School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

**Academic Excellence**
- Belmont Ridge Middle School incorporates high quality, distinctive teaching by motivated educators who consistently create innovative ways to engage the students in the learning process.
- Our math department has produced a student population of 80% working in an accelerated/advance curriculum and 50% that are currently working toward high school accreditation.
• The math department has developed a PSAT camp, and Advance Math Topic Seminar, a after school workshop, and a Summer Boot Camp.
• Belmont Ridge has embraced Loudoun County’s global initiative of “One To The World” with the educational philosophy of ‘Personalized Learning’. Each curriculum challenges the individual student with a Project Based Learning approach.
• Belmont educators use a complement of diverse instructional strategies in their lessons. The math teams incorporate a small group personalized learning model that has students learn at their own pace.
• The math department monitors student progress through the use of ALEKS, a math diagnostic that complements the personalized learning philosophy practiced at Belmont Ridge. Similarly, the English department uses Achieve3000, a diagnostic program that targets mastery in reading, vocabulary, and comprehension.
• Other popular technologies used by Belmont teachers to enhance education include, Discovery Ed, Brain Pop, Kahn Academy, and Imagine Learning.
• Whether teachers design their lesson to include direct instruction, cooperative learning stations, Chromebooks/iPads/laptops, or projects, they always include formative and summative assessments that offer measurable feedback and correction.
• The master schedule allows flexibility for teachers to work individually with students; work together as a collaborative learning team (CTL) for department planning; and come together as an interdisciplinary team that includes the core subjects of math/history/English/science and special education.

Developmental Responsiveness
• Our CLT’s are respectful, high-efficacy, small communities which meet frequently and are joined by school counselors and deans.
• Because the deans, secretaries, and counselors stay with their particular group of students through the three years of middle school, students are provided with continuing relationships that offers valuable interactions and input.
• One of the strongest responses to the developmental needs of each student is the time teachers take to pre-assess, remediate, and re-teach content to struggling learners.
• In the spring, a rising grade level night is held to provide families the opportunity to become acquainted with our school and the expectations for the coming school year. We also host an
event in the spring during which time our rising 6th grader students come to Belmont Ridge to
tour the school and be introduced to students and staff.
• The Belmont Extreme Camp also provides a smooth transition for incoming sixth graders to meet
teachers, make friends, learn how to follow a bell schedule, and open lockers.
• We offer Middle School Math Camps for students who are looking for support before beginning
their math classes in the fall.
• The PEER Mentor program, allows for trained high school students to meet with specific groups of
Belmont Ridge students both before and after school.
• The school counselors work in conjunction with this program to match students up with an
appropriate PEER mentor to insure that the program is effective for the students that participate.
• We collaborate with our neighboring high school’s Varsity Club to foster mentoring relationships
between high school student athletes and identified at-risk middle school students. During the
monthly meetings, our students learn about what it takes to succeed in high school while having
fun and building relationships.
• As a way to provide comprehensive services to meet our students’ various developmental needs,
we utilize our PBIS program. Our school has established a referral process for teachers,
counselors, and administrators to use as a means to identify these students. The committee has
researched and established two interventions at Tier 2, Check-in/Check- out (CICO) and
mentoring.
• The Before and After School Activities Program (BASAP), sponsored by our
• PTO, offers students an opportunity to gain information and experience in a wide variety of
teacher-led activities including web page design, culinary arts, sports medicine, etc. The faculty
and staff understand that engaging students’ interests in class is the foundation of a successful
school.
• Parents visit the school to discuss their own careers during resource Career
• Café days.
• Counselors develop a documented plan of study for every student to discuss their class choices
through twelfth grade.
• Teachers at Belmont Ridge use a cross-curricular approach to continually reinforce important
concepts and skills that address real-world issues.
• Our Bright Life Buddies offers a community of acceptance between students with disabilities and
their non-disabled peers.
• Belmont Ridge students and staff are increasingly global and civic minded.
Social Equity

• Through personalized learning, we increasingly focus on advancing proficient achievement and encouraging our students to challenge themselves.
• Each student is scheduled for a resource block every other day. During this time, students have access to teachers, computers, printers, iPad’s, and other technology allowing equal access for all students.
• Teachers at Belmont Ridge meet the changing needs of our diverse student population with a continued focus on mastery learning.
• Teachers at every grade-level are trained to meet the needs of our diverse students through attending Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol (SIOP) training, a program which uses instructional strategies and tools for English Language Learners, and STETSON training.
• The families in the Belmont Ridge school community play an integral role in creating an environment that promotes student achievement.
• In addition to the PTO, the school supports parents and students by conducting parent information sessions, which include Back to School Nights in the Fall, as well as monthly Principal’s Coffee, a meeting open to all parents to discuss the happenings in the school.
• Within the school, counselors, teachers, and administrators support social and emotional needs of students in a variety of ways including through our expanded Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) program
• Restorative circles have been implemented through students’ develop social norms and understanding around sensitive topics such as bullying.
• In the 2016-2017 school year, a second tier of PBIS interventions were implemented to address the needs of the students who needed additional academic, social, or emotional support to be successful of their academic standing.

Organizational Support

• Our teachers, school counselors, parents, community and administration work collaboratively to foster a learning environment which enhances instruction and meets the needs of all Belmont Ridge students.
• At the beginning of each school year teachers, school counselors, parents, community members, and administration review the previous year’s school improvement plan (SIP). We then disaggregate and analyze various pieces of data to ensure realistic goals are composed for the upcoming school year.
• The master schedule incorporates a grade-level content-area collaborative learning team (CLT) environment. The schedule also allows for interdisciplinary team (IT) planning time. Students
are placed on teams so interdisciplinary teachers can meet and discuss academic, social, and emotional needs of our middle school students.

• Once a month, the IT meets with the school counselor, grade level dean, and administration to discuss student academic and social progress.

• Teachers have been given the flexibility to choose professional development that will target their individual areas of growth and interests. Options have been provided not only to deepen expertise in their content, but also to create connections within the school building and district.

• Observations of other teachers, participation in a school-wide book review, and attending technology and digital content trainings are a few options teachers may select.

• Teachers may also elect to attend, present, or serve on committees at conferences such as VSTE, NCTE, VMSA, iNACOL, and NSTA.

• Belmont Ridge emphasizes the importance of connecting with the supportive community it serves. The Belmont Ridge Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) works diligently throughout the year to provide for teachers and students.

• Belmont Ridge is also supported through partnerships with local businesses. These school-business partnerships have provided our students with career exploration activities, school spirit gear, digital citizenship lessons, physical fitness and well-being strategies, and equipment such as digital devices, 3-D printers, and athletic goods.

• All new teachers are paired with a mentor teacher for the entirety of their first year.

• Through our Back-to-School Nights, parent conferences, monthly PTO meetings, Connect-Ed phone message system, school website, school Facebook page, school Twitter account, and access to Phoenix (ParentVUE/StudentVUE), Belmont Ridge families are given opportunities to connect with the Belmont Ridge staff to ensure that they are involved in their child’s education and school community.