



# **Belle Meade Montessori School**

# **Handbook 2020-2021**

## Table of Contents

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| General Contact Information                                | 3     |
| School Calendar  | 3     |
| Mission, Philosophy, and Guiding Principles                | 3-4   |
| Principles of Adolescent Development                       | 4     |
| What Is Montessori?  | 4-5   |
| Daily Activities, Chores, and Community Work               | 5     |
| Current Courses  | 6-11  |
| Farm Chores  | 11    |
| Grading Criteria, Evaluations, and Graduation Requirements | 11-12 |
| List of Supplies   | 13    |
| Field Trips  | 14    |
| Computer and Electronics Policy                            | 14    |
| Kitchen Use and Lunches                                    | 14-15 |
| Attendance and Inclement Weather                           | 15    |
| Transportation   | 15    |
| Parent Participation                                       | 16-17 |
| Admission Policy   | 17    |
| School Board   | 17-18 |

## General Contact Information

|   |  |
|---|--|
| School  | 540-987-8970   |
| Head of School, John Glass                        | <a href="mailto:school@bellemeadeschool.org">school@bellemeadeschool.org</a> ;<br><a href="mailto:john@bellemeadeschool.org">john@bellemeadeschool.org</a> |
| Mike Dunnigan, Teacher                            | <a href="mailto:miked@bellemeadeschool.org">miked@bellemeadeschool.org</a>   |
| Joe Parker, Teacher                               | <a href="mailto:joe@bellemeadeschool.org">joe@bellemeadeschool.org</a>   |
| Becky Glass, Art Teacher                          | <a href="mailto:becky@bellemeadeschool.org">becky@bellemeadeschool.org</a>   |
| Lauren Hammer, Riding Instructor                  | <a href="mailto:lauren@bellemeadeschool.org">lauren@bellemeadeschool.org</a>   |
| Financial Director and Board Chair, Susan Hoffman | <a href="mailto:board@bellemeadeschool.org">board@bellemeadeschool.org</a>   |
| Administrator/Grant Writer, Anna Maher            | <a href="mailto:anna@bellemeadeschool.org">anna@bellemeadeschool.org</a>   |

## School Year Calendar

Please see the [online calendar](#) on the school website.

## Mission

Belle Meade Montessori School provides an exceptional education that emphasizes individual responsibility as well as social and environmental consciousness through experiential learning.

## Philosophy

Grounded in the ideals of sustainable living, Belle Meade strives to create an atmosphere where students can discover their passions, express their creativity, develop responsibility, forge meaningful relationships, and learn to be contributing members of a community.

## Guiding Principles

Belle Meade Montessori School provides

- an integration of academic excellence and sustainable living.
- a well-balanced education that includes valuable life skills.
- experiential learning that actively involves each student in the learning process.
- individualized teaching and learning create valuable experiences for each student.
- exploration and discovery, critical to the educational process.
- an environment in which content mastery is achieved through understanding.
- interdisciplinary, project-based learning to actively engage students.
- on-site farm chores and animal care as a part of each student's daily activities.
- opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility, respect, and value for animals and nature.
- an environment where mentoring each other is fostered.
- empowerment through learning to express oneself, speak up for oneself, and become aware that one's choices defines one's life.
- a happy, friendly, and nurturing environment.
- a pace that promotes maturation, growth, healing, and self-definition.
- practice of communication skills with people of all ages.

- practical skills for real life.
- daily morning and afternoon circles that encourage students to express their feelings while listening to and respecting others.

## **Principles of Adolescent Development**

During the teenage years, students are socially focused and exploring how they fit within society as a whole. This is a critical stage of self development when adolescents establish a unique perspective on value, valorization/self-worth and confidence. They have a curiosity to understand their individual sexual identity, where they fit within their peer group, and how they will form their social conscience and worldview. They make daily decisions to balance exploration versus completion of a task, which means they seek trust as an underpinning for their relationship with the adults around them.

Education is a process that depends on students working side-by-side with teachers and parents while being allowed an increase of independence to discover their social role and individual identities.

Teachers provide guidance to achieve challenging academic goals through application and real-world experience. Their experience, education, and actions serve as models of behavior for students while building an environment of trust and mutual respect. Teachers build a framework for students to develop their own moral worldview in a supportive environment by addressing topics when the students show interest. Students need to see an inherent connection between their actions and natural consequences, and teachers are necessary facilitators to aid students in taking risks, taking responsibility, and solving real problems. Teachers have a radical optimism for the future because they recognize the innate worth of each and every student and know students individually. Teachers' primary responsibility is to prepare students for success academically, socially and personally.

Parents extend trust, first to their students and then to the teachers, but they also need to trust themselves. Trusting relationships are the underpinning for adolescent education. Students, parents and staff work together to build relationships based on mutual respect that produce high expectations, increased confidence, academic growth, and accomplishment.

