

# Winn Brook School

## Parent Handbook

97 Waterhouse Road  
Belmont, MA 02478



If you need assistance reading this document or other school publications, please contact the building principal to obtain translation services.

Spanish

Si Ud. necesita ayuda para leer este documento u otras publicaciones escolares, por favor llame al director de la escuela para obtener servicios de traducción.

French

Pour obtenir une traduction de ce document ou d'autres documents de l'école, veuillez contacter le(la) directeur(directrice) de l'école de votre enfant.

Portuguese

Se você precisar assistência a ler este documento ou qualquer outra publicação escolar, por favor contatar o mestre da escola para obter serviços de tradução.

German

Falls Sie mit diesem Dokument oder anderen Schulpublikationen Verständnisprobleme haben, fragen Sie bitte beim Schuldirektor wegen eines Übersetzungsdienstes an.

Japanese

もしこの文書、あるいはその他の学校刊行物を読む際に分からない部分があれば校長に連絡して翻訳サービスを頼んでください。

Chinese

如果您在阅读本文或其它学校出版物的时候需要翻译，请与校长联系。

Korean

이 문서나 기타 학교 인쇄물을 읽는데 도움이 필요하신다면, 건물 책임자에게 부탁하여 번역 도움을 받으십시오.

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## **Health & Safety**

### **School Closing or Delayed Opening**

Inclement weather may force the closing of schools or delay the opening. Local television and radio stations are the best source of NO SCHOOL notices. Announcements are made on these stations:

**WBZ, CH 4** ([www.wbz.com](http://www.wbz.com)) and radio ([www.wbz1030.com](http://www.wbz1030.com)),

**WCVB, CH 5** ([www.thebostonchannel.com](http://www.thebostonchannel.com)),

**WHDH, CH 7** ([www.whdh.com](http://www.whdh.com)), WRKO radio ([www.wrko.com](http://www.wrko.com))

There may be days when parents feel that their children should be kept home due to severe weather. Although we must record these as absences, we recognize that parents may, on a rare occasion, decide to keep a children at home for safety reasons.

For the most up-to-date information on delayed opening during inclement weather in the Belmont schools, please go to <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/emergency/>.

### **Emergency Planning**

In order to be prepared for an emergency, we do practice fire drills and “lock-down” procedures. For the most up-to-date information on emergency planning in the Belmont schools, please go to <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/emergency/>.

### **Health Services**

Each school has a health clinic operated by a registered nurse whose time may be shared with other schools should emergencies arise. Medications may be dispensed to students at school by our registered nurse. Parents/guardians must complete the “Parent Authorization Form for Medical Administration” and the child’s licensed prescriber must complete the “Medication Order Form.” All medications must be brought to the school nurse in either the original pharmacy labeled container or original manufacturer’s container. **Please do not send medications to school with your child.** More information on health services may be found at: <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/health/>

### **Change in Dismissal Routines**

If your child’s dismissal plans change, please call the Winn Brook office (617-993-5700) or send a note to the teacher. Teachers are generally unable to check email during the school day, so to be sure that the message is received, a phone call to the office is preferred.

## **General Information for Parents**

### **Hours**

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays: 8:50am -3:00pm

Regular Wednesdays: 8:50am – 1:50pm

Early Release Wednesdays: 8:50am-11:50am

Kindergarten Half Day Program: 8:50am-12:05pm

Before-school supervision begins at 8:35am. In order to ensure safety, students should NOT arrive prior to this time. Students wait outside (weather permitting) until the bell rings at 8:45am. Parents must come to the office through the front doors to sign-in any child who is tardy. **If a child is to be absent or tardy, it is important that parents/guardians call our attendance line: 617-993-5702.**

If we do not receive a call from you and your child is not in attendance, we will contact you by phone.

Once the school day ends, we do not provide after-school supervision in any of the exterior play spaces. Students who walk are expected to go directly home. They should not stay to play on the park or playground without adult supervision.

