

BENNETT PARK MONTESSORI CENTER

BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOL #32

Creating a community where every child is known, valued, and inspired to become a lifelong learner.



2026-2027 Family Handbook



Moving Forward Together

Providing equitable, engaging, and supportive learning experiences that develop the whole child and empower every student to reach their full potential.

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Welcome to Bennett Park Montessori Center

Welcome to Bennett Park Montessori Center. We are excited to partner with your family as we work together to support your child's academic, social, and personal growth. This handbook is designed to introduce families to our Montessori philosophy, school community, policies and procedures while serving as a resource throughout the school year.

The Montessori Philosophy

Montessori is a child-centered approach to education developed through the research and observations of Dr. Maria Montessori. At its core, Montessori education recognizes that children are naturally curious and capable learners who thrive when given opportunities to explore, make choices, and take responsibility for their learning.

Montessori education emphasizes the development of the whole child. Academic growth is important, but so is the development of confidence, responsibility, perseverance, empathy, and problem-solving skills. Through meaningful experiences, students learn to think critically, work independently, and contribute positively to their community.

A cornerstone of Montessori education is **Peace Education**, which helps students develop skills such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and mutual respect. These experiences foster a strong sense of community and help students learn how to work collaboratively with others.

At Bennett Park Montessori, our goal is to cultivate confident, compassionate, and self-directed learners who develop a lifelong love of learning and are prepared to make meaningful contributions to the world around them.

About Bennett Park Montessori

Bennett Park Montessori Center has a rich history rooted in the Original Bennett Park School, established on Cedar Street in 1851. The current building was constructed in 1913 and has served several educational purposes throughout its history, including as the home of BUILD Academy, Buffalo's first community school.

In 1977, the school became Bennett Park Montessori Center. Today, it remains the only public Montessori School in Western New York and one of the largest public Montessori programs in the country. Serving students from Preschool through Grade 8, Bennett Park combines the Montessori approach with Buffalo Public Schools curriculum and New York State learning standards to support the development of the whole child.

The 2026-2027 school year marks our 49th year as a Buffalo Public Montessori School.

Core Principles of Montessori Education

Montessori education is built upon several key principles:

- **Movement and Learning:** Children learn best through active engagement and hands-on experiences.
- **Choice and Responsibility:** Students develop independence through meaningful choices within clear expectations.
- **Interest and Curiosity:** Learning is most powerful when connected to a child's natural interests.
- **Intrinsic Motivation:** A love of learning is developed through purpose, discovery, and personal accomplishment.
- **Collaboration:** Students learn from teachers and from one another within a supportive community.
- **Meaningful Context:** Learning becomes deeper when connected to real-world experiences.
- **Respectful Relationships:** Kind, consistent, and supportive adult guidance promotes positive development.
- **Order and Independence:** Well-prepared environments help students develop concentration, responsibility, and self-discipline.

Mission and Vision

At Bennett Park Montessori, our mission is to cultivate an inclusive learning environment where each child's unique potential is recognized and nurtured. With a commitment to academic excellence, our staff, with the support of parents and caregivers, provides a developmentally appropriate, multi-aged, child-centered curriculum which fosters respect and celebrates our differences through the Montessori approach.

Our vision is to be a leading public Montessori school that sets the standard for educational excellence and innovation. We envision a community where students are inspired to reach their highest academic and personal potential, supported by dedicated educators and engaged families. By fostering a culture of respect, curiosity, and resilience, we aim to prepare our students to excel in a rapidly changing world and to make meaningful contributions to society. Through continuous improvement and commitment to Montessori philosophy, we strive to create an environment where every child can thrive and achieve their dreams.

Our Commitments

At Bennett Park Montessori, we are committed to providing a high-quality public Montessori education for children from Preschool through Grade 8. We strive to create a learning community where students are empowered to become independent thinkers, compassionate citizens, and lifelong learners.

Our teachers are New York State certified, many hold Montessori credentials, and all are offered in-house Montessori training.

As a public Montessori school, we:

- Follow the New York State Learning Standards.
- Use Buffalo Public Schools curriculum resources and assessments.
- Integrate Montessori lessons, materials, and instructional practices into daily learning.
- Foster a peaceful community through peace education, classroom meetings, and restorative practices.
- Utilize hands-on materials and experiential learning to build mastery and problem-solving skills.
- Encourage student independence through guided choice, goal setting, and self-reflection.
- Connect learning to the natural environment through outdoor experiences.
- Partner closely with families to support student growth and success.

Through these commitments, we seek to ensure that every child is known, challenged, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential.

Our Classrooms

Multi-Age Learning Communities

One of the defining features of Montessori education is the multi-age classroom. Students learn and grow alongside peers of different ages, creating opportunities for mentoring, collaboration, leadership, and community building.

At Bennett Park Montessori, students are grouped into the following learning communities:

- **3-6:** Preschool, Prekindergarten, and Kindergarten
- **5-7:** Kindergarten through Grade 1
- **6-9:** Grades 1-3
- **9-12:** Grades 4-5
- **12-14:** Grades 6-8

To support the transition to middle school, our 6th grade students learn as a single-grade cohort before entering the 12-14 program.

What you May Notice in a Montessori Classroom

Montessori classrooms often look different from traditional classrooms.

