

Bryant Montessori School



**Student and Family Handbook
2026-2027**

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Dear Bryant Families,

Welcome to Bryant Montessori! We are excited about the 2026-2027 school year and look forward to our continued pursuit of building community and learners that own the ability to care for themselves, each other, and this place.

The Bryant staff is passionate in its belief in Montessori pedagogy, which has provided a unity of purpose for us in our work with children and each other. We are committed to care for students and families, community creation, and a growth mindset.

Each day we begin with the Bryant motto.

Care for yourself. Care for each other. Care for this place.

These sentences guide our efforts to promote personal responsibility and positive citizenship in our students. We use the motto as a guide when we teach social/emotional learning and self-regulation. Bryant is dedicated to developing the whole child: mind, body, and soul.

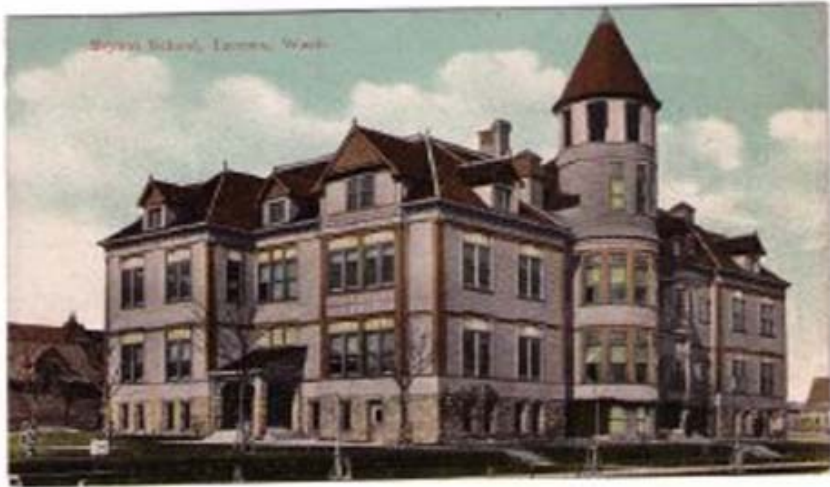
Montessori classrooms are designed to facilitate independent learning and exploration. We strive to create bright, warm, and inviting classrooms. Students can be seen scattered around the classroom, working alone or with one or two others, or in small group lessons. The multi-grade classrooms of Montessori schools promote students learning from students, and older students become leaders, helping guide classroom culture and learning.

We are proud to be Washington State's only PK-8th grade public Montessori school and we invite you to become an active member of our community.

The Staff of Bryant Montessori School

Bryant: A Brief History

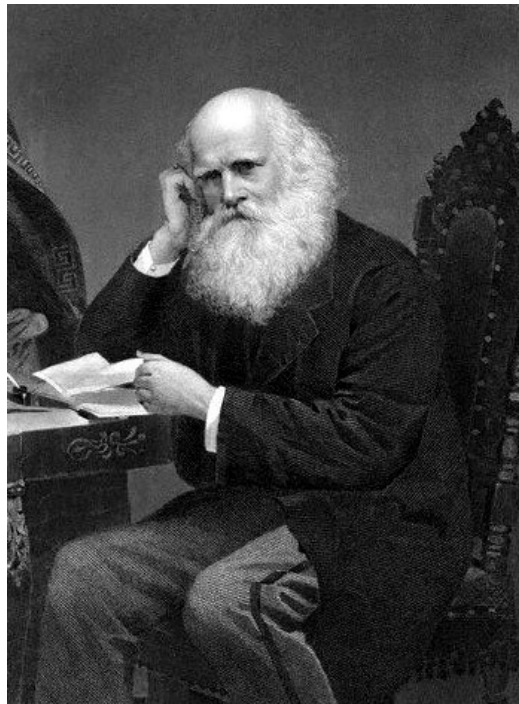
The original Bryant Elementary school was built in 1891 and named after the journalist and poet, William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878). The former building has been located in the Hilltop Community at South 8th and Grant since 1962. It continued to be an elementary school until 1998 when it was given a Federal Magnet Grant and began the transition to a public Montessori school. In 2024, Bryant Montessori moved into our new building on the same footprint of the former building.



Thanatopsis (an excerpt)

By William Cullen Bryant

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice—



What is Montessori Education?

Dr. Maria Montessori first designed Montessori Education over one hundred years ago in Italy. Her philosophy calls us to respect every child and provide that child a well-prepared learning environment to encourage intellectual, emotional, and physical development in a noncompetitive classroom where each child is allowed choice of works within limits. All classrooms are multi-grade based on the planes of development of Maria Montessori and are collectively referred to as houses: Children's House (pre-k and kindergarten), Lower Elementary (1st, 2nd, & 3rd), Upper Elementary (4th & 5th), and Middle School (6th grade and 7th & 8th). In Tacoma Public Schools, we end Upper Elementary at 5th grade and form a "bridge" year for 6th graders.