## Homework

Our School Advisory Council surveyed both parents and staff in order to develop guidelines for homework. While the research seems to be inconclusive regarding the value of homework at the elementary level, it is thought to encourage responsibility and time-management skills. We also believe that it is helpful in promoting both reading fluency and math fact fluency. Based on our research, teacher input and parent feedback, our School Advisory Council developed the following guidelines.

### Expected Total Time Including Assigned Reading

Kindergarten:	no homework
Grade 1:	15-20 minutes
Grade 2:	20-30 minutes
Grade 3:	25-35 minutes
Grade 4:	35-45 minutes

## School Meals

Lunch is available at each school.

- **Menus and Prices**

Menus are emailed to families at the beginning of each month and are also posted online at: <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Home/Food-Services/School-Lunch>

The full elementary lunch price is \$2.75 and the cost for those who qualify for reduced meal benefits is \$.40 .

- **How to pay? What do I need? What does my child need?**

Meals can be paid for by cash/check or online via [myschoolbucks.com](http://myschoolbucks.com). Checks can be made payable to "Belmont School Lunch" and sent in envelope to school with the full name of the child (same process for cash). For online payments, you will need your child's 7-digit ID number. This number can be obtained by contacting the Food Service office at 617-993-5871.

Your child will need his/her unique 4-digit PIN number which has been assigned. This 4-digit PIN is typed in at the register onto a PIN pad (similar to a simple calculator). This number can also be obtained by contacting our office, your child's teacher or the cafeteria cashier. If they do not know their PIN at the register, the cashier can easily look students up by their last names.

- **Free and Reduced Meal Benefits**

Free and reduced meal assistance applications are available on the school website. Applications must be completed in full and returned to Dustin O'Brien at Belmont High School (221 Concord Ave, Belmont, MA 02478).

- **Questions?**

Feel free to contact our Food Service Director during school hours at 617-993-5871.

## Lost and Found

Please encourage your child to check our Lost and Found area for any missing items. This area is located on the first floor at the entrance to the kindergarten corridor. Our PTA checks it for overflow and announces dates by which items need to be retrieved. Items left beyond these dates are donated to a local charity. Parents are welcome to sign in at the office and check the area themselves.

## PTA

The Winn Brook PTA plays a vital role in our school community. They plan before/after school enrichment classes, fund enrichment programs which take place during the school day, organize library volunteers, host wonderful community building events, assist with landscaping, maintain our Lost and Found area, run curriculum related family events such as Math and Science Nights, and so much more. There are countless ways to get involved in the PTA whether you have a limited amount of time to volunteer or are able to make a long term commitment. Please see our PTA webpage for more information: <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/winnbrook/pta/>

## **Volunteers**

All volunteers and other individuals who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children in the Belmont Public Schools must complete a criminal offender records information (CORI) background check. Applications are available in the main office of all Belmont Schools. For School Committee policies relating to CORI checks in the Belmont Public Schools, please go to <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/uploads/docs/sc/policies/0000/Crofts0005.pdf>.

## **Gifts for School Personnel**

The state's laws and regulations prohibit school employees from accepting any gift that has a value of \$50 or more — whether in the form of cash, event tickets, meals, or goods. The State Ethics Commission created an exemption related to class gifts for teachers: "Under the exemption, the parents and students of a class, acting together, may give a gift worth up to \$150 to a teacher, provided that the gift is identified only as being from the class, and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the teacher. A single class gift worth up to \$150, or several class gifts during the school year with a total value up to \$150, may be given."

If there are individuals and groups who do wish to recognize a teacher or group of educators, they might want to consider a contribution to the school's PTA or to the Foundation for Belmont Education. Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible, and Foundation grants support programming and needs of the Belmont Public Schools. The Foundation is happy to receive gifts in the name of an educator(s). (Foundation for Belmont Education, PO Box 518, Belmont, MA 02478: [www.fbe-belmont.org](http://www.fbe-belmont.org)).

## **Student Records**

The State Board of Education has adopted regulations pertaining to student records. The regulations apply to all public elementary and secondary schools. They are designed to ensure parents and students the rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and distribution of student records. They guide school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of students' records.