- Students may work independently, with partners, or in small groups.
- Teachers provide individual and small-group instruction throughout the day.
- Students may work at tables, desks, or on floor rugs.
- Learning materials are carefully organized and accessible to students.
- Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their classroom environment by caring for materials and helping maintain shared spaces.

The Role of Adults

Teachers and teaching assistants work together to support student learning, independence, and well-being. Adults guide students, provide instruction, supervise activities, and help create a safe, welcoming environment where children can grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

Montessori Materials

Many Montessori lessons use specialized hands-on materials designed to help children explore concepts through active learning. These materials are an important part of the classroom environment. If materials are accidentally brought home, please return them to school so they can continue to be used by all students.

The 3-6 Learning Community

The 3-6 classroom includes Preschool, Prekindergarten, and Kindergarten students learning together in a carefully prepared environment designed to foster independence, curiosity, responsibility, and a love of learning.

Students are encouraged to make choices, care for their classroom, develop practical life skills, and learn through hands-on experiences. Older students serve as role models and mentors, while younger students learn by observing and working alongside their peers. Over time, children develop confidence, self-control, problem-solving skills, and a sense of belonging within their classroom community.

Teachers serve as guides and facilitators, providing lessons, encouragement, and appropriate challenges while supporting each child's individual growth and development.

Areas of Learning

The Montessori 3-6 curriculum is organized into five interconnected areas.

Practical Life

Children develop independence through everyday activities such as caring for themselves, caring for their environment, preparing food, and practicing grace and courtesy. These experiences build concentration, cooperation, responsibility, and confidence.

Sensorial

Children explore the world through their senses, developing observation, classification, and comparison skills that support late learning in mathematics, language, and science.

Language

Students build vocabulary, phonemic awareness, reading, and writing skills through hands-on materials and meaningful communication experiences.

Mathematics

Children develop a concrete understanding of numbers, quantity, operations, patterns, and place value before moving toward more abstract mathematical thinking.

Cultural Studies

Students explore science, geography, history, art, music, and world cultures while developing an appreciation for their community, the natural world, and diverse perspectives.

Independence and Readiness

Children in the 3-6 program are encouraged to do as much as they can independently. Families can support this growth by providing opportunities for children to dress themselves, care for belongings, assist with household tasks, and make age-appropriate choices.

Important information for 3-6 Families

Bathroom Independence

Preschool students (3-year-olds) are requested to be toilet trained at the beginning of the school year. Because accidents occasionally occur, please send a labeled change of clothing to be kept at school.

Clothing & Personal Belongings

Students should come to school dressed for active learning. Montessori students may work on the floor, participate in outdoor learning experiences, garden, explore nature, create art, and engage in hands-on activities throughout the day. Families are encouraged to send children in comfortable clothing that can get messy.

Please **label all** backpacks, jackets, hats, mittens, shoes, boots, lunch boxes, water bottles, and other personal belongings with your child's name. This is especially important for younger students, as items are frequently removed throughout the day and can be difficult to identify.

Families of students in the 3-6 program should also send a labeled change of clothing to be kept at school.

Phasing-In

Please refer to the First Day of School and Phasing-In schedule for information regarding the start of the school year.

The 5-7 & 6-9 Learning Community

As students move into the 5-7 and 6-9 learning communities, they become increasingly independent learners. They begin to ask deeper questions, collaborate more with their peers, and take greater responsibility for their work and their role within the classroom community.

Students receive instruction in a variety of settings including individual lessons, small-group instruction, and occasional whole-group lessons. Community meetings, collaborative projects, and peer learning opportunities help students build leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills.

Montessori materials continue to support learning while helping students transition from concrete experiences toward more abstract thinking. As students gain confidence and master, they are encouraged to apply their knowledge through exploration, discussion, research, and real-world connections.

Like the 3-6 program, these classrooms include uninterrupted work periods that allow students to work independently, collaborate with classmates, or meet with teachers for lessons and support. Instruction aligns with New York State learning standards while integrating Montessori practices across language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and cultural studies.

The 9-12 Learning Community

The 9-12 learning community (Upper Elementary) builds upon the foundation established in the earlier Montessori years. As students grow, they develop greater independence, abstract thinking, and responsibility for their learning. They are increasingly challenged to think critically, collaborate with others, and apply their knowledge in meaningful ways.

Teachers often work collaboratively to meet students' academic and social-emotional needs. Within the multi-age classroom, students learn from one another, share ideas, and take on leadership roles within the community. Some students may choose to serve as Junior Peace Ambassadors, helping to promote student voice, leadership, and community building.

While hands-on materials remain an important part of learning, students increasingly move toward abstract thinking, research, discussion, and written expression. They are encouraged to explore topics in greater depth, solve complex problems, and make connections across subject areas.

Learning extends beyond the classroom through experiences such as Montessori Outdoor Learning Education (MOLE), field studies, and grade-level trips that help students apply their skills in real-world settings.

Note: At Bennett Park Montessori, sixth-grade students learn as a single-grade cohort to support their transition into the middle school years and prepare them for the 12-14 program.

The 12-14 Learning Community

The 12-14 learning community supports students as they transition from childhood into adolescence and prepare for the increased academic and personal responsibilities of high school. During these years, students are developing greater independence, strengthening their identities, and learning to make responsible decisions both inside and outside the classroom.

At Bennett Park Montessori, students are encouraged to think critically, collaborate effectively, advocate for themselves, and contribute positively to their community. Teachers provide both guidance and structure while helping students develop the confidence, responsibility, and organizational skills needed for future success.