## **What Is Montessori?**

Through her direct observation and interaction with children during the early 1900s, Dr. Maria Montessori realized that children develop in identifiable periods, each one distinct and critical to children's unfolding as individuals and members of society. Over the past century, the Montessori educational approach has been proven to be successful both nationally and internationally and is reinforced by current scientific research about child development. Belle Meade implements an educational environment that meets these developmental needs of the adolescent, both at the middle and high school levels.

At Belle Meade adolescents study and work on the farm, using their whole minds and bodies in real work because the adolescent needs real work and to feel that the work is worthwhile. The students must work collaboratively for the farm to be successful, and they work side-by-side with adults. The adults are not only teachers in a traditional sense but also mentors. Students' social interactions with peers and adults provide inspiration, feedback, and validation that they are wonderfully unique individuals as well as integral and important members of a community.

Although at the adolescent level academic instruction is more structured than in the earlier years of Montessori education, it continues to focus on natural human development and meeting the individual needs of students. Montessori adolescents are not only academically prepared to pursue college or

other interests, but they also become creative, collaborative, innovative, self-confident, emotionally mature, and socially skilled adults.

## **Daily Activities**

Every day at Belle Meade provides students with opportunities to connect with each other and the land. Students begin and end each day with circle and farm chores. Morning circle is a time for reflection and sharing where students and staff express their ideas as equals. Chores build personal responsibility, teamwork, and cooperation while fostering care for the farm and school. Chores include tending to horses, chickens, pigs, and turkey, chopping and gathering firewood, gardening, and cleaning the school.

Belle Meade Farm offers a natural learning environment that strives to connect students with nature, plants, animals, and the world around them. Students interact with the farm animals on a daily basis and have animal companions who live and work on campus, including dogs and cats. These animals act as companions for students and staff and are therapeutic additions to the school environment.

Sustainability is an integral part of the Belle Meade community. The farm and school operate hand-in-hand, allowing students to practice a sustainable lifestyle. Students develop sustainable relationships through acceptance of themselves and by building connections with others. The school community offers a sustainable foundation for learning and applying knowledge by doing, living, and growing on a daily basis.

## **Chores and Community Work**

Daily chores sustain the farm, school, and community. Students and staff all take part in this work twice a day: in the morning and in the afternoon. Every few weeks, chores rotate so that students have the opportunity to experience each area of responsibility on Belle Meade campus, collaborating with different students and staff members. Feeding the animals, gardening, housekeeping, chopping firewood, and harvesting are among the chore tasks. Regularly completing work with visible, real world results builds habits of confidence and responsibility. Students come to school prepared to work outside every day in all weather conditions with a hat, coat, good work gloves, and boots, which are essential items kept at school for this purpose.

On Thursdays, Belle Meade extends the school day in order to spend additional time engaging in various projects and long-term or large-scale community work throughout campus. Students split into groups and work with a faculty or staff member on a specific activity that benefits the school or farm in some way. Depending on the season, time of year, and schedule, students may engage in collecting firewood, trail clearing, gardening and harvesting, moving animal houses, cleaning, mowing, and working on special projects (such as designing and building an adventure obstacle course).

Community work day provides an opportunity for students and staff to interact on common footing, work side by side outside of the classroom, and engaging in active, hands on projects that contribute to the sustainability of Belle Meade campus.

## **Current Courses**

### **Middle School Math**

Middle school mathematics emphasizes problem solving and assists the student in finding mathematical solutions. In addition to problem solving this course reviews and enhances the student's understanding of basic mathematical concepts. This class looks further into the order of operations, decimals, the metric system, basic geometry, data analysis, factors, proportions, ratio, integers, and algebraic equations.

## **Pre-Algebra**

Students learn the basics of algebraic thinking while honing fundamental math skills. Students learn algebraic language and concepts. During the course they expand their ability to independently apply algebraic reasoning using real numbers, exponents, variables, ratios, proportions, equations, and inequalities.

## **Algebra I**

Algebra is the study of numerical patterns and their abstract representations. Students represent and analyze these patterns using functions, operations, tables, and graphs. Students learn these concepts and skills in a cognitively rich context of problem solving and critical reading and thinking. Advanced algebra concepts involve more complex reasoning and functions, conic sections, trigonometry and modeling.

## **Geometry**

Geometry is the study of spatial reasoning. Students learn properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional figures, classical reasoning, geometric construction, and Cartesian geometry. Students learn these concepts and skills in a cognitively rich context of problem solving, critical reading and thinking, and hands-on projects. Advanced studies in geometry can lead to trigonometry, the study of right triangles and their applications.

