

Dear Families,

Welcome to Daniel Bagley Elementary School and Room 103! I am very excited about the upcoming school year and becoming your child's kindergarten teacher.



I absolutely LOVE my job and have been teaching in Seattle Public School since 1997. I began working at Bagley as a reading teacher in 1999 and was a member of the committee that started the Montessori program at our school. Back then, there were only 140 students in our school! Boy, have we grown!?! In the summer of 2000, I began my training as a Montessori teacher as a self-study (as opposed to an intern) and have been teaching in my classroom ever since!

At the time, Bagley was my neighborhood school. I lived in a cute little house in Greenwood, but about 8 years ago I moved up to north in to an Edmonds neighborhood close to Mukilteo. I love the nearly 1 acre lot that I share with my two silly basset hounds and my amazing partner of 11 years, Will. Living out side of the city allows us to follow our passion as vintage vehicle enthusiasts. We have a giant shop filled with boats, cars, motorcycles, and an Airstream trailer, most of which are from the 70s. Boating and camping on rivers or lakes (especially in Eastern Washington) with friends is our absolute favorite thing to do in the summer. We also love to travel to tropical destinations. In the cold winter months we are total home bodies and I could not be more content splitting time between working late in the classroom and cuddling with our 4 year old "puppies" in front of the fireplace on the weekends.

Although my commute has continued to become more and more grid-locked, arriving at our gorgeous school and walking in to my stunning classroom, makes it all worth it! I feel immense gratitude every day to work in such a beautiful setting, with even MORE beautiful tiny humans, along with such a capable and well intended staff of colleagues. I genuinely find the spirit of a five year old refreshing, intriguing, and enlightening. They truly are my greatest teachers. My gift to them is that I will not only be their dedicated mentor, but I also intend to be their humble student.

The core of my teaching approach is a blend of the Montessori method combined with Jane Nelson's Positive Discipline and up to date brain research with a focus on virtues. As a school, we are also adopting a very affective social and emotional curriculum called RULER and as you know Washington State has developed WAKids, which is getting kindergarten classrooms back to a more developmentally appropriate play-based learning approach. Over the course of the school year, I encourage my students to become confident, accountable, compassionate, reflective, and independently powerful and kind global citizens and leaders. Along with developing their academic skills during this year, I also hope to instill in them to strive for integrity, perseverance, and pride in the quality of their work and their abilities while taking a special interest in the care of the Earth and living things, and an appreciation for science and world cultures. Kindergarten is a year for us adults to guide them when they need it, but to also recognize when it's time to back off and get out of their way. I hold myself, my students, and my classroom parents in a very high regard and have equally high expectations for all of us.

My absolute favorite part of teaching is partnering, communicating, and bonding with parents and student's families to together set the individual course for each child, but then let them take the lead as we as Maria Montessori said, "follow the child". I love to get parents in the classroom. This may look like consistent weekly or special occasion volunteering opportunities and/ or inviting parent as presenters and guests on different topics. Having consistent parent classroom support will be especially imperative this year as we will no longer have assigned classroom assistants. It is very important for us to develop a tight relationship by front loading with many bonding and educational opportunities in the beginning of the year. Please plan on attending most of the scheduled events, knowing that things will slow down after the first couple of months of school. I also look forward to visiting to student homes on Friday evenings through out the year for "Dinner Dates with Ms. Norton". We will have a sign up for the Dinner Dates at the Family Connections meetings in September. For important Room 103 dates to add to your calendar now in order to plan ahead, please refer to the back of this letter.

Thank you ahead of time for your dedication, support, and partnership. Every school year experience and class is quite different, but each holds an equally special place in my heart. I look forward to making new memories with all of you!

Very Sincerely, Robin Norton

Room 103 Important Dates

*Ms. Norton's Parent Education Class Series 6:30-7:30PM:

(Please plan to attend MOST, as they build on one another.)

W. 10/5, Th. 10/13, T. 10/18, W. 11/16, W. 1/11, T. 2/7, W. 3/1, W. 4/19, T. 5/9, W. 6/7

Note: For parent education classes, I will do my best to provide childcare. So all parents can attend. If you know someone who can help with that (a mother's helper, high schoolers who need service hours, etc.), please let me know!

Key:

* = all parents

** = volunteers / chaperones needed

*** 5-7 parent volunteers need to help AND family members are invited guests. PLEASE try to attend.

September:

*W. 9/7 = Family Connections Meetings (8AM-7PM - 30 minute slots)

*Th. 9/8 = Family Connections Meetings (8AM-6PM - 30 minute slots)

T. 9/14 = Room 103 Classroom Volunteer Training

*Th. 9/22 = All School Curriculum Night

Sat. 9/24 = Rm. 103 Fall Potluck at Ms. Norton's House 5-7PM

October:

*** F. 10/7 = Cultural Suitcase Celebration

**F. 10/21 = Pumpkin Farm Field Trip (9:30AM-1:30PM)

November:

***W. 11/2 = Day of the Dead Celebration (The PM time TBA)

*Sun. 11/20 = Parent / Teacher Conferences 1-6PM

*M & T 11/21-11/22 = Conferences cont. 8AM-7PM.

IMPORTANT: Students attend the conferences.

M-F 11/21-11/25 = Conferences / Holiday - No school

December:

Th. 12/1-12/9 = Ms. Norton has jury duty

***F. 12/16 = Room 103 Winter Celebration

F. 12/16 - 1hr. early dismissal

M. 12/19- M. 1/2 = Winter Break - No school

January:

M. 1/2 = Holiday - No school

***F. 1/13 - Room 103 Peace March (Time TBA)

M. 1/16 = Holiday = No school

February:

W. 2/1 = Day between semesters - No school

**T. 2/14 - Friendship Celebration / card exchange

M. 2/20 - F. 2/24 = Mid-winter Break - No school

April:

M. 4/10 - F. 4/14 = Spring Break - No school

** 4/21 - Earth Day Field Trip to Seattle Children's Garden

June:

F. 6/16 = Room 103 End of Year Potluck 6 -8PM

F. 6/23 = Last day of school (1hr. early dismissal)