

Bryant Bulletin

August 22, 2018



Staff Spotlight— Mrs. Jessica Castanon

Mrs. Castanon is a new addition to our 5th grade Reading/Language Arts Team. Mrs. Castanon received both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Florida. This school year, Mrs. Castanon is beginning her 6th year teaching. Mrs. Castanon works in education because she believes in investing in our future. She loves teaching children not only academics but also skills to become responsible citizens and leaders in the world! Mrs. Castanon believes each student is uniquely gifted. She loves learning about each of her individual student's interests, strengths, and just sharing conversations with them. All of Mrs. Castanon's favorite moments in education involve helping students one-to-one. Whether it is with academics, social, or personal situations, Mrs. Castanon loves

to listen and offer guidance. She wants all her students to know she cares about them. Some of her hobbies include reading, playing tennis, hiking and traveling. To help foster a culture of care and kindness, Mrs. Castanon does lots of team building activities in her classroom as well as community circles. She also takes time to build meaningful relationships with each of her students. We are very excited to welcome Mrs. Castanon to the Bryant family!

Dr. Rhodes' Weekly Message

This week, we will begin discussing our Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for the school year. We have three WIGs this school year and in this edition of the Bryant Bulletin we will begin discussing Goal One- Student Growth. It is our goal that each and every student grow by at least one full school year or more by the end of each school year. This may seem like a given as students move up a grade level each year, but it is actually quite challenging. Since every student enters a grade level at a different "spot" in their learning, the most important aspect is for teachers to get to know and understand what students already know and determine a pathway for their learning. Continuous growth occurs when we do not focus on teaching all students the same thing in the same way, but teaching students overarching skills and then tailoring those skills to individual student need—practice with on-level materials, filling in gaps that students may have with the skill, or pushing students further who already know the skill. It is important to teach our students through the lens of a growth mindset; always pushing forward, setting goals, and growing in new ways.

Some specific ways we plan to ensure a year of more of growth for each student is through goal setting. Students will begin to set personal goals in class as well as academic goals. Students in all grade levels will use data to track their progress and record this data in their own data notebook/folder. Students, teachers, coaches, and administrators will discuss goals with students, how to set goals, how to measure success and what to do if we don't quite meet our goals and what to do next if we meet or exceed our goals. This of course will look different in Kindergarten than it will in 5th grade. Through this process, teachers will know their students even better, students will become more invested in their learning because they are intrinsically motivated to reach their goals, and overall, this will help each teacher to help grow each student by one or more years.

In next week's Bryant Bulletin, we will discuss other ways teachers and students will focus on Student Growth this school year.

FYI: Curriculum Nights begin on Thursday. Please see below for scheduled grade levels and times. Doors will open five minutes prior to the published start time. Please enter at the front of the school. The evening will begin in your student's classroom where they will show you around and explain routines. After 10 minutes we will transition to the gym where teachers will explain expectations, curriculum, and answer general questions about the grade level. This is a new format for us. Last year we conducted a Virtual Curriculum Night but parent feedback from the Parent End of Year Survey indicated that an in-person Curriculum Night would be preferred. Curriculum Night is not a time for parent/teacher conferences but will focus on broad expectations and curriculum to be covered during the year. Parents are welcome to bring their student and other siblings but all children must be supervised at all times, will need to sit with parents in the gym, and remain quiet during the presentation so everyone can hear. At the end of the Curriculum Night, all guests will exit through the gym doors, as we will be welcoming our next grade level through the front doors.

