BAKER BULLDOG STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

Name:_____

Advisory Teacher: _____



The Baker Middle School Family Commitment to Excellence

For Parents/Guardians: I agree to support the rules of Baker Middle School and the Tacoma School District.

In order to ensure the success of my student at Baker and beyond, I fully commit to:

- Ensuring and supporting my student's attendance and participation in all classes and school activities.
- Attending all scheduled conferences and meetings including Student Led Conferences.
- Communicating regularly with Baker staff on matters that could affect my student's achievement, participation, and engagement in learning.

Parent/Guardian Signature Print Name Relationship

For Students: I will be a responsible, academically successful citizen by:

- Adhering to all the rules and expectations in the Student Handbook.
- Striving for strong, on-time attendance to all classes and school activities.
- Participating actively, to the best of my abilities, in all learning activities, discussions, and events.
- Acting with academic and personal integrity and ensuring that all of my actions support the intent and spirit of The Bulldog Way.

I realize that adherence to these commitments gives me the best opportunity for achievement and accomplishment in the Baker Community of scholars and beyond.

Student Signature Print Name Date

THE BULLDOG WAY

CONFIDENT COMMUNICATOR

Baker Bulldogs are kind and determined in how they share and explain their ideas to others.

BRAVE ADVOCATE

Baker Bulldogs use their voice to stand up for themselves and others when something is wrong.

CRITICAL THINKER

Baker Bulldogs break down an issue at a deeper level to make decisions.



FLEXIBLE PROBLEM SOLVER

Baker Bulldogs think outside the box, learn from their mistakes, and use resources to reach a goal.

EMPATHETIC COLLABORATOR

RESPECTFUL CITIZEN

Baker Bulldogs are aware of their surroundings and how they treat others as they take ownership for their own actions.

The Bulldog Way

What is it?

This is a success profile developed by Baker Students for Baker Students. It was developed as a way to measure success beyond just GPAs and Test Scores. It is believed that if students learn these qualities, they will find success in high school and beyond. The goal is that as a community we will seek opportunities to teach, recognize, and support these.

How did is start?

A group of **60 Baker students**, with some guidance from an outside organization, came together to create a Success Profile for BMS students. The goal was to answer the following:

If I am well-prepared for future success in high school and beyond – as a learner and as a human being – What is it I need:

- To know?
- To understand?
- To be able to do?

This goal of the success profile was to have it represent student voices 100%. No adults had any input. It was completely created by Baker Students to help guide our success.

The Bulldog Way in Action

- It is a profile of what it means to be a successful Bulldog, both here and beyond
- It is a description of qualities that illustrate what success should look like when in action.
- It tells a story about what matters in your community.
- It connects with the vision and mission statements that the teachers have as goals.
- 100% student voice!

Bulldog Way Slips?

- When you catch a student demonstrating, trying to learn, or making efforts to enact one or more of the qualities listed in the Bulldog Way, a slip is given to that student in which the box is checked.
- The student then puts that slip into a raffle box by the office
- On Fridays at the end of the day, multiple student names are drawn for prizes.

Baker Middle School
Expectations and Rules

Rights of Learners

1. The right to say what makes sense to you.
2. The right to make mistakes.
3. The right to revise your thinking.
4. The right to share unfinished thinking and not be judged.
5. The right to be confused.

15/10 Rule

This rule is designed to support a smooth and safe start to class for both students and teachers. It enables teachers to take accurate attendance, ensures learning can begin without disruption, and helps maintain proper student supervision and accountability.
The 15/10 rule is as follows:

- No student may leave the classroom for the first 15 minutes of the class period. This includes the restroom, nurse, drinking fountain, another class, counselor....
- No student may leave class during the last 10 minutes of the class period. This includes the restroom, nurse, drinking fountain, another class, counselor....

If there is an emergency, please communicate with the teacher and adjustments can be made. You may not bypass the teacher before class starts by first going to the counselor, nurse, or front office. This will become a tardy. Please always check in with the teacher first.