1. **Respect the child** - A holistic approach allows each child to experience the joy of learning, allows the time to enjoy the process, and ensures the development of self-esteem. It provides the experiences from which children create their own knowledge.
2. **Planes of Development** - There are four planes. Early childhood, ages 0-6, is the 1st plane and focuses on the Individual Creation of the Person. The 2nd plane is the Construction of the Intelligence for ages 6-12. The Construction of Social Self is the 3rd plane, ages 12-18. The 4th plane, ages 18+, is Construction of Self Understanding.
3. **Prepared Environment** - The environment, or classroom, is made ready for the child. It is carefully designed to assist and encourage the natural development of the child.
4. **Independence and Discovery** - Children are guided to develop a love of learning and self-confidence. Children engage in tasks that appeal to them and have been designed so that each new step is built upon what the child has mastered.



Bryant Mission Statement

To develop independent lifelong learners who are compassionate contributors to a global community.

Bryant Vision Statement

Using the Montessori philosophy, we provide a peaceful, enriched educational environment in which each child is encouraged to grow to their fullest potential academically, socially, and emotionally.



Bryant Motto

Care for yourself.

Care for each other.

Care for this place.

Bell Schedule

8:25	Gates open– students line up
8:35	First Bell
8:40	Tardy Bell

Late Start Wednesday Bell Schedule

9:25	Gates open– students line up
9:35	First Bell
9:40	Tardy Bell

Student Calendar

Bryant Montessori follows the district elementary calendar for school days and start times. This applies to TK students in Montessori Children's House classes and to middle school students. ECEAP students follow the early learning calendar.

Attendance

- ♦ The single greatest factor contributing to school success is student attendance. Every day counts.
- ♦ Please report your child's absence and cause for the absence by 8:45 on the day of the absence. Call 253-571-2800, email BryantAttendance@tacoma.k12.wa.us, or use ParentVUE.
- ♦ Notes signed by a parent/guardian are also accepted to excuse an absence and may be turned into the office.
- ♦ We are required by law RCW28A.225.010 to report both unexcused and excused absences greater than 2 in a month or 10 in a year. A conference will be scheduled to work to reduce absences.

- ♦ We encourage families to schedule vacations around our school schedule, but we realize this is not always possible. Please contact the office at least a week in advance if you have a planned absences greater than two days, so that our staff can provide homework

When You are Tardy

- ♦ We all run late from time to time. If students arrive late to school, they must check in at the office to ensure that they are marked present. Students can order a hot lunch and will need a tardy slip before heading to class. Tardies may be excused for a variety of reasons. Please let the office know if the tardy needs to be excused when you drop off your child.
- ♦ If your child is late by 60 or more minutes, it will be considered a half day absence.

Changes in Student Dismissal Plans

- ♦ To alter end of day plans, adult-to-adult communication is required. A note or email to our office or your child's teacher from the parent/guardian is required if your child has a change to their regular dismissal routine. After the school day has begun, please make sure you have communicated any changes to our office before 2 PM. In general, the earlier the better.

Educational Information

Field Studies and Field Trips

We believe that school-sponsored field studies are an integral part in educating the children we serve and give them opportunities to learn from the world around them. Each house participates in field studies throughout the year. These partner with what children learn in class and are used to enrich the learning experience. Students are highly encouraged to attend. Please make sure you promptly fill out the permission slips as they come home throughout the year. *They must be returned to the office, or your child's teacher, 24 hours before the field trip or your child will not take part.*



Student Fees

Schools provide students with books, materials and equipment that are not included on the school supply list. Fees may be charged to students for consumable supplies, planners, materials used on projects that are taken home or field studies. Students will be charged for any property or materials that are lost, stolen or damaged. The district is authorized to withhold grades, diplomas and/or transcripts unless arrangements are made with the principal for payment. (RCW 28A.635.060; Policy 3231, 3520) Fees may be waived if you cannot afford them. Contact your school principal for more information.

Library

All students enrolled in Tacoma Public Schools automatically have a Tacoma Public Library membership through the Pathways Program. Students may use their TPS student ID number as a library card at any of the 8 Tacoma Public Library locations and have access to all library services. Book Flix are streaming interactive books for children. There is much, much more! Visit www.tacomalibrary.org. Click “View My Account” in the upper right hand corner. Enter student ID number and pin (1234) to get started.