The 12-14 program blends Montessori principles with a more traditional secondary school model. Students receive instruction from content-area teachers in Mathematics, English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. Students also have the opportunity to earn high school credit in **Biology**, providing an early foundation for future high school coursework.

Additional learning opportunities may include Technology, Mandarin Chinese, Art, Music, Physical Education, Instrumental Music, and African Drumming. Students continue to apply their learning through experiences such as Montessori Outdoor Learning Education (MOLE) and the Peace Ambassador program, which promote leadership, service, and real-world problem solving.

Our goal is to help students become confident, capable, and compassionate young adults who are prepared for success in high school and beyond.

General Information

Your Child's First Day of School: 2026-2027

We are excited to welcome our students back for the 2026-2027 school year! Please review the information below for your child's first days of school.

Pre-kindergarten through Grade 8 and Special Classes (8:1:1 or 8:1:3)

First Day of School: Thursday, September 3rd

Preschool and Prekindergarten

At Bennett Park Montessori, our Preschool (3-year-old) and Prekindergarten (4-year-old) students participate in a gradual "phasing-in" process. This helps children adjust comfortably to their new classroom environment.

Important Reminders:

- *Label your child's backpack with their name.*
- *For the safety of our school community, students walk independently to their classrooms with support from school staff as needed.*

Prekindergarten (4-Year-Olds):

Thursday, September 3 & Friday, September 4

- Morning only. Pick up by **12:15 p.m.**
- Students may ride their regular morning bus to school
- On **September 3 only**, one parent/guardian may walk their child to the classroom

Tuesday, September 8

- First full day of school for Pre-K students
- Afternoon bus service begins

Preschool (3-Year-Olds):

Monday, September 14 & Tuesday, September 15

- Morning only. Pick up by **12:15 p.m.**
- Students may ride their regular morning bus to school
- On **September 14 only**, one parent/guardian may walk their child to the classroom

Wednesday, September 16

- First full day of school for Preschool students
- Afternoon bus service begins

Important: Preschool (3-year-old) students **only** participate in a phase-out process at the end of the school year. Their last day of school is **Friday, June 11, 2027.**

School Hours

Students arrive at **9:10 a.m.** Students will begin **bus** dismissal at **4 p.m.**

Bennett Park Montessori follows a staggered dismissal schedule for **pick up only**:

- **3-6 Program** (Grades PS, PK, K): 3:35 p.m.
- **5-7/6-9 Programs** (Grades 1-3): 3:45 p.m.
- **9-12/12-14 Programs** (Grades 4-8): 3:55 p.m.

Student Supply Lists

Supply lists for all grade levels are available online at <https://bit.ly/4fKiuRa> or using the following QR code



Home/School Communication

Strong communication between families and school is essential to student success. We encourage families to stay informed and reach out with questions or concerns throughout the school year.

Communication Tools

- **Seesaw/ClassDojo:** Used for classroom updates and non-urgent communication with teachers.
- **Email/Phone:** Teachers and staff will respond as soon as possible when not actively engaged in instruction or supervision.
- **Parent/School Communication Folder:** Families of younger students should check folders regularly for notices, forms, and school information.
- **Parent Portal/Infinite Campus:** Families are encouraged to monitor attendance, schedules, grades, and student progress.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Families are encouraged to participate in parent-teacher conferences and maintain open communication with teachers regarding their child's progress and needs.

Family Involvement: Bennett Park Montessori offers many opportunities for family engagement throughout the school year. Information regarding school events, volunteer opportunities, and community activities will be shared through the school website, newsletters, classroom communications, and the principal's bulletin.

Messages & Announcements

To protect instructional time, classroom calls are not transferred during the school day. Office staff will gladly take a message and ensure it is shared with the appropriate staff member. Teachers will return phone calls and messages when they are available.

Homework

Reading with your child for at least 20 minutes each day is one of the most important ways to support academic success. We encourage all families to make reading a regular part of their daily routine.

Homework provides opportunities for students to practice skills and reinforce learning. Teachers will communicate homework expectations that are developmentally appropriate for each age level. Please contact your child's teacher with any questions or concerns.

School Community

Holiday

Following the Montessori philosophy, Bennett Park Montessori Center does not celebrate holidays in the traditional sense. Instead, we focus on cultural exploration, the change of seasons, community experiences, and values such as kindness, gratitude, and respect.

We recognize that holidays are meaningful to many families and welcome opportunities to share traditions, experiences, and cultural perspectives in developmentally appropriate ways.

Extended Learning Opportunities Program

Information regarding after school and extended learning opportunities will be shared with families throughout the school year through the school website, principal's bulletin, and other school communications.

Library

Bennett Park Montessori Center has a half-time librarian who supports student learning and research. Students may visit the library with their classroom teacher to check out books, conduct research, and explore topics of interest.

Fundraising

Fundraising activities may be conducted by the Montessori Community Association (MCA), grade levels, athletic teams, clubs, or other school organizations to support student activities, field trips, athletics, and community needs. Participation in fundraising is voluntary. All school-affiliated fundraising activities must receive administrative approval and follow district procedures for financial oversight.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance

At Bennett Park Montessori Center, students are expected to attend school daily, arrive on time and be ready to learn. **Students absent for more than 9 days during the school year are considered chronically absent.** If your child must miss school due to illness, an appointment, family need, or another reason, please send a note upon their return indicating the date and reason for the absence.