## **Statistics**

Statistics is a branch of mathematics that deals with the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. Students will study and analyze data from many real world disciplines such as medicine, biology, social science, law, natural resources, climate, engineering, sports, and economics, just to name a few. The class will be introduced to professional level statistical software in order to process medium to very large data sets. Students will be expected to design surveys and experiments in order to demonstrate statistical methods and models. The positive and negative influences of Big Data in modern culture will play an important role during background discussions.

## **Biology**

This course uses problem-solving techniques to explore living systems. High School Biology includes a variety of hands-on experiments and challenges students to explore basic life processes, cellular organization, mechanisms of inheritance, the dynamic relationship between organisms, and the change in organisms through time. As students explore these concepts they will be challenged to grow in their understanding of the scientific method and they will develop a greater sense of belonging to the community of life.

## **Life Science**

Life Science explores living systems through experience and experimentation, as well expository instruction and reading. This course challenges students to expand their understanding of evolution, basic life processes, cellular organization, heredity, ecology, and human biology.

## **Anatomy & Physiology**

Anatomy is a branch of Biology concerned with the scientific study of the physical structures of organisms. The structures of insects, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals will be explored by way of hands-on laboratories throughout this course. Physiology will investigate the chemical and physical functions found in living organisms and systems.

## **Chemistry**

Chemistry is focused on the study of the structure and composition of matter, and the changes that occur to matter during various chemical and physical interactions. The course provides many hands-on experiments and investigations involving laboratory equipment, basic elements, compounds, and mixtures. Students explore atomic structure, the periodic table, chemical equations, stoichiometry, gas laws, acids and bases, phase changes, and oxidation-reduction reactions. The nature of the course necessitates a comfortable understanding of algebra and a willingness to develop an understanding of the scientific method.

## **Physics**

Physics is the study of the properties of matter and energy. The course will cover the topics of classical mechanics, thermodynamics, electricity and magnetism, and modern physics. Laboratory work provides realistic experience in data collection, analysis, and the demonstration of important physics principles. It is suggested that students have a good mastery of Algebra II in order to succeed in the course.

## **Middle School Language Arts**

Language Arts is designed to help students develop their self-expression and empathy through the writing process. Students read many different types of books across many different genres to help them learn through observation. Students write every day, including practicing communication skills, the creative process and academic writing, to help them learn by practice. In class, students work in groups, explore modern media, learn grammar principles and generate new work. The capstone project for this course is producing a school literary magazine as a class as well as keeping an individual reading journal.

## **Literary Seminar**

This course uses the Socratic Method to facilitate cooperative argumentative dialogue among the students, based on asking and answering questions. The goal is to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presuppositions. Literature that is discussed in this course will draw from the readings students complete for their specific English classes, and students will come prepared with questions and discussion topics to address in class. Students will use the ideas and concepts discussed in the seminar to write academic essays and creative work.

## **Literary Criticism and Creative Writing**

Students will develop their self-expression through the creative writing process. They will spend a good deal of time reading the work of successful, contemporary authors in a mix of mediums, including poetry, prose, essays and long-form works, to help them learn through observation. They will be expected to write every day, including journaling, craft essays and creative work, to help them learn by practice. In class, they will discuss writing craft, teach one another, provide peer feedback and generate new creative work. The capstone project for this course will be a collection of student writings published both as an individual portfolio and as a class literary magazine.

## **American Literature and Critical Thinking**

Students will develop their self-expression through critical thinking. They will spend a good deal of time reading classic writings by American authors in a mix of mediums, including poetry, prose, essays and long-form works, to help them learn through observation. They will be expected to write every day, including journaling, academic essays and research papers, to help them learn by practice. In class, they will discuss rhetoric, teach one another, provide peer feedback and generate

new work. The capstone project for this course will be a collection of student writings published both as an individual portfolio and as a class literary magazine.

### **British Literature and Advanced Grammar**

Students will develop through self-expression with appropriate grammar and mechanics. They will spend a good deal of time reading classic writings by British authors in a mix of mediums, including poetry, prose, essays and long-form works, to help them learn through observation. They will be expected to write every day, including journaling, academic essays and grammar exercises, to help them learn by practice. In class, students will discuss grammar and mechanics, teach one another, provide peer feedback and generate new essays. The capstone project for this course will be a collection of student writings published both as an individual portfolio and as a class literary magazine.

### **World Literature and Public Speaking**

Students will develop their self-expression through the communication process. They will spend a good deal of time reading the work of successful authors from around the world in a mix of mediums, including poetry, prose, essays and long-form works, to help them learn through observation. They will be expected to write every day, including journaling, academic essays and speaking outlines, to help them learn by practice. In class they will discuss public speaking techniques, teach one another, provide peer feedback and present speeches. The capstone project for this course will be a collection of student writings published both as an individual portfolio and as a class literary magazine.