The Bryant library is small, but mighty! Elementary students visit the library once a week for a lesson and check-out. Middle School access is dependent upon the schedule for that particular year. Please feel free to visit with your child before or after school. Please watch for information to come home throughout the year.



Standardized Testing

Depending on your child’s age, students will be tested throughout the year. Kindergarteners participate in WaKIDS and iReady. First through fifth graders will participate in iReady Reading and Math three times per year. Sixth graders participate in iReady Math two times per year. Sixth, Seventh and Eighth graders participate in iReady Reading and Math Synergy Assessment three times a year. Third through eighth grade students participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) in May of each year. Please contact your child’s teacher to get more information about each assessment. We use all of these assessments to improve the learning experience for each child, and we ask that families support their child’s full participation in the assessments that we administer.

Extra Learning Activities

- ♦ After school clubs with Beyond the Bell and Club B
- ♦ Middle School Sports
- ♦ 5th Grade Band or orchestra through Hilltop Heritage Middle School
- ♦ Through the support of the Bryant Neighborhood Center, a select group of students in elementary school can get reading support after school three days/week. As your child’s teacher if interested.

Communication

- ♦ Teachers will send home important information with your student when it comes out, so please check your student's backpack daily for any communication.
- ♦ Most teachers prefer to communicate through email in order to lessen the use of paper or through their classroom Sway site which gets updated 1-2 times a month. Please check with your student's teacher to see how information is communicated.
- ♦ Please make sure we have your most up-to-date email in the system. You can check this information in ParentVue.

ParentVue

- ♦ ParentVue is a new tool parents/guardians can use to access information about how their student is doing. It includes attendance, student grades and academic progress, MySchoolBucks, annual student forms, and school contact information.

Peach Jar

- ♦ Many school announcements and extra-curricular information are sent through electronic communication called Peach Jar. Contact the school office to find out more information.



Communication with Students During the School Day

- ♦ Bryant Montessori has made the conscious choice to be a cell phone free school. All students are expected to turn in their cell phones at the start of the day and will receive them back at the end of the day. This allows students to focus on their academics, face-to-face socialization, and in-person collaboration.
- ♦ Students are discouraged from making phone calls during the school day. We ask families to use school staff to communicate with your child during the school day. This ensures adult-to-adult communication that fosters trust and safety. Staff members will handle any emergency calls to or from parents and guardians during the school day. Please call the office for any needs throughout the day and not your student's cell phone.
- ♦ This policy also includes smart watches, tablets, and any other electronic device that is not the school issued laptop.

Schoolwide Newsletters

- ♦ It's important for families to be connected with what is going on at your child's school and in his or her class. One way we strive to keep you "in the loop" is by sending newsletters. Watch for teachers' regular communications.
- ♦ Please make sure the school has your current email address. While some teachers send paper copy newsletters, many have gone to electronic versions to be more earth friendly and less paper reliant.
- ♦ Every Sunday evening, Mr. O'Brien sends a Sunday email to families regarding important information from the school and the district. This will be sent through a phone call and an email to the contacts we have on file in ParentVue.

Family Involvement and Support

Bryant Montessori Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

Bryant Montessori Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

Our PTO works on behalf of parents/caregivers, staff, and students to enhance the educational environment at Bryant:

Build Community

Through a variety of events that provide opportunities for parents/caregivers to meet each other and school staff, the PTO helps create a connected, supportive school environment for students.

Support Learning

By offering financial assistance, volunteers, help for STEAM Nights, Book Fairs, and other school events, the PTO works to bolster the teachers at Bryant.

Involve Parents/Caregivers

From joining the PTO Board to spending a few minutes a month at a meeting, the PTO provides opportunities for parents/caregivers to become involved at school through volunteering time, talent, or ideas.

Join Us!

The Bryant PTO is a 501©(3) non-profit and operates under its own bylaws. There are no membership fees and every member of the Bryant community is welcomed and encouraged to attend PTO meetings and events.

Find us on the Bryant Montessori PTO Facebook page, check the Bryant calendar for events, and learn more about our amazing PTO at: <http://www.bryantmontessori.ptboard.com/home>

Volunteer!

Our number one priority at Bryant Montessori is the children we serve. To provide a safe and effective learning environment, we have committed to a Family Involvement Policy that provides:

- * An encouraging, welcoming environment for families.**
- * Regular communication in-person and through phone calls, emails and class room newsletters.**
- * Parent teacher conferences twice a year or as needed.**
- * A school website with up to date information: www.bryantmontessori.org**
- * Opportunities to volunteer and observe in the classroom.**
- * Opportunities to support our Bryant community and families.**
- * Equitable access to education and enrichment through scholarships.**

Volunteer Signup and Opportunities

We welcome parents and family members in our school. For safety, all volunteers must complete a yearly background check in the office. For more information including forms to complete visit : [Volunteer with Tacoma Public Schools \(tacomaschools.org\)](http://tacomaschools.org) Forms take two-three days to process.