Arrival & Dismissal

- **Bus arrival:** Students arriving by bus will enter the building at **9:10 a.m.** through the main entrance on Clinton Street.
- **Drop off (Walk/Car):** Parent drop-off on Cedar Street. Staff members will be stationed along the sidewalks until 9:30 a.m. to greet students. All students will walk along the sidewalk on Clinton St to the main entrance doors. **Do not park on the school side of Clinton Street.** There is **no parking** in the Cedar Street drop-off zone. Doors open at **9:10 a.m.** Please do not leave your child unattended, as students may not enter the building before that time.
- **Pick-up:** Dismissal takes place on Cedar Street. Please be prepared to show a valid ID when picking up your child. **Do not park on the school side of Clinton Street.** There is **no parking** in the Cedar Street drop-off/pick-up zone.
- **Important:** School buses block access to the staff parking lot on Clinton Street from **9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.** and again from **3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**, preventing vehicles from entering or exiting the lot. Please do not park in this lot during these times.
- For the safety of our school community, students walk to their classrooms independently or with assistance of school staff.

Arriving Late

Students who arrive **after 9:40 a.m.** will be marked tardy. Late arrivals must enter through the main entrance, where they will be signed in by the clerical team. Parents/guardians do not need to enter the building, as school staff will handle the sign-in process.

Early Dismissal

If your child must be picked up before **3:00 p.m.**, please **notify the teacher in writing** or **call the office before 2:00 p.m.** For the safety of all students, the adult picking up the child must report to the main entrance, present a valid ID, and sign the early dismissal log. Once identification has been verified, the student will be called to meet the adult outside.

Limited emergency requests made after **2:00 p.m.** will require administrative approval. Approved pick-ups after **3:00 p.m.** will take place on Cedar Street.

Health and Wellness

Allergies/Food Restrictions

Bennett Park Montessori Center is a peanut-restricted environment. To protect the health and safety of all students, please do not pack peanuts, peanut butter, tree nuts, or foods containing nuts in your child's lunch. If you would like to provide a classroom snack, all items must be **store-bought** and free of nuts and nut products.

Please inform your child's teacher of any **religious** dietary restrictions. If your child has a food **allergy** or requires dietary accommodation, the school must receive updated medical documentation each year describing the allergy and any necessary accommodations.

Illness & Medication

Please ensure that all contact information, including emergency contacts, is kept up to date. If your child becomes ill during the school day, a parent/guardian or emergency contact may be asked to pick them up from school.

To help prevent the spread of illness, students who have a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea must remain home and be symptom-free for **24 hours** before returning to school.

If your child requires medication during the school day, please contact the school nurse. A physician's order with dosage and administration instructions is required, and all medications must be delivered directly to the nurse by an adult in the original container.

Students may not carry or self-administer prescription or over-the-counter medications, including cough drops, without the required medical documentation and authorization. These procedures are required for student safety and compliance with New York State regulations.

Immunization Requirements for Students

New York State Public Health Law Section 2164 requires every student attending public, private or parochial school in New York State to show proof of all required immunizations within 14 days of the start of the school year.

Please submit proof of your child's immunizations as soon as possible to our school nurse or email medicalrecords@buffaloschools.org. For the 2026-2027 school year, the Buffalo Public Schools deadline is **September 16, 2026**. Students who do not meet the immunization requirements by this date will be excluded from school in accordance with New York State law.

Nutrition (Meals & Snacks)

Bennett Park Montessori encourages healthy eating habits and age-appropriate independence during meals and snacks. All students receive free breakfast and lunch through Buffalo Public Schools.

Some classrooms may organize a snack schedule for families who wish to provide a classroom snack. All snacks must be **store-bought** and comply with school allergy restrictions.

Parents/guardians should notify the school of any food allergies, dietary accommodations, or religious dietary restrictions. Medical documentation should be submitted annually for any dietary accommodations required by a student's health needs.

Lunch menus and nutrition resources are available through the Buffalo Public Schools website. Families with questions regarding school meals may contact cafeteria manager at **(716) 816-4603**.

Outside Time/Recess

Outdoor learning is an important part of a Montessori education. Students in the 3-6, 5-7, 6-9, and 9-12 ages may go outside daily for recess and learning activities when the "real feel" temperature is **above 20° F (-7°C)**. Please send your child to school dressed appropriately for the weather in clothing that can get dirty during outdoor play and exploration.

If your family needs assistance with seasonal clothing or outdoor gear, please contact your child's teacher. We may be able to provide support through donated items available at the school.

Peaceful Learning Community: Student Conduct & Safety

Positive/Peaceful Behavior Intervention Supports

At Bennett Park Montessori, we believe positive behavior, self-regulation, and conflict resolution are skills that can be taught and practiced. Students learn expectations through daily instruction, classroom community-building activities, and Montessori lessons focused on grace, courtesy, respect, responsibility, and peaceful problem-solving.

School-wide expectations encourage students to be:

- Respectful
- Responsible
- Peaceful

Students regularly participate in community-building activities, restorative conversations, and opportunities to develop social-emotional skills.

When students need additional support, the Student Support Team may provide interventions such as small group support, Check-In/Check-Out, individualized plans, or referrals to

community partners. Families who believe their child may benefit from additional support should contact their child's teacher or a member of the school's support team.