### **Latin I**

First year Latin takes two years. It emphasizes building vocabulary and grammar which applies to English, Spanish, and other language studies. Students study the social and political history of the Romans. They learn to analyze the structure of words and sentences as they translate passages and comprehend meaning. Students learn present, imperfect, and perfect verb tenses and nominative, dative, and accusative cases.

### **Latin II**

Second year Latin also takes two years. It continues building vocabulary and adds more complicated grammar. Students translate stories about the culture and history that expands to include Britain and Alexandria as parts of the Roman Empire. Students learn all five cases for nouns and study infinitives, pluperfect, and imperative verbs.

### **Introduction to the Spanish Language & Spanish I**

Introduction to Spanish focuses on teaching conversational Spanish and includes grammar, vocabulary, written, and conversational Spanish. This class also introduces the student to Spanish and Latin-American culture. In Spanish I students begin to develop communicative competence in speaking, writing, comprehending and reading Spanish and expand their understanding of the culture of Spanish speaking countries. The main goal in the class is to provide a context for everything students study. The class gives attention to grammar and vocabulary in a context of real-life situations, Latino cultures, and the language as a whole. The idea is to acquire a feel for the language, an appreciation of its beauty, and a degree of comfort and confidence in speaking it. Along the way, students learn a lot about the English language as well as Spanish.

### **Spanish II & III**

In Spanish II, the study of reading, writing, speaking, and listening continues as more complex grammatical structures are introduced. With more communicative competence come deeper discussions in Spanish about Latino culture and students' own experiences. Immersion in the

language continues as students learn circumlocution in order to hold conversations entirely in Spanish.

Spanish III continues development of listening, reading, writing, speaking, interpersonal communication and cultural awareness. Complexity and comprehension increase as students learn more vocabulary and grammar. Discussion in Spanish of Latino literature, culture, history and contemporary events is emphasized.

### **World Geography**

World Geography class teaches students how to use maps, globes, atlases, satellite images, photographs, graphs, and other geographic tools to study and understand the world's populations, national identities and geographic environments. Students will look to history for understanding of how geological factors affect civilizations and cultures and economic, political, and social development. By the end of the class students will be able to identify all the continents, oceans, many islands and nations, and understand that the world's population is a single community divided by geographic location.

### **Microeconomy (Middle and High School)**

Students gain real life experience and develop independence as they engage in practical economics. Students learn economics by creating and running their own business. They learn economic terms, principles, manage inventory, design budgets and keep accurate accounts of income and expenditures. Students learn and practice working in different roles within a business.

### **American History II**

American History II expands on the foundation laid in American History I. Students delve deeper into research and analysis as they study key events in the history of the Western Hemisphere. They learn to evaluate other historians research, peruse original documents, and prepare to draw and defend their own conclusions about American History and the American Experience.

### **Art**

Using traditional techniques and emerging technologies, this class emphasizes exploration, analysis, and investigation of the creative process. Students develop technical skills that empower them to communicate ideas visually, developing an understanding of and appreciation for the visual arts. Students explore various two-dimensional and three-dimensional art media, using different expressive and technical approaches. Students study the factors that distinguish artistic styles and that clarify the role of art in culture.

### **Music**

Our music program offers instrumental and vocal students an arena in which to develop skills and public performance. Fundamentals of reading music and ear training are equally emphasized throughout the school year. Students also have the opportunity to participate in a variety of public performances during the year, including plays, skits, trimester dinners, group or solo videos, and open mic events at regional venues.

### **Drama**

All students participate in drama lessons which include improvisation, drama games, and exercises. Students produce and act in a Broadway quality musical one year and a student written production in alternating years. Past productions include: Grease, Footloose, Skitastrophy Extravaganza, The Addam's Family, and Oklahoma.

## **Instrumental Music**

The instrumental music program emphasizes basic musical skills for band and orchestra. Students study the elements of music, and how to create and to enjoy music.

## **Physical Education**

Physical Education (Phys. Ed.) focuses on exploring and engaging in outdoor physical activities that can be continued throughout life. Students gain strength, skill, sportsmanship, and self-confidence through activities including hiking, swimming, canoeing, traditional sports, group games, archery, bicycling, and skiing.

## **Equestrian/Riding**

Our equestrian program offers a wide range of activities that serve beginner, intermediate, and advanced riders. Lessons take place 3-4 times a week and involve a variety of activities: basic skills and techniques, horsemanship, ring work, trail rides, jumping, lunge training, equine therapy, and introductory fox hunting with local clubs. Additionally, the equestrian program runs a riding club that plans events and activities outside of school hours and organizes annual activities (such as trail rides) for club fundraisers.

## **Human Intimacy and Relationships Round Table**

Interest in human intimacy is a natural attribute of adolescence that ties directly into self-concept and a developing self and social identity. This interest results in both questions and conversations. At Belle Meade, staff meet students where they are and guide students when they are ready to learn. Accordingly from time to time--and by student request--Belle Meade has group discussions (separated by gender) to frankly answer questions and discuss intimacy in a manner that encourages personal moral development and responsible choices.