Volunteer Opportunities-Classroom Based

Classroom Partner	Read with students	Chaperone field trips
Mentoring	Making Montessori materials	Teaching enrichment lessons
Tutoring	Chaperone middle school dances	

Volunteer Opportunities-PTO

Popcorn Fridays	Garden work parties	Fundraising
Family Fun Nights	Coffee and Tissues	Book Fairs

Site Council Decision Making (SCDM) Team

The Bryant Montessori SCDM provides a forum for decision-making by staff, families, students, and community members. One parent member serves on the team. The SCDM team meetings are held twice each month during the school year. The scheduled meeting times and places will be determined at the beginning of the school year and posted. The purpose of the SCDM (School Centered Decision Making) Team is to form direction and make decisions collectively with representatives of all areas of our school community, ensuring that we align our practice to our mission. The SCDM Team is responsible for overseeing the design, development, modification, and implementation of the CAP (Continuous Action Plan).

Office Protocols

Our office team seeks to support students and families. To that end, we ask these protocols.

- Volunteers must have an approved volunteer application on file.
- Visitors to the school must provide photo ID to verify their identity.
- Only adults approved by the main caregiver are given access to a child.
- We only release children to adults approved by the main caregiver.
- Our health room or office will serve as the adult-to-adult communication about the well-being of children when at school.
- We strive to avoid interrupting class instruction. Only in rare, special circumstances will we bring a child to the office to speak with a guardian.

Counselor

Bryant Montessori has a school counselor who collaborates with students, staff and families to improve student development and academic achievement . Reem Stewart is our primary counselor and can be reached at (253) 571-2832, or

rstewar1@tacoma.k12.wa.us. She is assisted on Wednesday afternoon and Fridays by Angela Colleran, acollier1@tacoma.k12.wa.us.

Some of their responsibilities are:

- ♦ Work with ALL students to encourage a safe school climate of trust and respect
- ♦ Deliver classroom lessons that align to ASCA standards
- ♦ Facilitate small groups
- ♦ Meet individually with students to do brief, solution-focused counseling
- ♦ Help students who are struggling to make positive behavior choices
- ♦ Collaborate with parents/guardians, teachers, support staff and administration
- ♦ Maintain confidentiality of students and their families unless there is a need to know or a safety concern
- ♦ Provide education and information about students' social-emotional needs

Bryant Montessori School's Outdoor Garden Classroom

An important part of our school culture, our Garden makes a difference.

♦ **It provides regular access to green space**

Serving hundreds of preK – 8th grade students in a dense urban neighborhood.

♦ **Aligns with state and Montessori standards**

With clear applications for science, art, practical life and social-emotional learning.

♦ **Develops the whole child**

Promotes mental health; cultivates independence and a sense of belonging; facilitates hands-on learning and exploration.

Our Garden's Mission:

The Bryant Montessori School Outdoor Classroom is made up of gardens designed for exploring and experiencing the natural world through hands-on learning. It's a place for peaceful retreat and cultivating stewardship of self, community and the earth.

What makes our garden unique?

The Outdoor Garden Classroom is solely maintained by our school community of students, staff and families. Working to maintain our gardens is a core part of our learning.

Contact the Garden Leadership Team at gardenleadership@bryantpto.com or visit our website at bit.ly/BryantGarden.

Student Health

We take the health and safety of your child very seriously at Bryant. Please read the information below to find out more about how we support your child's health while they are at school.

Health Room

Our school is served by Shewan Jackson, a registered nurse, two days per week and a part-time health room clerk.

Please contact our nurse or health clerk at 253-571-2843 if your child has a medical condition that may affect him or her at school to make sure we have a plan in place to keep him or her safe.



Medications at School

If your child needs to take medication at school, including over-the-counter medications, you must have a doctor's order on file to disperse the medication. This includes medication that needs to be given on field trips and at camp. Please contact the nurse at the number above for more information.



Health Screenings

Dental health, hearing, and vision screening are offered to students throughout the year. You will be notified of screenings before they happen and can opt your child out, if you choose. The nurse will contact you if there is a need for a follow-up. Please contact the nurse or office if you have questions.

Decisions to Ask a Guardian to Take a Student Home

Nurse Jackson or the office team evaluate students' health and make the decision about whether to call home and ask a guardian to pick a student up. Please allow us to make that decision, which commonly involves guardians. Please do not allow your child to make the decision to go home. School staff need to communicate directly with you.