Bullying/Harassment (DASA)

Bennett Park Montessori is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment for all students. New York State's Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) prohibits discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

Families with concerns regarding bullying, harassment, or discrimination should follow the steps outlined in [When Questions or Concerns Arise](#) or submit a report through the Buffalo Public Schools Report Bullying Form.

Cell Phones/Internet Enabled Devices

In compliance with the New York State Distraction-Free School Zones Law and the BPS Standards for Conduct Character and Support, student use of personal internet-enabled devices, including cell phones, smartwatches, headphones, earbuds, and other Bluetooth-enabled accessories, is prohibited during the school day. This includes all instructional and non-instructional time.

Violations of this policy will be addressed in alignment with the BPS Standards for Conduct, Character and Support.

Additionally, the school assumes no liability for the damage, destruction, theft, or loss of personal internet-enabled devices on school property. The student and/or parent assumes the risk of potential damage, destruction, theft, or loss when making the decision to bring such devices to school.

At Bennett Park Montessori Center, the following procedures will be in place:

- **Preschool through Grade 3:** Students may turn their device in to their teacher or place it in a designated lockbox on their floor.
- **Grades 4-8:** Students must follow our school's device collection policy upon arrival. Students arriving late must report to their homeroom first to store their device before reporting to class.

Important: If you need to reach your child regarding an urgent matter or relay important information during the school day, please contact the main office at **(716) 816-4603**.

Athletics Code of Conduct

All spectators attending Buffalo Public Schools athletic events are expected to follow the BPS Athletics Spectator Protocol and Code of Conduct. Spectators must comply with safety procedures, demonstrate good sportsmanship, and treat student-athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect. Additional information is available on the Buffalo Public Schools website.

Personal Property

Students should leave toys and other non-school items at home unless specifically requested by a teacher. Personal items can become distractions, may be lost or damaged, and can create unnecessary conflicts between students.

Dress Code

Students are expected to come to school appropriately dressed and ready to participate in school activities. Parent/guardians and students share responsibility for ensuring that clothing is safe, appropriate, and does not interfere with the learning environment.

For detailed information regarding dress expectations and responses to policy violations, please refer to the **Buffalo Public Schools Standards for Conduct, Character, and Support**.

School Closings

Bennett Park Montessori Center follows all Buffalo Public Schools closings and delays. Families will receive automated notifications, and updates will be posted on the Buffalo Public Schools website and local media outlets.

Visitors & Volunteers

Visitor Policy

All visitors must enter through the main entrance on Clinton Street and report to the Main Office. Visitors must sign in and out of the building and wear the visitor badge provided for the duration of their visit.

Visitors are expected to:

- Remain in the areas of the school related to their scheduled activity or event.
- Enter and exit the building at their scheduled time.
- Refrain from disrupting the learning environment.
- Comply with all security procedures, including screening through the Evolv system and inspection of bags by school security personnel.
- Schedule appointments in advance when meeting with teachers, administrators or other staff members.
- Ensure that students attending school events are supervised by an adult.

Unauthorized visitors will be referred to administration and/or school security, and appropriate safety procedures will be followed in accordance with Buffalo Public Schools policies.

Volunteer Policy

Volunteers play an important role in supporting student learning, strengthening school-family partnerships, and enhancing the school community. We welcome family and community members who wish to share their time and talents with Bennett Park Montessori.

Volunteers must:

- Complete the Buffalo Public Schools volunteer application and receive approval **annually**.
- Follow all district volunteer procedures and requirements.
- Sign in and out through the Main Office during each visit.
- Wear volunteer identification while on school grounds.
- Maintain student and staff confidentiality.
- Participate only in activities related to their approved volunteer role.
- Follow all school safety procedures and expectations.

For the safety of our students and school community, volunteers are expected to remain in approved areas and refrain from visiting classrooms or other locations outside of their assigned activities.

Transportation

Transportation information will be mailed directly by the Buffalo Public Schools Transportation Department. Please be aware that route changes, substitute drivers, traffic conditions, and weather may affect pick-up and drop-off times. The First Student app is available and will provide alerts regarding transportation changes or disruptions.

Younger students will receive a bus information tag to be attached to their backpack. The tag includes your child's bus number, bus stop, and contact information. ***Please contact the school if the bus tag needs to be replaced.***

Important Information:

- All 3-year-old students will be assigned a seat with a built-in car seat at the front of the bus to ensure safe transportation.
- Younger students must be met at the bus stop by an authorized adult. If an authorized adult is not present, the Transportation Department will attempt to contact you. This may result in delays for other students. Authorized adults may be added or updated using the [Adults Allowed to Meet My Student](#) form*.
- For alternate daily pick-up or drop-off locations, please complete the [Second Address Request](#) form*.
- Changes to dismissal **must** be submitted in writing or communicated to the main office **before 2 pm**.
- **Address Changes:** Please contact a member of the school's clerical team. *Two proofs of address are required to process an address change.*
- For questions or concerns regarding transportation, contact the Buffalo Public Schools Transportation Department at **(716) 816-4895**.

*Forms: <https://www.buffaloschools.org/o/dept-transportation/page/transportation-forms>

When Questions/Concerns Arise

At BPMC, we believe that open communication and respectful problem-solving are essential to a strong school community. Most questions and concerns can be resolved quickly when addressed with the person closest to the situation.