Under state law (603 CMR 23.00), parents (and students upon reaching 14 years of age or 9<sup>th</sup> grade) have the right to see the contents of their child's student record within 10 school days of making a request. They also have the right to copies of anything in the student record. Copies of the law may be obtained through the school.

## **Academic Reporting and Support** **Reporting Student Progress**

A student's progress is reported to parents/guardians through written reports and scheduled conferences. In January and June, a written report is provided. In October/November and March a scheduled conference will take place to discuss student progress. In addition, teachers provide informal feedback to students and to parents/guardians on a regular basis. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school when concerns or questions arise. For School Committee policies relating to reporting pupil progress in the Belmont Public Schools, please go to <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/uploads/docs/sc/policies/5000/Crofts5006.pdf>

## **Response to Intervention**

While we are committed to teaching all children, not all students learn in the same way and at the same pace. Therefore, we use a multi-tiered model of teaching known as Response to Intervention (RtI). The purpose of RtI is to identify and support students with learning needs, primarily in the areas of literacy, mathematics and behavior. Tier I instruction is provided to all students in the general education classroom. When screening assessments indicate that children are not meeting the expected benchmarks, they are given specialized, small group instruction (Tier II). This may be done in or outside of the classroom and may involve the classroom teacher, a trained professional aide, or a specialist. Progress is carefully monitored and if it is not adequate, Tier III interventions are put in place. These

involve more frequent, targeted instruction from a specialist. Rtl is a proactive approach which enables us to quickly respond to students' needs so that they do not fall substantially behind their peers.

## **Special Education**

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are developed for students who have been determined by a Team evaluation to have a disability, and as a consequence are unable to progress effectively in the general education program without specially designed instruction, or are unable to access the general curriculum without a related service.

For the most up-to-date information regarding Special Education for Belmont's elementary schools, please go to <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Home/Student-Services/Special-Education>

## **504 Plans**

The Belmont Public School District will ensure that no student with a disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Amended Act (ADAA) within the District's jurisdiction will be denied, because of his/her disability, participation in curricular, intramural, or interscholastic activities or any of the services offered or rendered regularly to the students of this District.

No otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by the Belmont Public School District. The District is committed to ensure that students with Section 504 disabilities be identified, evaluated, and provided with a free appropriate public education. The District does not discriminate on the basis of disability with regard to admission, access to education services, treatment or employment in its programs and activities.

504 Plans may be written when a student has an impairment which substantially limits a life activity and he/she needs accommodations to access the general education curriculum. More information may be found at: <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Home/Student-Services/Special-Education>

## **Bullying**

Arguments, confrontations, and fighting sometimes happen between siblings, schoolmates, teammates, even best friends. Unkind words might be spoken. Names may be called. Pushes can lead to shoves. Is it bullying? In many cases, it is not. Usually, such quarrels are simply clashes that can be resolved. They are a normal part of growing up and learning social skills.

Sometimes, however, these actions are intentional acts of bullying. To help distinguish bullying from routine childhood conflicts, look for these hallmarks\*:

- **Bullying is intentional.** The target does not knowingly provoke the bully and may have made it clear that the behavior is unwelcome.
- **The behavior is often repetitive.** Bullying generally is carried out repeatedly over time. It can sometimes be a single incident.
- **The incident involves hurtful acts, words, or other behavior.** Bullying is an oppressive or negative act intended to hurt someone else.
- **The act is committed by one or more people against another.** Bullying can be done by a single person or by a group.
- **There is a real or perceived imbalance of power.** A child without power cannot bully. Power can be defined as physical strength, social status, or intimidating behavior.