Illnesses at School

If your child feels ill, they can visit the health room or office. If necessary, the nurse or office staff will contact families if the student needs to go home. If a student is sent home for a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, they cannot return to school until they have been without the use of medication for 24 hours. Please make sure you abide by this rule.

When is your child too sick for school?



School attendance is a powerful predictor of school success and on-time graduation. Department of Education says children who miss less than 9 days generally perform better in school. Use these tips to tell when your child is too sick for school.

Send your child to school if they...



Don't feel great but are able to participate in normal activities.

Call a healthcare provider if they...



Have a fever of 100.4°F or higher for more than 2 days.

Keep your child home if they...



Feel sick and have a fever of 100.4°F or higher, test positive for flu or COVID-19, or can't participate in normal activities.

Throw up 2 or more times in the past 24 hours.



Have diarrhea and increased stool frequency (2 more than normal).

Have a rash of unknown origin. They can return to school when a healthcare provider says it's okay.



Have an oozing sore or wound you can't cover or contain.



Throw up or have diarrhea for more than 2 days.



Have the sniffles for more than a week and aren't getting better.



Have asthma symptoms after using asthma medicine. If they have trouble breathing after using an inhaler, call 911.

This is general guidance. Schools, healthcare providers, or the Health Department may advise differently based on individual circumstances.

tpchd.org

Rev. May 29, 2024

You will receive a letter from the nurse's office when a contagious illness has been reported in a classroom. Strep Throat is one example of illnesses that will prompt a letter home.

You will also receive a "head bump" notice and a phone call if your child hits his or her head while at school. Please look for this in your child's backpack.

Lice

Lice are common in schools, especially with younger children. Please check your child thoroughly to ensure he or she does not also have lice. Also, make sure you are washing your child's coats, hats, and scarfs regularly. Lice spread through contact; they cannot jump.

Food at School

Breakfast and Lunch

- ♦ In the elementary school, breakfast is served in classrooms upon arrival. Middle school students have access to breakfast in the cafeteria upon arrival at school.
- ♦ Your child is still able to get breakfast if he or she is late, but they need to check in at the office before going to class.
- ♦ Lunches are scheduled mid-day. Please contact your child's teacher to find out when their lunch is scheduled for the year. Your child may bring a home lunch or order a school lunch. There are three options for school lunch each day that rotate every other week. A school lunch calendar can be found on the district website.

Snacks

- ♦ Water bottles filled with water are always welcomed in our classrooms.
- ♦ Healthy snacks may be eaten with permission of the classroom teacher. We try to promote healthy diets in children. As such, we ask families to send children to school with snacks that are generally considered to promote good health. Fruits and vegetables are always welcome.
- ♦ We strive to limit the amount of sugar children consume each day in order to promote good health and good attention to school work. We ask for families' support by not sending children to school with sugary treats. When staff see concerning patterns, we will appeal to families. We ask families to send foods generally considered healthy for student snacks.
- ♦ Some classroom teachers organize community snacks that are shared with all their classmates.

Sharing Food

Sharing food from home is not allowed for three important reasons.

1. Many students have strong allergic reactions to certain foods and, by eating or drinking an item that has not been provided by their home, they could inadvertently consume a food that harms them.
2. Families pack meals for their children to eat, not for another child to eat.
3. Children can be manipulated or intimidated into sharing items from their meals with others. For cafeteria supervisors, it can be difficult to distinguish sharing from coercion.

Gum

To promote a cleaner school, no students may chew gum at school. If families believe that their student needs to chew gum to access their education, they should request a meeting with the teaching team and the principal.

Personal Items

Ear buds and Headphones

Similar to the cell phone policy, ear buds and headphones should be stored away from a student's ears during class. While we do allow headphones that reduce the auditory stimulation of rooms inside the school, we will not permit the use of headphones that emit sounds unless with the explicit direction of staff—as in testing, lessons, or research.

Bikes and Scooters

Skateboards, bikes and scooters are not to be ridden on school grounds, though we do encourage students to ride them to school. They should be walked to the bike rack within the fenced school property and secured during school hours and during after school dismissal.



Animals and Pets

Many of our students have allergies or safety concerns with animals. For this reason, animals are **not** allowed on campus. This includes animals that are carried, on leashes, or in a carrier. If an animal is brought on school grounds, you will be asked to wait off campus for your child. Thank you for making our school a safe place! Only service animals are permitted on school grounds.



Toys

Please keep all toys, trinkets, trading cards, and video games home; they are not helpful and they cause distractions, disruptions, and conflicts. Staff will take and secure any such items and return them at the end of the day. If the item returns again, staff will appeal to parents to keep the items at home. Families may contact your child's teacher to retrieve the item if this happens.

One exception may be a sharing day. These will be communicated to you by your child's teacher.