- Contact your child's teacher first through Seesaw, email, or by leaving a message with the main office.
- If additional support is needed, contact the Main Office to speak with or leave a message for an administrator.
- If you would like to discuss a concern in person, please reach out to schedule a meeting in advance to ensure staff availability.
- Families may share concerns verbally or in writing with the school principal at any time.
- Non-urgent matters are typically addressed within **48-72 hours**. Student safety concerns will be prioritized and addressed as quickly as possible.
- If concerns remain unresolved after following the steps above, families may contact the Buffalo Public Schools Parent Advocate at **(716) 816-4678**.

Community Involvement

Montessori Community Association (MCA)

The Montessori Community Association (MCA) is the parent community organization that supports Bennett Park Montessori through family engagement, advocacy, volunteerism, fundraising, and school events. All members of the Bennett Park Community are encouraged to participate.

Information regarding meetings, events, volunteer opportunities, and membership will be shared throughout the school year.

For more information, visit www.bennettparkmontessori.org or email BennettparkMCA@gmail.com

Montessori Outdoor Learning Education (MOLE)

Montessori Outdoor Learning Education (MOLE) extends learning beyond the classroom through hands-on experiences in nature and the local community. Rooted in the Montessori belief that children learn best through exploration and real-world experiences, MOLE provides opportunities for students to connect classroom learning to the natural world.

Students may participate in activities such as gardening, environmental stewardship, outdoor investigations, field studies, and service-learning projects. Through these experiences, students develop responsibility, teamwork, problem-solving skills, and an appreciation for the environment.

In partnership with community organizations such as Grassroots Gardens and other local partners, Bennett Park continues to expand opportunities for outdoor learning that support students' academic, physical, and social-emotional growth.

Peace Team & Student Leadership

The Peace Team serves as a coordinating group for initiatives that promote student wellness, leadership, service, environmental stewardship, and positive school culture. Through these programs, students have opportunities to build leadership skills, contribute to their school community, and develop a sense of responsibility to others.

Programs and activities may include:

- Peace Ambassadors
- Student Council
- National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Wellness initiatives
- Gardening and environmental stewardship
- Recycling efforts
- Schoolwide celebrations and service activities

The Peace Team works collaboratively to support the well-being of students, staff, and families while fostering a welcoming and inclusive school community. Through wellness initiatives, leadership opportunities, cultural celebrations, and student engagement, the team promotes a sense of belonging, appreciation for diverse perspectives, and shared responsibility for maintaining a positive school climate.

School-Based Management Team (SBMT)

The School-Based Management Team (SBMT) is composed of parents, teachers, staff, and administrators who work together to support school improvement and student success. Through the Buffalo Public Schools Shared Decision-Making process, the SBMT reviews school goals, identifies priorities, and provides input on matters that impact the school community.

The team serves as a forum for collaboration and communication, helping to ensure that multiple perspectives are considered when making decisions that support academic achievement, school climate, and the overall educational experience of students.

Families are encouraged to participate in the shared decision-making process and attend meetings when opportunities are available. Information regarding membership, meeting dates, and the district's Shared Decision-Making Plan can be found on the Buffalo Public Schools website.

Appendix

Contact Information

Bennett Park Montessori

342 Clinton St

Buffalo, NY 14204

www.buffaloschools.org/BennettPark.cfm

Phone: (716) 816-4603

Fax: (716) 851-3895

Buffalo Public Schools:

www.buffaloschools.org

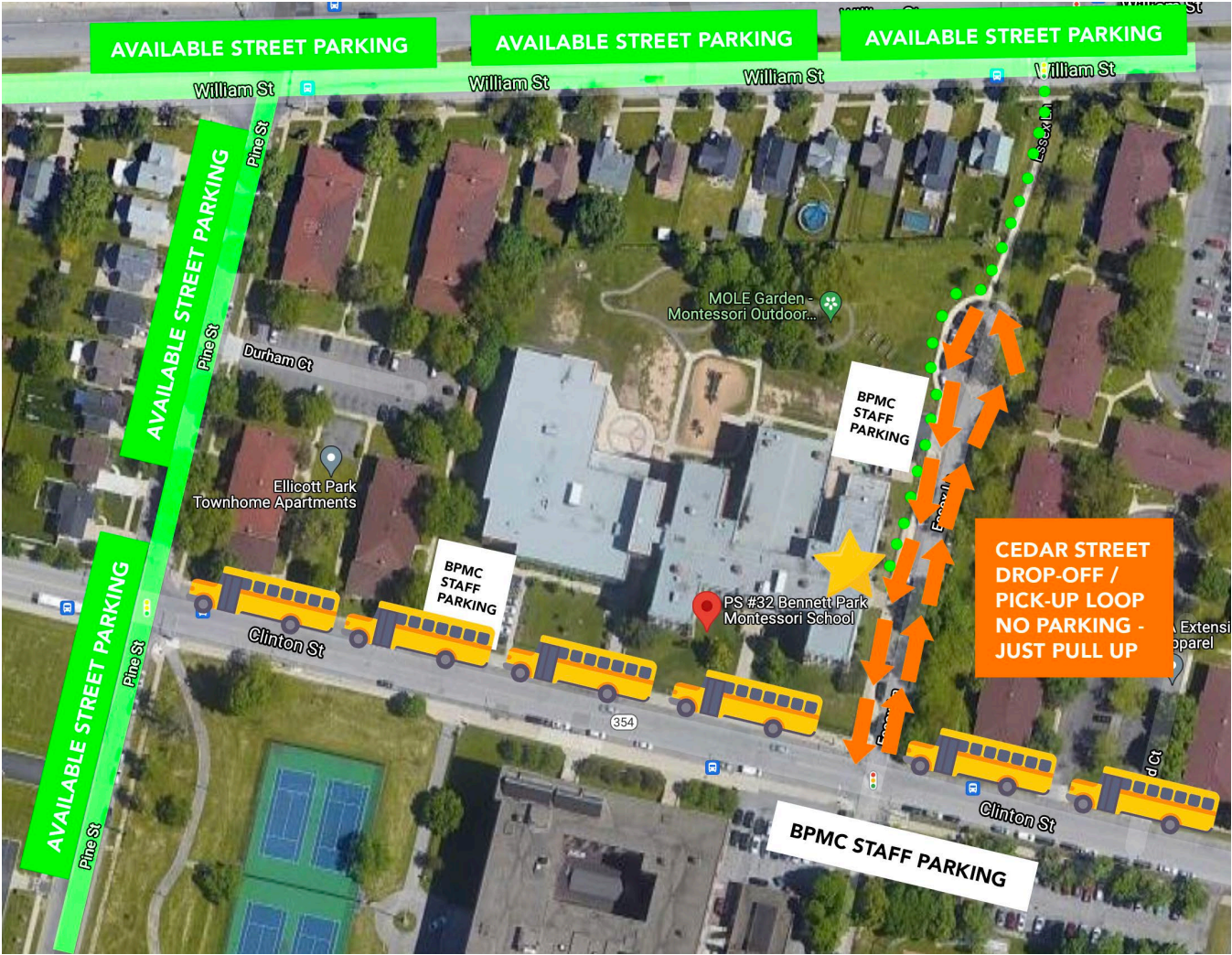
(716) 816-3500

Transportation Department (Bus Information):

www.buffaloschools.org/Transportation.cfm

(716) 816-4895

Parking/Bus Drop off



2026-2027 Events Calendar

Please look for school notices regarding events. Sometimes it may be necessary to change dates/times of events.

August 2026

25th – New Family Gathering (PS, PK, K) (10am-12pm)

September 2026

Montessori Principle: *Respect for the Child*

Character Development Focus: *Grace & Courtesy*

Wellness Focus: *Self-awareness, Social Awareness, Suicide Prevention Awareness, Hispanic Heritage Month*

1st – Superintendent’s Conference Day - No School for students

2nd – Teacher Set-Up Day – No School for students

3rd – First Day of School for students in grades PK-8 (PK phase-in of half days 3rd and 4th - parent p/u by 12:15pm)

7th – Labor Day – No School

8th – First full day PK (4-year-olds)

9th – Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

10th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm – 7:30pm)

14th & 15th – PS (3yr-olds phase-in of half days - parent p/u by 12:15pm)

16th – Full days begin for PS (3yr-olds)

17th – Last day for proof of immunizations

22nd – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

24th – Open House/Meet the Teacher (5pm-7pm)

October 2026

Montessori Principle: *Respect for the Child*

Character Development Focus: *Respect (for self and others)*

Wellness Focus: *Bullying Prevention-Red Ribbon Week, Depression Awareness, Emotional Wellness*

8th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

9th – 5-week Progress Report grades close

12th – No School (*Indigenous Peoples’ & Italian-Heritage Day*)

19th – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

21st – Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

22nd – Fall Festival at Montessori (5pm-7pm)

30th – Fall Picture Day (*no Halloween costumes*)

November 2026

Montessori Principle: *The Prepared Environment*

Character Development Focus: *Gratitude, Generosity*

Wellness Focus: *Homeless Youth Awareness, Native American Heritage Month*

3rd – No School (*Election Day*)

11th – No School (*Veterans Day*)

12th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

13th – 1st Quarter grades close

16th – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

18th – Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

25th-27th – No School (*Thanksgiving Recess*)

December 2026

Montessori Principle: *The Prepared Environment*

Character Development Focus: *Courage, Integrity*

Wellness Focus: *Stress Free, Managing Emotions*

3rd – 1st Quarter Parent/Teacher Conference Night (5pm-7pm)

7th – Picture Retake Day

9th – Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

10th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

11th – 15-week Progress Report grades close

11th – Winter Concert Performances (10am & 1:30pm)

15th – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

24th-Jan 1st – No School (*Winter Recess*)

January 2027

Montessori Principle: *Self-Directed Learning*

Character Development Focus: *Responsibility, Preparation*

Wellness Focus: *Mental Wellness, Financial Wellness, Responsible Decision Making*

4th – Students/Faculty return from Winter Recess

13th – Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

14th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

18th – No School (*Dr. MLK Jr. Day*)

20th – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

28th – Taste of Montessori Night (5pm–7pm)

29th – 2nd Quarter grades close

February 2027

Montessori Principle: *Self-Directed Learning*

Character Development Focus: *Compassion, Empathy*

Wellness Focus: *African American History, Boost Self-Esteem, Random Acts of Kindness*

10th – Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

11th – 2nd Quarter Parent/Teacher Conference Night (*by appointment 5pm-7pm*)

11th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

15th – No School (*Presidents’ Day*)

16th-19th – No School (*Mid-Winter Recess*)

22nd – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

26th – Black History Month Performances (10am, 1:30pm)