## **Farm Chores**

Daily chores sustain the farm, school and community. Students and staff all take part in this work twice a day: in the morning and again in the afternoon. General farm chores, gardening, keeping the building clean, kitchen duty, and harvesting from the farm and garden are among the activities at these times. In the process of doing this work, students learn about the needs of animals, about health and nutrition, how to care for trees and vegetable plants, how to maintain a household, and many other skills that students will rely on throughout their lives, whatever their living situation. Students should come prepared to work outside every day in all weather conditions. A hat, good work gloves and boots are essential items that are kept at school.

## **Other Courses Offered on a Rotating Basis**

Please see the "Academics" tab on [the school website](#) for a complete course descriptions.

Algebra II

Pre-Calculus

Earth Science

Integrated Science

American History I

Government/Economics I

Government/Economics II

World Geography

World History I

World History II

# Grading Criteria, Evaluations, and Graduation Requirements

## Standards of Learning

Teachers review the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) for each subject while developing the curriculum. Belle Meade previously released SOL tests to make sure our students are adequately prepared for the next grade level; however, teachers do not “teach to the test.”

## Original Work

References are to be given for all research. All assignments must be each student’s original work. All sources must be synthesized, summarized or quoted.

## Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences

Conferences are held at the end of each trimester (12 weeks) to discuss student progress. Parents are encouraged to use this time to discuss any concerns with the teachers. Progress reports are sent out midway through each trimester (4 weeks). Teachers are available to speak with parents by appointment at other times. Staff can be reached by e-mail or telephone: 540-987-8970. Please refer to the [school calendar](#) for conference dates.

## Grades

High school students will be evaluated in each course based on the following four-point grade scale:  
Grade Percentage/GPA (Grade Point Average)

|                                       |             |           |            |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| A = 90% - 100% (4.0)                  | A+ (98-100) | A (93-97) | A- (90-92) |
| B = 80% - 89% (3.0)                   | B+ (87-89)  | B (83-86) | B- (80-82) |
| C = 70% - 79% (2.0)                   | C+ (77-79)  | C (73-76) | C- (70-72) |
| D = 60% - 69% (1.0)                   | D+ (67-69)  | D (63-66) | D- (60-62) |
| Incomplete/F = 59%<br>and below (0.0) |             |           |            |

Middle school students will be evaluated in each course based on the following scale:  
Course Complete (CC) Course Complete with Distinction (CCD) Course Incomplete (CI).

## Trimester Evaluations

Parent/Student/Teacher conferences are held at the end of each trimester (12 weeks) to discuss their child’s progress. Parents will be sent an email to schedule their conference. There will be no school the day of conferences. Students are included in conferences. At the conference both the student and parents/guardians will receive a trimester evaluation in writing. Evaluations, which include a grade and a written assessment of the student’s progress, will be discussed each trimester during the parent/student/teacher conferences. Parents are encouraged to use this time to discuss their child’s growth. A final grade for the course will be given at the end of the third trimester.

## Graduation Requirements

Students must meet the following graduation requirements: 4 credits each of English, math, science, history, physical education, foreign language and electives; 2 credits each of art and music. Community service requirements must also be met. Belle Meade adheres to the Virginia Advanced Studies Diploma Requirements:

## Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50.C)

| Discipline Area   | Standard Credits:<br>effective with<br>first-time ninth<br>graders in<br>2003-2004 through<br>2010-2011 | Standard<br>Credits:<br>effective with<br>first-time ninth<br>graders in<br>2011-2012 and<br>beyond | Verified Credits - effective with<br>ninth graders in 2000-2001 and<br>beyond |
|---|---|---|---|
| English   | 4   | 4   | 2   |
| <a href="#">Mathematics</a><br>[Note 1]                       | 4   | 4   | 2   |
| <a href="#">Laboratory Science</a><br>[Note 2]                | 4   | 4   | 2   |
| <a href="#">History &amp; Social<br/>Sciences</a><br>[Note 3] | 4   | 4   | 2   |
| <a href="#">Foreign Languages</a><br>[Note 4]                 | 3   | 3   |   |
| Health & Physical<br>Education                                | 2   | 2   |   |
| Fine Arts or Career &<br>Technical Education                  | 1   | 1   |   |
| Economics and<br>Personal Finance                             |   | 1   |   |
| <a href="#">Electives</a>                                     | 2   | 3   |   |
| <a href="#">Student Selected Test</a><br>[Note 5]             |   |   | 1   |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>24</b>   | <b>26</b>   | <b>9</b>  |

### Student Community Service Requirements

The school community service requirement includes one hour of daily chores and one and a half hours of weekly community work except during the skiing season.