Follow the saying, *if it's special, it stays home*.



Lost and Found

Everyday, students leave items on our playground. If they are labeled, we can easily return them to students. If items are not labeled, we display them in our lost and found racks. If you notice your child's items being missing, please check with your child's teacher and look in our lost and found.

- ♦ To reduce the number of lost items, please label items with your child's name. This includes jackets, sweatshirts, clothing, lunchboxes, backpacks and any other item you can write his or her name.
- ♦ Items that are not claimed in a timely fashion will be donated quarterly.
- ♦ Personal items such as keys, glasses, and phones are taken to the office.

Behavior Expectations

Discipline Philosophy

One of the tenants of the Montessori Philosophy is showing each other *grace and courtesy*. At Bryant we teach children social strategies to navigate friendships and social situations. We teach courteous manners, socially acceptable behavior, understanding feelings, empathy for others, assertive ways of establishing healthy boundaries, and how to ask adults for help. Staff embody these insights and skills in all of our work with students and explicitly teach them. Some of these lessons are delivered to whole groups in community meetings and others happen in small groups. The ideal is for students to apply what they learn at school, at home, and in other social settings.



"If we are to teach real peace in this world... we shall have to begin with the children."

—Mahatma Gandhi

Behavioral Expectations

We have five basic expectations of students at Bryant, which we express in morning announcements daily: "We are the Bryant BEARS. We are Brave, Empathetic, Aware, Responsible, and Safe." These five expectations have become a foundational part of our program and support our motto: *Care for yourself, care for each other, and care for this place.*

We want every child to be successful and have a good learning experience at Bryant. In order to realize this, we teach lessons within our classrooms and model what these five expectations sound and look like.

When students have difficulty following these expectations, our first step is to redirect students' efforts and to reteach our expectations.

If the student persists in the behavior, the staff member nearest the situation respectfully and clearly imposes a consequence that is immediate (or as near as possible), suited to the behavior, and at the lowest level that corrects and ceases the behavior. Depending on the circumstance and the age of the child, staff may call the parent to communicate the incident, provide context, explain the consequence, and ask for family support in ending the behavior. At this point, we will likely document the incident in our records.

(Continued on next page)

If the student persists in the behavior, the principal or assistant principal usually engages. Depending on the circumstance, the level of concern, and the age of the child, administration may call the family to appeal for support. If the behavior is sufficiently repetitive, disruptive, or serious, administration may apply a short- or long-term suspension in alignment with district policies and state code.

The objective is to use the lowest level of corrective action that ceases the behavior and restores orderly learning environments. Of course, different behaviors and actions are handled on a case by case basis. Some actions are more severe and may bypass the first couple of steps. All corrective actions may be appealed.

Restorative Practices

Ultimately, expected school behaviors are social: they contribute to, distract from, or interfere with safe, focused learning communities. To help children see their impact on others and willingly contribute to such learning communities, we establish school and classroom culture that promotes connection, care, relevance, and respect. The most basic element is classroom community circles. Every student, every day should experience community circles that help children learn about themselves and each other and come to care about the community and want to contribute to it.

When a student causes harm, we assist them in holding conversations designed to address the harm and restore the relationship and the environment. This involves students talking directly with others in a safe, respectful manner. It involves mutual respect by all parties, the empowerment of the student harmed by the behavior, and the development of a sincere action by the initiator to restore the harmonious order. Staff consider the context of the incident, evaluate the power dynamics, and create a dynamic that allows for reflection, honesty, and an effort to restore the relationship. It requires courage on the part of the harmed student and vulnerability on the part of the initiator. Sometimes, witnesses help; sometimes, staff take a stronger role; if the staff member believes that the initiator is not sufficiently able or willing or if they cannot adequately support the harmed student, the conversation is isolated and more directive. On rare occasions, family members are invited to participate; never will a student be addressed by staff and the family of another child without their own family being present. We ask families to involve school staff/administration rather than addressing the behavior of students from other families alone.

This does not preclude corrective action by the school. Restorative practices in coordination with corrective actions allow us to find the “just right” level of action to correct behavior, restore relationships, environments, and order, and teach children to be accountable to others in their community. All involved in any school behavioral incident are children, worthy of care, instruction, and hope for improvement.

Specific Policies

Dress Code

We strive to ensure a safe and comfortable learning environment for all students. We believe that the responsibility for the dress and grooming of a student rests primarily with the student and their family and that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. We expect students to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to wear clothes that are suitable for the school activities.

School-directed changes to a student's attire or grooming should be the least restrictive and disruptive to the student's school day. Any school dress code enforcement actions should minimize the potential loss of educational time. Administration and enforcement of the dress code will be gender neutral and consistent. These are our guidelines.