March 2027

Montessori Principle: *Freedom within Limits*

Character Development Focus: *Perseverance*

Wellness Focus: *Sleep Awareness, Spiritual Wellness, Growth Mindset, Women’s History Month*

4th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

9th – Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

10th – No School (*Eid al-Fitr*)

11th – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

11th – Basket Raffle Fundraiser (5pm–7:30pm)

12th – 25-week Progress Report grades close

22nd – Spring Pictures and 8th Grade Cap & Gown Pictures

26th - 2nd – No School (*Spring Recess*)

April 2027

Montessori Principle: *Freedom within Limits*

Character Development Focus: *Community, Teamwork*

Wellness Focus: *Stress Awareness, Physical Awareness, Child Abuse Prevention*

5th – Students/Faculty return from Spring Recess

8th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

13th-14th – NYS 3-8 ELA Testing

21st - Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

22nd - SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

22nd - Book, Bite, Family Movie Night (5pm–7pm)

23rd-3rd Quarter grades close

27th-28th – NYS 3-8 Math Testing

29th - 3rd Quarter Parent Conferences (*by appointment 4pm-7pm*)

May 2027

Montessori Principle: *Whole Child Development*

Character Development Focus: *Peace, Harmony*

Wellness Focus: *Mental Health Awareness, Teacher Appreciation, Buffalo Healing and Restoration*

4th – NYS 5th & 8th Grade Science Testing

5th – National Bike to School Day

6th – MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

10th – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

12th – Early Release Day (*Dismissal at 12:15pm*)

13th-14th – No School (*Superintendent Conference Days/NYS Test Scoring*)

19th - Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

20th - Spring Fest at Montessori (5pm-7pm)

21st - 35-week Progress Report grades close

21st - All library books returned

31st – No School (*Memorial Day*)

June 2027

Montessori Principle: *Whole Child Development*

Character Development Focus: *Leadership, Confidence*

Wellness Focus: *Occupational Wellness, LGBTQ+ Pride Month, Juneteenth Celebration*

3rd - Spring Concert (10am & 1:30pm)

8th – SBMT Meeting (9am–10am)

9th - Peace Team (PBIS/Wellness) (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

10th - MCA Meeting (5:30pm-7:30pm)

11th - Last day for 3yr. Olds

14th - New 3–6-year-old Parent Orientation

15th-17th - First Lessons for new 3–6-year-olds (10am-2pm)

17th – Juneteenth Celebration Day

18th – No School (*Juneteenth Holiday*)

24th – 4th Quarter grades close

24th – Last Day of School for PK-8 Students

Dates to be determined:

TBD – 4th, 6th, 8th grades City Honors Testing

TBD – NYSESLAT Speaking Test Window

TBD – Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Window

TBD – 8th Grade Moving Up Day

District Calendar



Buffalo Public Schools 2026-2027 School Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	X	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

OCTOBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	X	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	X	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	X	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	X	26	27	28
29	30					

DECEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	X	X	26
27	28	29	30	X		

JANUARY 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					X	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	X	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

IMPORTANT DATES

SEPTEMBER
 1 Supt. Conf. Day (Professional Development)
 2 Teacher Set-up Day
 3 First Day for Students
 7 Labor Day

OCTOBER
 12 Indigenous Peoples' & Italian Heritage Day

NOVEMBER
 3 Election Day
 11 Veterans Day
 25-27 Thanksgiving Recess

DECEMBER
 24-31 Winter Recess
JANUARY
 1 Winter Recess (cont.)
 18 Dr. MLK Jr. Day
 26-29 NYS Regents Exams (high school)

FEBRUARY
 15 Presidents' Day
 16-19 Mid-Winter Break

MARCH
 10 Eid al-Fitr
 26 Good Friday
 29 Easter (observed)
 30-31 Spring Recess

APRIL
 1-2 Spring Recess (cont.)
 TBD WIDA Speaking Test Window
 13-14 NYS 3-8 ELA Testing
 27-28 NYS 3-8 Math Testing
MAY
 TBD WIDA Speaking Test Window
 TBD WIDA Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Window
 4 NYS 5&8 Science Testing
 12 Early Release Day
 13-14 Supt. Conf. Days/NYS Test Scoring
 31 Memorial Day

JUNE
 15-24 NYS Regents Exam (high school)
 18 Juneteenth Holiday (observed)
 24 Last Day for Students
 25 Rating Day/Last Day for Faculty

JULY
 5 Fourth of July (observed)

FEBRUARY 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	X	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

MARCH 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	X	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	X	27
28	X	30	31			

APRIL 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

MAY 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	X					

**2 Supt. Conf. Day & NYS Test Scoring in May

JUNE 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	X	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

CALENDAR DAYS					
	FAC	STU		FAC	STU
SEPT	21	19	FEB	15	15
OCT	21	21	MAR	18	18
NOV	16	16	APR	20	20
DEC	17	17	MAY	20	18
JAN	19	19	JUN	18	17

Total Faculty Days: 185
 Total Actual Student Days: PK - 12 = 180 (incl. Regents exam dates for grade 9-12)
 Credited Student Days: 183 (incl. 3 Supt. Conf. Days)

H.S. Regents Exams
3-8 NYS testing

Supt. Conf. Day & NYS Test Scoring
Central Office Also Closed

Early Release Day
Schools Closed

Approved by
 Board of
 Education
 04.15.2026