Bathroom Log

Each classroom has a Bathroom Log. Students must sign out on the log every time they leave the room to use the restroom. It's important to write clearly and include both the time you leave and the time you return. Always carry a hall pass when you are outside of the classroom.

Electronics

It is important to always focus on being a scholar and active participant in all learning activities. For this reason, cellphones, ear buds, headphones, and any other non-school issued electronics may not be used in the classroom. If a student does not follow this rule the teacher may take the electronic device and hold onto it in a safe place until the end of the class period. If the student refuses to put the device(s) away and out of sight, an administrator will confiscate it and keep it in a safe place until the end of the day. In some cases, if a student continues to use the above-mentioned devices in class, he/she/they may need to check them into the office at the beginning of the day and pick-up at the end of the day.

Cell Phone Policy:

To support student success, foster a positive school environment, and minimize distractions, Baker classrooms, hallways during passing periods, and the cafeteria during lunch will be *cell phone, Bluetooth, and headphone free*.

What does this mean?

- **No use of cell phones, Smart Watches, or Bluetooth headphones is allowed anywhere inside the building during the school day.**
- Students must keep their cell phones **off** and stored in their **backpacks at all times**. Students may not carry cell phones in their pockets.

This consistent, school-wide policy is designed to:

- Reduce distractions during learning
- Encourage face-to-face social interactions
- Support social-emotional growth
- Help maintain a bully-free environment

Student Expectations for Cell Phone Use:

- **Cell phones may only be used outside the building** before and after school.
- Inside the school, **cell phones may only be used in the office, with permission,** to contact a parent or guardian.
- During the school day, phones must remain in backpacks. If a student needs a backpack to store their phone, the school can provide support.
- **Headphones may only be used in class** for academic purposes and only when directed by a teacher.
- **Wireless earbuds or Bluetooth headphones are not allowed at any time.**
- Students who use phones, Smart watches, or headphones during the school day will be subject to corrective action.
- The school is **not responsible** for lost, stolen, or damaged phones or headphones.

Note: During safety drills or emergencies, **cell phone use is strictly prohibited** to ensure clear communication and student safety. All emergency communication will come from school administration.



Dress Code

The purpose of the school dress code is to provide a means of identification and belonging to Baker Middle School; it helps us better define ourselves as a community of students and scholars. This is also a safety protocol that makes it possible for us to easily identify intruders. Our Baker Middle School dress code is designed to help students focus on learning. It also contributes to our safe and orderly school environment. Students must dress appropriately and according to the guidelines. There will be no modifications to intended style. Students must remain in dress code for the entire school day including arrival and departure. Students who do not comply with the Baker uniform will be asked to make adjustments and/or have a parent/guardian bring the appropriate items.

Free Dress Days: Multiple times throughout the school year Baker will have free dress days. Students are required to dress appropriately and according to the guidelines set forth by ASB, staff, and administration. Questions regarding this attire must be clarified beforehand. * Please notify office/counselors if you are having difficulty fulfilling the dress code expectations.

Clothing Item	Color	Description
Bulldog Shirts- purchased at Baker Middle School *This is **required** uniform attire. *	Maroon Gold Gray	*Baker Middle School logo required — No other logos are acceptable *Long sleeves may be worn under the t-shirts *No bare midriffs *No pinning, tying shirts, rubber bands or other alterations such as cutting or drawing on shirts.
Hoodies/sweatshirts- *This is optional but helpful in cold weather	Maroon Black Gold	*Official Baker Middle School logo required - No other logos are acceptable – Please do not buy from any other place other than the school. *No hoods may be worn while in the building ***Coat/sweatshirts need to remain unzipped to expose Baker gear**
Pants (sweats/legging/joggers) Shorts Capris Jeans Skirts	Any and all colors	*Must be worn at the waist and no larger than one size up ***Shorts/skirts must be no more than two inches above the knee** *No holes, tears, rips or other alterations
Shoes		*Athletic or dress — no open toes *All shoes must have heel straps or backs *No flip flops, sports sandals, slippers
Jewelry and Accessories		*Belts must be worn through the loops * No bandanas of any color, doo-rags, hair nets *Needs to be school appropriate (no marijuana leaves, swear words, etc.) * No furry tails
Hats		*Absolutely no hats are to be worn in the building
Outerwear		*Coats and other outerwear must be stored in backpacks or worn under an approved uniform shirt.

