership events;
- Multi-tiered systems of support;
- Instructional facilitators/coaches;
- Student-led conferences;

- A robust transition program into and out of the middle school;
- And personalized learning.

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