Middle school students (grades 6 through 8) are required to complete 5 hours of outside community service each school year. High school students (grades 9 through 12) are required to complete 10 hours per school year. Proposed service projects need to be approved by Belle Meade Montessori School. Documentation of work performed and hours completed must be signed by a supervisor.

# List of Supplies

Students should be prepared for school with the following individual supplies (communal supplies should be provided by each student to share with the group):

## Individual Supplies:

- Please bring back textbooks that went home with you during online learning!
- Two reusable cloth masks to be worn to school and washed at home regularly.
- Lapdesk for use as writing surface
- Lunch in reusable containers with ice pack or Thermos (**ready to eat without use of kitchen**)\*
- Two refillable water bottles with name on them
- Spiral notebooks for science labs
- One-inch binder with paper
- (MS) One-inch binder for with paper
- Pocket folders with brads for three-hole paper (6 folders)
- 5 Single-subject spiral notebooks
- 1 Spiral grid notebook for math
- 2 Packs of 3-hole grid paper for math (8½ x 11)
- Protractor
- Drafting Compass (writing, not magnetic)
- Ruler with standard and metric measurements
- Advanced function calculator (high school only - for use at teacher discretion)
- Composition book for journaling
- Sketchbook for art
- Kneaded eraser for art
- 2 dozen pencils
- Colored pencils
- Portable pencil sharpener
- Pencil erasers
- Pens
- Sharpies
- Scissors
- Laptop
- Plastic pencil box
- Rubber work boots
- Work gloves
- Indoor shoes
- Sports shoes for PE
- Change of clothes to be kept in locker
- Clothes for the weather
- Swimsuit and towel to be left at school
- Horseback Riding Apparel: helmet, boots (with heels) & riding pants (no jeans!) (riders only)

Supplies for Communal Use: 3 rolls of blue painters tape, 1 box gauze bandages, 1 box of band-aides, 4 boxes of tissues, 4 rolls of paper towels, 5 poster boards, 2 reams of copy paper, dry erase markers, 2 bottles hand sanitizer, 2 boxes Clorox wipes, 1 box of gloves or box of masks (if available)

## [Fall Camping Supply List](#)

## Field Trips

Belle Meade Montessori School's educational field trips and experiential learning activities are a required and important part of the curriculum. Belle Meade has easy access to Washington, D.C., and Shenandoah National Park, among other sites. Some of the trips planned for the school year include an overnight canoe trip, skiing in the winter, and hiking nearby trails. Parents are usually notified of the details of each field trip in advance. Most outings are included in the activity fee; however, certain outings may require a fee.

In the spring, students attend a drama performance at the American Shakespeare Center at Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton.

Some of the field trips involve hiking—mostly in Shenandoah National Park. Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing (including hiking shoes or boots) and to bring two large water bottles, a bagged lunch, and an appropriate backpack that can be worn on both shoulders.

Students learn basic canoeing and camping skills on the fall trip as part of the physical education curriculum. They need camping gear, “dry-bags” for clothes, hats, sunscreen, and any personal items. Details and packing lists are provided before the trip. This fun-filled canoe trip is an integral part of the community-building process and educational curriculum.

Like canoeing, weekly skiing is an important part of the physical education program. Students ski at Massanutten Resort every Thursday afternoon from mid-January through the end of February. A one-time fee includes five ski-lift passes, ski rental equipment, ski lessons, and transportation. Skiing gives students an opportunity to reconnect with nature in the wintertime while enjoying the slopes.

## Computer and Electronics Policy

Students are encouraged to bring their own laptop computers to school for use in class under teacher supervision. School computers are available for student academic use during school hours only. Tablets with attached keyboards are acceptable substitutes for computers. Computers on school grounds, whether owned by Belle Meade School or by students, are for school use only. Teachers determine on an individual basis that technology may be restricted in the classroom.

Cell phones are to be left in lockers or backpacks unless a teacher has authorized use for academic purposes. Leave iPods, tablets, Kindles, MP3 players, and other portable music, internet or gaming devices at home, as these devices interfere with the academic program. Should students abuse this policy, devices and cell phones will be confiscated.

## Kitchen Use and Lunches

### Kitchen

**The kitchen is not available for lunch and snack preparation.** Belle Meade Montessori School has a commercial kitchen for special events. The kitchen is often used for school functions. The refrigerator is used to store fresh garden harvest.