Academic and Program Information

Baker Middle School operates on a six-period day. The school year is divided into two 18-week semesters.

Curriculum

All students have core classes, as well as the option of electives. CORE classes include: Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts, Social Studies and Physical Education. Elective classes include: Art, Korean, AVID, Drama, Broadcasting, Spanish, Health, Orchestra, Band, Choir, Technology (7th and 8th grade) and Advanced Placement Human Geography (8th grade only). Our foreign language programs are designed so that students who take and pass the class both their 7th and 8th grade years can earn a high school credit. All students will rotate through the electives during their 3 years at Baker, and may have one of the mentioned electives more than once.

ML Program (Multi Lingual)

Non-native English speakers will be tested and provided ELL services if they qualify. For more information, call Baker Middle School or the district's Second Language Acquisition Department at 253-571-1415.

Title I-AP Programs

The goal of the Title I/LAP programs is to help participating students at Baker meet the state's performance standards expected of all students. The program model at Baker offers targeted assistance in the area of math for a selected number of 6th and 7th grade students. Students are identified for services through state assessment scores and teacher recommendation.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Baker is home for the Tacoma School District DHH program for middle school students. Hard of Hearing and Deaf students attend regular classes with the assistance of sign language interpreters. Students in the DHH program are encouraged to participate in all school activities. A video phone is provided and may be reached by calling 253-292-2286. For more information, call the main office.

Activities

School Spirit

Our school spirit is reflected in loyalty to oneself and the school. It is divided into three categories. Students are expected to always exhibit these characteristics — especially when attending sporting events, or school performances.

Excellence: Strive for excellence in all you do.
Pride: Demonstrate pride in yourself and your school.
Tradition: Effort, courtesy and sportsmanship are Baker's traditions

BE A FAN... NOT A FANATIC!

- RESPECT DECISIONS MADE BY CONTEST & SCHOOL OFFICIALS
- REFRAIN FROM TAUNTING, BOOING, HECKLING & THE USE OF INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE
- RECONGNIZE & ACKNOWLEDGE OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCES BY ATHLETES ON BOTH TEAMS
- ATTENDANCE AT THIS CONTEST IS NOT A LICENSE TO VERBALLY ASSAULT OTHERS OR TO BE GENERALLY OFFENSIVE
- RESPECT ATHLETES, COACHES, OFFICIALS & FANS

If you do not adhere to these expectations, you will be asked to leave the event.

Identification Cards

All students should carry their Baker issued ID card at all times. ID cards will include photo ID and a bar code. If you purchase an ASB membership for $15.00, it will be printed on the ID card. Students who lose or misplace their cards will be charged a $5.00 replacement fee.

ASB Membership

Students who participate in sports, ASB clubs or the Associated Student Body Government are required to have an ASB membership on their account. Free and reduced lunch students will not be charged but they need to request an ASB membership be added to their account. To participate in Athletics, students need to pay $15 for the ASB and $50 for the Pay to Play Fee. Please make sure to fill out the 2026-2027 Nutrition Survey because that survey can have an impact on those fees. We want all students to participate in Sports. Please do not let the fees be a detriment to your participation. Once you make a team, we can discuss the options available if you need to pay the fee.

Associated Student Body Senators (ASB)

ASB consists of seven 6th, 7th and 8th graders who become student senators. They make decisions about activities and money for all extracurricular activities. To become an ASB senator, students must have a 2.50 GPA, fill out an application, and give a speech to their own grade level. Senators must maintain a 2.50 GPA, display good citizenship and have good attendance. Please Contact Larry Kennedy at lkenned1@tacoma.k12.wa.us if you have questions regarding ASB activities or programs.