1. Shoes must be worn at all times. Students should wear sneakers on PE days.
2. Clothing, jewelry, and personal items (backpacks and bags, water bottles, etc.) shall be free of writing, pictures, or insignia that are
 - a. crude, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive,
 - b. that bear drug, alcohol, or tobacco advertising, promotions, or likeness,
 - c. or that advocate views that violate the district's non-discrimination policy.
3. Hats, caps and other head coverings shall be allowed during class as long as ears and face are showing and visible. However, children may be asked to take them off if they become a distraction or a disruption, or if they interfere with learning or communication. Our intention is to allow staff to see students to monitor their well-being and to engage them in learning.
4. Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal all parts of the body generally considered to be private.
5. Jackets and coats may be worn at all times.
6. Sunglasses should not be worn in the building unless for medical reasons.

Fragrances, make-up, and lip-gloss

Fragrances, make-up, and lip-gloss are not necessary in school and may cause disruptions. Staff ask that they not come to school. If they are used to disrupt learning or if scents interfere with the health or safety of others, staff will ask for the items and return them to students at the end of the day. If problems persist, students may face consequences.

Money at school

Other than payment for school activities and items, money should not come to school. Students should not exchange money at school. Betting and paying students for behaviors are not allowed. No students may interrupt school time with sales of any item.

Guidelines for Behavior

Voice Levels

There are six voice levels at Bryant; 0-5.

0 is no voice and is used in the hallway and classroom work when quiet is needed.

1 is a whisper and should be audible only to the person sitting directly with the other.

2 is a small group voice. It is audible only to others at the same table.

3 is a teacher voice. Students are asked to use a level three voice when doing presentations or leading a discussion. It is a controlled voice in an orderly environment and audible to all in the same room.

4 is an outdoor voice and should only be used outside.

5 is an emergency voice and should only be used in an emergency.

Restroom Behavior

Students are expected get permission to use the restroom, to sign out of the room, and to go, flush, wash, and leave. Bathrooms are not break areas or play areas. Students should leave the bathroom in clean order and return to class immediately upon finishing.

Hallway

Students should walk with purpose, stay to the right, walk around others they encounter, and use 0 voice. When in a line, students should keep their bodies to themselves, eyes forward, and keep pace with the line.

Cafeteria

The cafeteria is a place to eat and quietly talk with friends. To contribute to a relatively calm and orderly environment, students must get food, take their seats, eat only their food, talk only to those at their table, use sign language to communicate with supervisors, and only get up when given permission. No running or yelling is permitted.

Recess

Staff will teach all students recess expectations and actively supervise to help students follow them. In alignment with Washington Administrative Code, on rare occasions and for limited amounts of time, staff may have students sit out of parts of recess to ensure student safety.

Bus

Students found to be unsafe and not following the bus driver's expectations will be suspended from the bus. If the behavior continues, they may be expelled from the bus.

Garden Behavior

The Bryant Montessori Garden is an outdoor classroom for exploring and experiencing the natural world through hands-on learning. It is also a place for peaceful retreat and for cultivating stewardship of self, community, and the earth. In order for the plants and animals inhabiting the garden to thrive and for students to learn from and enjoy the space, we must maintain a peaceful garden zone. *We Care for this Place* by:

Being peaceful in the Garden

Using walking feet

Staying on the paths

Observing the wildlife quietly – using Level 1 or 2 voices

Caring for the plants and animals

Only picking with teacher permission

Cleaning-up after ourselves

Closing the gates

Keeping playground games on the playground

Using tree stumps and benches for sitting

Behavior at School Events

All school expectations should be followed at school events, on or off campus.

PDA

Public displays of affection shall be limited to expressions generally considered acceptable in child-centered settings. Inappropriate physical contact including but not limited to kissing, intimate touching, or sexual behavior are not allowed at school.

Inappropriate Language

Using language or engaging in conduct that is considered offensive, crude, vulgar, or grossly offensive are not allowed at school. This includes profanity, slurs, and language meant to make others uncomfortable. Please see the section on Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) on the next page for more information.

Classroom Expectations

Students are expected to follow classroom expectations for any class they are a part of and with any teacher they interact with.

Assembly Expectations

Students are expected to take seats, direct attention forward, and contribute to the attention of others by keeping bodies to selves and voices off. Staff help students attend to performances by ensuring bathroom usage before and after performances.

Cell Phone Free School

Bryant Montessori has made the conscious choice to be a cell phone free school. All students are expected to turn in their cell phones and related items at the start of the day and will receive them back at the end of the day. This includes smart watches (with the exception of simple devices that contact guardians exclusively), earbuds, airpods, and any device capable of sending and receiving information or that disrupt learning for the student or others. This allows students to focus on their academics, face-to-face socialization, and in-person collaboration. Students who maintain possession of cell phones and/or use them during the school day without staff direction will face consequences and may be required to check their phone at the office daily. Refer to the addendum on page 27.