### Lunch Time

Adolescents are very hungry! Sending enough healthy snack and lunch food is important for good learning. Food will be stored in lockers and needs to be ready to eat. Students need a hard plastic or metal refillable water bottle with name on it. Below are some suggestions to help choose a healthy lunch:

## Healthy

Homemade/Natural  
Water  
100% fruit juice  
Whole grain bread  
Whole, fresh fruit  
Fresh vegetables  
Honey  
Dark chocolate  
Nuts and seeds  
Real cheese  
Real, unprocessed meats

## Not Healthy (Please don't bring)

Soda, sports drinks, energy drinks, coffee  
High fructose corn syrup beverages  
White bread  
Processed foods  
Lunchables  
Microwave dinners  
Refined sugar  
Hostess cupcakes  
Energy bars  
Kraft Singles  
Spam

## Attendance and Inclement Weather

### Attendance

The school day is 8:00 to 3:30 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 8:00 to 5:00 on Thursdays. Students should arrive at 8:00 to be ready for opening circle. Students will be marked tardy after 8:05. If your student will be absent, please email the school at [school@bellemeadeschool.org](mailto:school@bellemeadeschool.org) or call (540) 987-8970 as soon as you are able. Whenever possible, please schedule medical appointments outside of school hours. Let us know ahead of time when an appointment must be made during school hours. All work must be made up by students, even when the absence is excused.

### Inclement Weather

Teachers and directors will make a decision on road conditions and let families know by email when school is cancelled due to weather conditions. Closings are posted on the school Facebook page and by email by 6:30 a.m.

## Transportation

### Bus

Students who ride the bus have the following schedule:

| Location                | Pick-up         | Drop-off       | Thursday Drop-off |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Hackley's               | 7:10 am         | 4:15 pm        | 5:45 pm           |
| Massie's Corner         | 7:25 am         | 4:05 pm        | 5:30 pm           |
| Sperryville Schoolhouse | 7:40 am         | 3:45 pm        | 5:15 pm           |
| Belle Meade             | Arrive: 8:00 am | Leave: 3:30 pm | Leave: 5:00 pm    |

### Student Pick-up and Drop-off

Please park in the lot and walk down the driveway to the sidewalk behind the building. Belle Meade appreciates everyone using the sidewalks to help protect the lawn and plantings. Students enter the building at the tile room, where they store their belongings in their lockers. Here students change into boots for chores and into indoor shoes for class.

## **Parent Participation**

Parents are a vital part of the school. Parental participation is needed in the Belle Meade Montessori School community in several ways. Parents are required to participate 20 hours per school year or pay \$20 per hour in lieu of volunteering.

### **Support of the Students**

Parental support for the individual student is crucial. Each student needs to come to school well-rested with completed homework, appropriate clothing, a healthy lunch, and a reusable water bottle daily. Eating a healthy breakfast and lunch each day is important to maintain energy levels and stay focused throughout the day.

You are invited to share in the successes of each trimester at the potluck dinner and performance. These evenings are scheduled in advance at the end of each term and can be found on the school calendar. Trimester dinners are an excellent opportunity for families to come together and support Belle Meade students.

### **Support of the Community**

Community work hours are on Thursday afternoons from 3:00 to 5:00. Students and faculty stay at school until 5:00 and are joined by families to improve and maintain the school and farm. Work activities include collecting firewood to heat the school, trail clearing, moving chicken houses, and weeding the vegetable garden. Families sign up for at least two Thursdays a trimester. This time counts towards parent volunteer hours (parents are required to volunteer 20 hours per school year or pay \$20 per hour in lieu of volunteering).

Please share your skills and talents with the school by signing up for one or more of the following leadership positions. The leader in each position will coordinate with staff and students as necessary. The school needs help in the following areas during the school year:

#### Parent Volunteer Positions:

PTO Chairperson  
Library Organizer  
Garden Helper  
Firewood  
CSA Marketer  
Facilities Handyperson  
Community Events Coordinator  
Emergency Substitute Bus Driver (Rarely needed!)

### **Support of the Farm**

Purchasing food regularly from the farm is an important part of parental support of the school. Buying, preparing, and serving food that the students have helped to raise is a strong validation of their efforts. Encouraging extended family, friends, neighbors, business associates, and the community to purchase food increases the farm's support of the school. Tuition, donations, and food purchases are all vital to the school's sustainability.

Regular emailing keeps families informed about what is available. To sign up for a recurring Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) share or place an order please call 540-987-8970 or 540-987-9748 or email [CSA@bellemeadeschool.org](mailto:CSA@bellemeadeschool.org). Orders can either be picked up at the farm or

sent home with students. More information about our farm products, including a list of meat prices, can be found at [www.bellemeade.net/farm](http://www.bellemeade.net/farm).

## **Admissions Policy**

Belle Meade Montessori School considers all applicants for grades 6-12 under a rolling admission policy. Applications are accepted and evaluated throughout the year. The school does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, or national or ethnic origin when assessing applications. Belle Meade welcomes students from all backgrounds with or without prior Montessori experience. Qualified applicants will display a desire to attend Belle Meade School and an understanding of the school's unique program through an in-person interview. Previous academic performance will also be considered when determining qualified applicants.