After-School Programs & Clubs

Bulldog Center

Baker provides many after-school activities through our partnership with the YMCA. Our afterschool program is The Bulldog Center. The activities in The Bulldog Center allow students to meet new friends, learn more about a club or activity, and have a safe and supervised place to be after school hours. Activities include, but are not limited to: cooking club, chess club, anime and after school tutoring, sewing, 3D printing. This program is ever evolving based upon the interest and needs of students and staff.

- An activity bus will be provided for all students who participate in after-school activities. The bus leaves daily (Monday-Thursday) from Baker at approximately 4:35 PM.
- Students who are **not** enrolled in after school activities will not be allowed to ride the activity bus.
- Bused students will be dropped off at the feeder elementary school nearest their home (Larchmont, Stafford, Birney, or Fern Hill).
- Students must register to participate in the "Bulldog Center" after school program through the Family App or see program coordinator for a paper application.
- If students do not adhere to the rules of The Bulldog Center, they will be suspended from the program. The Bulldog Center is part of the district partnership "Club Beyond" including community partners led by the YMCA. Registration is required.

Middle School Athletics

Middle school students compete district-wide against each other in 11 different sports. 6th through 8th graders can participate at the varsity, junior varsity and c-team level, gaining valuable experiences through competition. Registration must be completed online in final forms.

To participate in middle school athletics, students must:

1. Complete Final Forms
   - Athletic Registration
   - Concussion & Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness e Informed Consent Form
2. Submit proof of current physical exam signed by your physician (physicals are good for 13 months)
3. Maintain academic eligibility Find details in the Interscholastic Athletics and Activities Regulations 2151R
4. Pay the required ASB membership fee $15 and the $50 "Pay to Play" fee through the family app or at Baker middle school office. For questions or inquiries, email Baker's athletic director, Karl Berggren at kberggr@tacoma.k12.wa.us

Academic Standard for Athletic Eligibility

Students must have a 2.0 with no failing grades throughout the season to be eligible to participate in interschool competition. * This eligibility will be determined by the school's regular grading cycle or formal progress reports. Review of each student's academics will be monitored by the athletic director. Students' ineligible based upon the school's regular grading cycle or formal progress reports will be placed on suspension from competition for one week. If at the end of one (1) week, a formal progress

report for the student reflects that he/she is meeting the requirements, he/she may then be reinstated for competition. Only one progress report will be allowed per week. If the student does not meet the requirements, he/she will remain ineligible and on suspension from competition. During the suspension period, the student will be allowed to practice but will not be allowed to play a game until the student meets the academic standard stated above.

**The academic standard* may be waived by the building administration upon written request by the student

Session #1: Sept 14 – Oct. 29

Boys Basketball, Baseball, Girls Soccer

Session #2 Nov. 4- Jan. 7

Volleyball, Boys Soccer, Girls' Flag Football

Session #3: Feb. 8 – April 1

Girls Basketball, Football, Cross Country

Session #4: April 14 – June 5

Wrestling, Fast Pitch, Track and Field



Attendance Procedures

It is the legal and professional obligation of all teachers to take attendance every class period. Attendance is a legal document and accuracy matters. School attendance is one of the major factors affecting the progress made by all students. There is a direct relationship among absences, poor grades, and dropouts. Arriving on time and attending school every day are the first steps to success. Parents/guardians must provide the school with a valid reason in writing or by leaving a message by calling the Baker attendance office at 253.571.5058 before any absence or late arrival will be excused.