FYI: Based on the End of Year Parent Survey we have made adjustments to several key areas across grade levels to provide consistency. These include:

- A more specific School Management Plan with specific steps and consequences which are the same in all grades.
- Consistent lines of communications between home and school, K-1 daily folder, 2-5 planner with daily indication of student behavior. Teachers will also communicate via phone, newsletter and email. There will not be the use of a variety of apps for different communication with different teachers.
- A different approach to homework. In the End of Year Parent Survey, parents were asked if students in grades K-2nd should have more homework than last year. 14.46% said "yes." The same question was asked of 3rd-5th parents and 8.43% said "yes." In the open comments section there were quite a few parents who discussed the need for flexibility in homework due to students' busy schedules. In response we have designed homework menus for each 9 weeks. Current research indicates reading nightly is important as well as the study of sight words; therefore, each grade level is indicating how many minutes students should read or practice sight words. Math facts are also important and should be practiced. The homework menus are designed to add extra activities for students to complete during the 9 weeks. Many of these activities involve interacting with family members, etc. Our goal is for students to intrinsically want to do these extra assignments. However, as a parent, if your student does not have time, they do not have to complete them. The homework menus are not for a grade but rather to share via technology and in the classroom. As the year progresses teachers will also provide links to websites/programs which you can use at your discretion for additional homework.

FYI: We will be making further adjustments to car rider arrival. This morning our car rider line was backed up to the roundabout, which also meant buses could not get in to the school. We are also not able to unload cars fast enough in the morning to get everyone in by 8:20. We are a growing campus (over 100 additional students just over the summer months) and will continue to grow, so it is important we get everything adjusted so we can handle growth over the coming years without continuing to make major adjustments each year. I will keep you updated through email as to changes as we make them. Once we make changes, we will also have staff members along the route to help guide you through any changes. Please remain flexible and calm. Working together, we will determine our best course of action to keep everyone safe, keep traffic flowing, and get everyone to school on time.

Thank You: Our new Treasure Tower in the Front Office has been sponsored for the first semester by [Cody's Tree Service, Inc.](#) Thank you to the Geimans for their sponsorship of this new initiative. Our Treasure Tower will be used to recognize student attendance as well as kindness exhibited by one student towards another.

Thank You: We have made some changes to our arrival and dismissal procedures and we appreciate your cooperation and understanding as everyone learns the new routines. Our goal in making these small changes is to increase student safety and streamline our processes.

After School Program: The Abrakadoodle Company will be offering after school art enrichment beginning in mid-September. There will be two sessions, September 12-October 17 and October 31-December 12. If you are interested in this program, [click here](#) to learn more or enroll. Please note that outside companies rent space at the school and are overseen by the company and its employees. Bryant Staff and Administration are not involved and do not oversee the programs. They will probably have their own method of releasing car riders, etc.

Website / Event Calendar

Monday, August 20- Friday August 24

School Police Week, BES will make a presentation to approximately ten officers on the 23rd.

Thursday, August 23

Kindergarten Curriculum Night, 5:45-6:15pm (please note updated time...time was off by 15 minutes in last bulletin)
5th Grade Curriculum Night, 6:30-7:00pm

Tuesday, August 28

1st Grade Curriculum Night, 5:45-6:15pm (please note updated time...time was off by 15 minutes in last bulletin)
4th Grade Curriculum Night, 6:30-7:00pm

Thursday, August 30

2nd Grade Curriculum Night, 5:45-6:15pm (please note updated time...time was off by 15 minutes in last bulletin)
3rd Grade Curriculum Night, 6:30-7:00pm

Monday, September 3

Labor Day- School Holiday

Tuesday, September 4

Lunch visitors begin, once per week

Monday, September 10- Friday, September 14

Grandparents Week. Grandparents are invited to visit one day during the week and sit with their grand child(ren) at their *class lunchroom table*. Grandparents must be listed on the Katy ISD Lunch Visitor Form sent home in the First Day Envelope.

Thursday, September 6

PTA VIPS Kickoff, 9-10:00am in the cafeteria

Tuesday, September 18- Thursday, September 27

PTA Boosterthon Fundraising Program

Thursday, September 27

Boosterthon Obstacle Course during specials times

Office and Other Information

- Click [HERE](#) for the Bryant Website
- Click [HERE](#) for Katy ISD Home Access Center (HAC). Register to gain access to grades, e-news, etc.