## **School Board**

### **Susan Hoffman, Board Chair**

Susan Hoffman, A.B. Smith College, Ed. M. Harvard, Ed. D. Johns Hopkins University, has a diverse educational background. She has more than four decades of experience teaching, training teachers, and writing curricula. Her love of teaching and her love of the outdoors have merged in Belle Meade School. Susan's experience includes training teachers, developing mathematics curriculum, working as a mathematics resource teacher, classroom teaching, and individual tutoring in mathematics and reading. She was twice the state level winner of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching. She was also awarded a Cafritz Foundation grant for studying mathematics in China and Japan. She teaches Latin and participates in many school and farm activities. She and her husband Mike established Belle Meade Day Camp in 1994 and Belle Meade School in 2007. Susan served as Head of School from 2007-2018.

### **Kit Goldfarb**

Kit Goldfarb has provided communications and marketing services for 30 years. She has worked for major global organizations as well as small start-ups, primarily in the technology sector. During the tech boom, she established and ran KG Communications, a public relations and communications firm focused primarily on start-ups in the telecommunications industry. Through her work with technology companies, Kit began working with communications applications that would later become the foundation of social networking. In 2008, she switched industries and began working in global health and development, including living in sub-Saharan Africa and working in programs in areas such as women's economic development, community health services, and HIV/AIDS. During her studies and field work, she became interested in the issue of food security and sustainability in both the developing and developed world. Earlier in Kit's career, she worked with programs focused on cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis through shared community and business activities. Kit and her husband moved to Rappahannock County in 2013. Kit has a B.A. in government from the University of Texas, Austin, and an M.P.H., with a focus on global health, from George Mason University.

### **Clare Lindsay**

Clare Lindsay recently retired from EPA where she worked for 20 years on resource conservation issues. Clare led EPA's efforts to initiate the first-ever national dialogue on electronics product stewardship in the U.S. This initiative led to numerous states creating electronics take-back laws. She actively participated in development of many product stewardship initiatives for packaging, carpet, office furniture, and paint. Clare initiated a more coordinated EPA engagement in the development of sustainability standards for product design and performance. She was one of the primary authors of a road map for EPA leadership on sustainable materials management. Currently, she serves on the

Boards of the National Center for Electronics Recycling and R2 Solutions (an organization that manages an international standard for electronics recycling practices). She also serves on the Steering Committee of a new organization that is being launched called the Sustainable Purchasing Council. Before going to EPA, Clare practiced environmental and energy law in the private sector. She has an undergraduate degree from Smith College and a J.D. with honors from George Washington University.

### **Michael Amster**

Dr. Michael Amster is a pediatrician in Warrenton, Virginia, and the owner of Warrenton Pediatrics. Coming to Virginia in 1999 from Chicago, Michael did his residency at Virginia Commonwealth University, and started with Union Mill Pediatrics in Centreville. After moving out to Warrenton, he established Warrenton Pediatrics, where he has been treating Warrenton's children for the last 10 years. A member of the Fauquier County School Health Advisory board, Michael has worked on sleep issues, nutrition, and recreation. He has also been a member of the Child Nutrition, INC board, promoting proper nutrition in the home daycare setting. Michael is also ImPact certified, serving as Warrenton's concussion expert, training the county school trainers and health care workers in recognizing and treating concussion. Active at Fauquier Hospital, Michael serves on the Peer review committee, and has worked to improve the nursery and the inpatient pediatric program. He attended Northwestern on an Evans Scholarship, served as an Emergency Medical Technician in Chicago for a year, and then obtained his medical degree from the University of Illinois @ Chicago. His daughter Alyssa has attended Belle Meade since 2015.

### **Tobey Wheelock**

Tobey Wheelock is a web developer with a great deal of experience in helping small organizations thrive. He is a former algebra teacher and farmer and is the father of two home-schooled young adults. He is also a board member of the Businesses of Rappahannock, an organization devoted to helping county businesses succeed. He feels that all of those experiences help him guide Belle Meade Montessori School as it navigates the intersection between education, agriculture, and sustainable prosperity. Tobey has a B.A. degree from Williams College.

### **Michael Biniek**

Mike brings a love of nature, the outdoors, wildlife. His energy and wily sense of humor make working with him an adventure. He enjoys sharing practical projects with students. Mike holds a B.S. in Biology from George Mason University. He practices sustainable, grass-based farming. He has both a theoretical and a practical interest in farming. Mike studies and practices ecological growing of food and animal husbandry. He created a heating system for the schoolhouse and the farmhouse using locally available wood. He is involved with the students as a teacher, mentor, and school trip chaperone. With his wife Susan, Mike also manage Belle Meade Bed & Breakfast and Belle Meade Day Camp. In addition, Mike served two terms on the Rappahannock County Board of Supervisors.

Barbara Heller