Excused Absence/Late Arrival/Early Dismissal

Examples of excused absences, late arrivals, and early dismissals are:

- The student's personal illness or health condition
- The student's own dental or medical appointment
- Appearances in court when required by law
- Disciplinary actions - suspensions, etc.
- Religious observances
- Family emergencies when approved by the principal or designee
- School related activities
- Family activities when approved by the principal or designee

Policy for Pre-Planned Family Activity/Extended Absence

- Parents must complete and turn in a planned absence form. This must be approved by the principal or assistant principal at least three (3) days prior to the planned activity. Considering the student's academic record and the expected impact of absence on achievement, the principal may approve or deny excused absence requests.
- Parent and student must sign a Planned Absence Form and agree to make up the missed work and/or complete special assignments, or the absence will become unexcused.
- If special assignments or make-up work are not completed within five (5) school days following the student's return, the absence will become unexcused.
- Per District policy, a maximum of five (5) days absences for pre-planned family activities may be excused per year.

Unexcused Absence/Late Arrival/Early Dismissal

- Some examples of unexcused absences, late arrivals and early dismissals are:
- Being needed at home - for babysitting, house cleaning, etc.
- Being truant (absent from school without a parents/guardian's knowledge)
- Being out of town for a non-emergency reason
- Oversleeping
- Missing the school bus or other transportation
- Being out of uniform

Parents/guardians will be notified by telephone or by mail on a regular basis regarding their student's attendance. If more than five unexcused absences occur within thirty days, or more than ten unexcused absences occur within the school year the school is required by law to file a petition of non-attendance with the Juvenile Court. For more information regarding the district's attendance policy or the Washington State Becca Bill please call the Baker Attendance Office at 571-5058, Monday through Friday, 7:00AM 3:30PM.

Verifying Excused Absences and Late Arrival

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the school of a student's absences or late arrivals:

- by phone the day an absence or tardy occurs and/or
- by a written note presented to the attendance secretary immediately upon return to school

Written excuse notes to excuse absences and late arrivals must state:

- student's full name
- parent's full name
- date of absence + (for tardies) estimated time of arrival
- reason for absence or tardy • parent/guardian daytime phone number

Early Dismissal

- If a student must leave school during the day for any reason (medical, dental, disciplinary dismissal, etc.), a dismissal slip must be obtained from the Attendance Office.
- A written request for dismissal, to include both the time and reason for dismissal, is to be presented to the Attendance Secretary on the day of the early dismissal.
- If a student becomes ill during the day, an early dismissal slip will be issued by the nurse or the office after contact with the parent/guardian has been made and authorization has been given for the student to leave school early.
- Parents or guardians must provide valid identification prior to the release of a student.

School-Sponsored Activities

Any athletic contest, field trip, dance or like events approved by the Baker Middle School Administration is a school activity. A student may not be allowed to attend school-sponsored activities if that student has been truant, absent or suspended.

Tardiness

A student is tardy when he/she/they is not seated in class when the tardy bell rings. Teachers may allow exceptions for students with special needs. Tardiness interrupts class and interferes with student achievement and violates school policies.

Leaving the School Grounds

The Tacoma School District operates on the closed campus concept. Once a student arrives at school, he/she/they is not to leave the school grounds until the end of the school day without written permission from the office. Students attending after school activities may not leave campus then return to the afterschool activity for any reason without permission from the principal/designee. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Designated Early Release/Late Arrival

Any student having a late arrival or early release schedule will be issued a Designated Off Campus Card from the office. This applies to students with shortened days, home schooled students who attend Baker for elective classes, etc.

TRUANCY

- Students are truant when they are willfully, and without authorization, absent from class.
- Failure to check out of school before the end of regularly scheduled classes is considered truancy.
- Parent conferences may be required before truant students may re-enter their classes.
- Truancy and unexcused absences will automatically result in students making up missed time through lunch or after school detention and administration action.

Washington State BECCA Bill

The Washington State Becca Bill requires that parents ensure their children attend school. In accordance with the state's mandatory attendance laws:

- If a student is absent without excuse five times within a month the school district may file a petition with the juvenile court seeking the court's jurisdiction over the student's attendance in school.
- If a student is absent without excuse seven times within a month or ten times within a school year, the school district will file a petition with the juvenile court.