Academic Honesty

Students must not submit work under their name that is not their work. This includes copying the work of others or from sources and AI-generated work. To do so risks a failing grade on that assignment.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

Tacoma Public Schools has a policy in place to support students who are potentially being harassed, intimidated, or bullied:

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying means any intentional electronic, written, verbal, auditory, or physical act, including, but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics such as, but not limited to, physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status, marital status or weight, when the intentional electronic, written, verbal, auditory or physical act:

- ♦ Physically harms a student; or
- ♦ Damages the student's property; or
- ♦ Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- ♦ Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- ♦ Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

The goals of this policy are to foster a safe and civil educational environment through training, prevention and intervention strategies and to support targeted student(s), victims and/or others impacted by the violation.

To initiate a formal investigation of HIB, families, staff, or students can follow this link on the <https://www.tacomaschools.org/footer/tools/harassment-intimidation-or-bullying-hib>.

Bryant Montessori Cell Phone and Personal Electronics Policy

(NOT including district-provided, 1-1 laptops)

Bryant Montessori is a NO Cell Phone and Personal Electronics school for the 2024-25 school year. This means that student's cell phones *and other personal electronics -- such as earbuds, headphones, smart watches, gaming devices, etc. -- must either be left at home or turned OFF and placed in a designated, teacher-maintained lockbox from 8:40am to 3:10pm each school day (9:40am-3:10pm on late-start Wednesdays).*

What does this look like?

Each school day, students who bring their personal electronic devices to school are expected to place their device(s) in their homeroom teacher's designated lockbox upon entering cafeteria/classroom. This lockbox stays in the homeroom teacher's classroom until the end of the day. As students exit through the cafeteria at 3:10pm, students will be able to retrieve their device(s) from their homeroom teacher. If a student leaves earlier in the school day for any reason, they must pick up their device(s) from their homeroom teacher.

If staff see or hear students' personal electronic device(s) during the school day, the following steps will be taken:

1st offense / warning

- ◆ Student will be given a verbal reminder of the personal electronics policy.
- ◆ Student will be asked to hand the device to the staff member who will give the device to the student's homeroom teacher.
- ◆ Student may pick the device(s) up from their homeroom teacher at the end of the day.

2nd offense

- ◆ Student will be given a second verbal reminder of the policy, and informed that their parent/guardian will be notified, along with information about what happens if there is a 3rd offense.
- ◆ Student will be asked to hand the device to the staff member who will give the device to the student's homeroom teacher.
- ◆ The student's homeroom teacher will notify parents/guardians of the incident and the consequences of a third offense.
- ◆ Student may pick up their personal electronic devices(s) from their homeroom teacher at the end of the day.

3rd offense

- ◆ Student will be given a verbal reminder of the policy.
- ◆ Student will be asked to hand the device to the staff member who will give the device to the homeroom teacher.
- ◆ Student's homeroom teacher will notify parent/guardian that this is the 3rd offense, and they will need to pick up their student's device(s) from the main office at the end of the school day or when convenient.
- ◆ Homeroom teacher will take student's device(s) to the main office.
- ◆ Office staff will store device(s) in a safe place until a parent/guardian picks them up.

If a 4th offense is reached, the same protocol is followed as the 3rd offense, with the addition of a conversation between the administration, student, and student's family to develop a plan moving forward.

If parents/guardians need to contact their student during the school day, they should call the main office at (253) 571-2800. Office staff will quickly relay the message to the student.

Thank you for your cooperation and support as we protect instructional time, decrease cyberbullying, and shape our students into outstanding citizens.

Student-Family Handbook Signature Form

Please read through the entire handbook with your student and make them aware of the expectations and guidelines laid out. Then, have them sign this paper, returning it by Monday, April 14, 2025.

I _____, grade _____, have read/ been read to by my family the Bryant Montessori Student-Family Handbook. I understand it and agree to comply with the expectations and guidelines set forth in this document.

Please choose and check one of the following:

_____ My child _____ will not take a cellphone or related technology to school this year.

_____ My child _____ will take a cellphone to school this year and will hand it in to staff each morning for secure holding until the end of the school day. I accept that it is my child's responsibility to collect the cellphone each day.

_____ My child _____ will take a cellphone to school this year, but I will not hand the device to school staff each day. I understand that the school's policy is that students not use cell phones while on school property, and I accept that if they do, school staff will follow the cellphone policy as outlined in this handbook.

Student Signature

Date

Guardian Signature

Date