*\*Adapted from Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities, U.S. Dept of Education*

The Belmont Public Schools is committed to maintaining a school environment free of behavior that infringes on the physical and emotional safety and well-being of any student. The Belmont Public Schools shall not tolerate bullying or cyber bullying as defined by Massachusetts Law Chapter 71, section 37O. The BPS Bullying Prevention Plan and Incident Reporting Form may be found at: <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Families/Bullying-Prevention-Plan/BPI-Plan>

We take many steps to prevent bullying by creating a safe and supportive school environment focused on our core values of respect, community and high expectations. In addition to classroom and school-wide practices which support a positive culture, we explicitly teach social emotional skills in order for students to:

- develop self-awareness and self management skills,
- use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships, &
- develop decision-making skills and responsible behaviors. (From Illinois State Board of Education's Social/Emotional Learning Standards)

## **Behavior and Discipline**

- After consulting with the parents and appropriate school personnel, the principal may issue appropriate consequences and facilitate corrective action designed to help the student appropriately manage his/her school behavior.
- In accordance with Belmont School Committee Policy 5014 (<http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Portals/0/Docs/SCPolicies/5000/Crofts5014.pdf>), school lockers and desks assigned to individual students remain the property of the school and the administration reserves the right to open and inspect any locker or desk and its contents at any time. Personal property may be searched by authorized school officials when there is a reasonable suspicion that a student's property contains stolen articles, illegal items, or other contraband as defined by law or school policy
- If the principal determines that a formal suspension or expulsion is necessary, the procedures stated in the Belmont School Committee's Policy 5013 (<http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Portals/0/Docs/SCPolicies/5000/Crofts5013.pdf>) will be followed.
- In accordance with Belmont School Committee Policy 5015, if a law enforcement officer without a court order or warrant requests to question a Belmont Public Schools student at school or while the student is participating in a school sponsored activity, the principal shall ensure that the interrogation takes place privately, in the presence of the students' parents/guardians or an administrator when the parents/guardians have authorized a school administrator to act in their place.
- Harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, color, national origin, age, sexual orientation, and handicap in any form is illegal and will not be tolerated. Such harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or pictures which are derogatory to either gender or to race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation or handicapped individuals or groups. Any questions in this regard may be addressed to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Belmont Public Schools, 644 Pleasant Street, Belmont, MA 02478. See our policy 0002 at: <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Portals/0/Docs/SCPolicies//0000/Crofts0002.pdf>
- The discipline of a student who has been identified as having special needs is subject to the requirements of state and federal laws and regulations and the student's Individualized Education Program. The Superintendent shall ensure that each school observes the legal requirements and procedural safeguards for discipline of students with special needs.

- In accordance with Massachusetts' educational regulations (603 CMR 46.00), the Winn Brook staff does NOT use physical restraint for discipline or punishment. As a last resort, it may be used to protect students or other persons from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Physical restraint is defined as "direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement." It does not include brief physical contact to promote student safety, provide guidance, teach a skill, redirect attention, provide comfort or escort a child without the use of force. Restraints are reported to the principal and parents are informed.
- No student, employee, student organization, or school organization under the control of the Belmont Public Schools shall engage in the activity of hazing, as defined by Massachusetts law, of a student while on or off school property, regardless of the location.

## **Internet Use**

The Belmont Public Schools offers network access to its students, faculty, and staff. Access to the school network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. The intent of this policy is to ensure that students utilize this access in a manner consistent with the purpose of providing this service. The Belmont Public Schools reserves the right to amend this policy.

The primary purpose of the Belmont Public Schools Computer Network ("the Network") is to support the educational objectives of the Belmont Public Schools and Belmont's educational community in general. Network use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development. The Network is not a public forum, and the Belmont Public School system reserves the right to place reasonable limits on materials posted or accessed through this network.

Additionally, this policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of students in a digital world through the norms of appropriate, responsible behavior with regard to technology use called Digital Citizenship. The themes of Digital Citizenship are: etiquette, communication, literacy, access, commerce, law, rights and responsibilities, health and wellness, and security. (*\*Ribble, Mike. "Nine Elements of Digital Citizenship." Digital Citizenship; Using Technology Appropriately. 2010. Web. 5 April 2010*)

To use the Network, students must take full responsibility for their own actions. While the network's possibilities are tremendous, it also has potential for abuse. The Belmont Public Schools shall not be liable for the actions of anyone accessing the network. Students assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising from the way the student chooses to use their access to the Network.

A student's use of the Network constitutes their agreement to abide by this policy as set forth at:

<http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/it/Policies/Acceptable-Use-Policy>