Any parent found to have violated the law may be fined up to $25 per day of unexcused absence and the student will be ordered to attend school. The court may also order the parent/guardian to provide community service at the student's school in lieu of imposing a fine. A student who fails to comply with a court order to attend school may be found in contempt of court and may be placed in juvenile detention or receive alternative sentencing from the court. In addition to disciplinary action for nonattendance, unexcused absences may adversely affect a student's grade if the teacher (a) has shown a relationship between attendance and instructional goals and objectives of the course; (b) advised the student and parent/guardian in writing and by posting at the beginning of the year: and, (c) obtained approval from the principal for guidelines to be used in classes in which attendance may adversely affect grades or credits.

Attendance Intervention

- The parent will receive either a telephone call or a written notice of the absence when a student has been absent 5 or more times in a single class period.
- After the second (2) unexcused absence in a month, a conference will be scheduled with the parent/guardian and student.
- Other steps which may eliminate or reduce the attendance problem include, where appropriate, adjusting the child's school program or school or course assignment, providing more individualized instruction, providing after-school tutoring, or assisting the child to obtain supplementary services.

Withdrawals and Transfers

A withdrawal occurs when a student exits the Tacoma School District to move and/or enroll in a different district. A transfer occurs when a student moves and/or enrolls in another school within the Tacoma School District.

Procedure:

- Parent/guardian will notify registrar's office at 253-571-5061 of withdrawal or transfer at least one week in advance of departure. The parent/guardian will come to registrar's office to sign the withdrawal form and pay any fines or obligations.
- The student will return all books and pay any fines or obligations.

Guidelines for Student Use of Technology

Tacoma School District offers access through its digital resources to library materials, databases and the Internet. We believe that digital resources offer significant opportunities to enhance a student's education. The Tacoma School district utilizes Internet filtering for all computers networked in district facilities. However, it is not possible for us to completely limit access to materials with inappropriate content. Therefore, it is important that each student's parent or guardian consider carefully and make an informed decision concerning whether to permit the student to have access to the district's digital resources including the Internet. Access to the Internet will be granted to a student unless the student's parent or guardian specifically notifies the school in writing, using a negative sign-off form, that they do not want their student to use their internet.

With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility. It is important that parents and students read and discuss the district Acceptable Use Policy for Digital Resources and the accompanying regulation. A summary of the regulation follows. Complete text of the Acceptable Use Policy for Digital Resources (Policy 6973) and Regulation (6973R), is available on the TSD web site (tacoma.k12.wa.us).

In using digital resources, students accept the responsibility to:

1. Utilize digital resources for educational purposes only.
2. Abide by district policies and federal/state laws, including copyright laws.
3. Adhere to school guidelines on use of the network and notify staff prior to using the Internet.
4. Use good behavior just as in a classroom or hallway; general school rules for behavior and communication apply.
5. Respect district property and be responsible in the use of the hardware and software; do not destroy, modify, delete or add software to district computers without permission. Do not interfere or disrupt other users, services or equipment, including distributing unsolicited advertising.
6. Use digital resources in a legal, moral and ethical manner. Do not use digital resources for illegal, harassing, antisocial or indecent purposes. Do not access or print obscene, pornographic or other inappropriate materials.

Tacoma School District reserves the right to review and monitor activity on the network for responsible use consistent with the district's Acceptable Use Policy for Digital Resources and Regulations; and to remove a user's privilege to access the network at any time the district determines that the user is engaged in unauthorized activity or violating the policy. Disciplinary action will be consistent with the district's standard policies and procedures.

CODE OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT

NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS
REQUIRED BY FEDERAL DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS
AND COMMUNITIES ACT OF 1989

All information and details can be found using the following link:

District Handbook - Tacoma Public Schools (tacomaschools.org)

Policy Manual - Tacoma Public Schools (tacomaschools.org)