Follow us via social media:

Facebook= [Bryant Elementary](#)

Twitter= [@BryantElem](#) [#bengalpride](#)

From the Counselor:

Core Essentials: Each month, we will feature a Core Value as part of our Character Education Curriculum called Core Essentials. This month our Core Value is **WISDOM**. Wisdom is: finding out what you should do and doing it. Socrates once said that, "Wonder is the beginning of wisdom." Students will work on showing the trait of wisdom throughout the month, and continue to build on it throughout the year. Below are some great activities that you can do with your family to better understand what it means to have wisdom!

- Think of 3 things you would like to make sure you do before you go to school (brush your teeth, eat breakfast, tell someone in your family "good morning", etc.) and do those things.
- At the end of the day, do one thing that keeps your life organized (choose your clothes for the next day, put away books/toys, etc.)

Please contact me if you would like additional resources. Penny Flores, BES School Counselor, 281-234-4331, penelopewflores@katyisd.org, Canvas page: <https://katyisd.instructure.com/courses/159463>

No Place for Hate/Kindness Crew: We are looking for parents who would like to serve on our Kindness Crew Parent Committee. We would meet a minimum of four times during the school year to discuss ways of creating an inclusive, kind campus. A parent's perspective is greatly appreciated to help further the growth of this program. If you are interested, please sign up by [clicking here](#). This link will close on **September 7th**.

Home to School Connection

Family teamwork

Whether your youngsters are doing a group project or playing Hacky Sack, a team effort is needed. Everyone's a winner with these games that will show them teamwork in action.

Lower the yardstick. Together, hold a yardstick horizontally so that everyone has one finger underneath. Then, lower the yardstick to the ground—but if anyone's finger drops away, you have to start over. See how many tries it takes to get the yardstick to the floor.

Pass the ball. Sit in a circle with your feet out toward the center. Pass a ball around the circle—using only your feet. How many times can the ball go around before it drops on the ground?♥



Information from the PTA

Spirit Night

A big Thank You to everyone who came out to support our first PTA Spirit Night for the year. These nights are always so fun for the kids. They get so excited to see and talk to their friends outside of school. We're looking forward to many more fun evenings with our Bryant families. Your support is very much appreciated.

VIPS Kickoff

Join us on September 6th for our Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) kickoff. Meet other parents and PTA members and learn about how you can be involved at Bryant Elementary. We look forward to seeing you! We will meet from 9:00-10:00 in the cafeteria.

Student Birthday Information

Due to privacy, our school does not publish any type of formal directory of student information. However, some parents would like to provide their child's information to other parents for play dates, birthday party invitations, etc. In order to facilitate this, a Google Form has been created for each grade level. If you would like to share your information and your child(ren)'s information, you can fill out the information requested at each grade level link. This is completely voluntary. The links will be live through September 5th. After the 5th, the compiled information for each grade will be emailed to everyone who has chosen to participate. Information provided will not be considered private. The information will be shared only with parents who also provide their student's information. However, parents could share information with others. Again, this is completely optional and voluntary.

Kindergarten- <https://goo.gl/forms/i62Vjsw2oubxr2Du2>

1st Grade- <https://goo.gl/forms/ZaNW9DIsUVfyiLX2>

2nd Grade- <https://goo.gl/forms/R115WHR3J7wmL2uD3>

3rd Grade- <https://goo.gl/forms/CFvc5ZYrfi3JUEPR2>

4th Grade- <https://goo.gl/forms/YO4Pf2EQVetg3Kgu1>

5th Grade- <https://goo.gl/forms/ZsHT6DxgNs2CQLC72>

ECAP/YCAP- <https://goo.gl/forms/2QhbpQS0gGuCLlhd2>

Website

Visit the PTA website for up to date information by [clicking here](#).

Facebook

Check out the [Bryant PTA Facebook page](#) for information, pictures, and other great information.