

EXPERIENCE IMA | 2024-2025



12 MONTHS -  
ELEMENTARY

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PROGRAM  
VIEWBOOK



WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION  
DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS  
SPANISH & MANDARIN

Bellevue & Seattle, Washington

# WELCOME TO IMA

Dear Parents,

With pleasure I welcome you to International Montessori Academy. First, I'd like to pause and acknowledge the time and investment you have already put forth as you embark on this season of exploration to find a good fit school. This is a big decision, and we know with time, we will earn your trust and confidence!

IMA launched as a small school in 2011 with the goal of providing immersion opportunities for children in Mandarin. As interest in acquiring a global language grew, so too did our addition of Spanish offerings. Fast forward to today, and IMA has the privilege of serving nearly 200+ families and children across three school campuses in Bellevue and Seattle, WA.

At the core of what we do, we prioritize our children. At IMA we take pride in providing opportunities for your child's unique personality to grow and flourish. We aim to inspire wonder and curiosity as children begin to understand their identity, the community in which they live, and the complex world around them. While our students may be children today, we know that each child will someday be off to make their own mark on the world. It is what takes place in our classrooms today that will have the greatest impact on tomorrow.

At IMA we slow down and focus on developmentally appropriate practices that will spark academic excellence and create strong, confident individuals who are ready to integrate into a globally diverse community.

Thank you for choosing IMA. We cannot wait to begin this partnership and unleash your child's potential!

Sincerely,  
Brittney Gerry  
Head of School



# Our Programs by Age & Campus

	12MO - 2.11 YRS	PRESCHOOL 3 YRS	PRE-K 4 YRS	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST-SECOND GRADE
TODDLER	● ● ●				
CHINESE BILINGUAL		● ●	● ●		
CHINESE IMMERSION		● ● ●	● ● ●		
SPANISH IMMERSION		●	●		
CHINESE BILINGUAL ELEMENTARY				●	●

Program enrollment is based upon the child's age by 9/1.

- West Bellevue
- Eastgate
- Capitol Hill

- **Full Immersion:** Primary and secondary teachers engage in the target language of the classroom
- **Bilingual:** Primary teacher engages in English, secondary teacher engages in the target language of the chosen language model
- **Toddler classrooms at West Bellevue and Eastgate** are dual language with primary instruction in English and secondary immersion in Chinese
- **Toddler classrooms at Capitol Hill** parents can select a Chinese or Spanish bilingual toddler language track

# Why IMA?

## **At IMA, every child is a priority.**

We carefully curate a personalized learning experience for each child by understanding every student's individualized needs and learning style. Our dedicated faculty is focused on finding the best learning outcome for every student, and will tailor an approach that sets your child up for success.

## **Tomorrow's leaders need global education.**

We believe parents shouldn't have to choose between a robust language acquisition program and strong academics. By doing both, IMA prepares young learners for unlimited success in an inclusive world.

## **We know getting better doesn't mean staying the same.**

By maintaining a constant eye on best practices and an improvement-focused mindset, IMA is able to offer a world-class education in a nurturing, home-like environment.

## **Parents are our partners.**

Technology allows us to build a powerful alliance between school and home. We value parent feedback and use tools to help you, as parents, to feel connected and continue the learning experience after the school day ends. IMA connects school to home using Procure Engage.

IMA blends the traditions of Montessori education with modern practices and innovation to inspire every learner!



# Early Childhood



## Toddler

12 mo - 2 yrs 11 mo

IMA's early childhood classrooms engage in lessons designed to promote physical and emotional independence. In a calm and peaceful classroom environment, children learn practical life and self-care skills and use concrete materials to practice early math and language concepts. Monthly project-based and themed units provide a structure for integrating all content areas. Montessori inspired lessons are sequenced to meet students' individual needs and developmental milestones.

Our **Toddler** programs are a stepping stone for language immersion. Primary engagement takes place in English, with Spanish and Mandarin exposure depending upon the campus model. As children become comfortable in a dual-language classroom and their comprehension and oral vocabulary expands, they begin to confidently engage in their non-primary language.

Throughout the course of the day, children are provided both individual and whole group lessons as they navigate the curriculum and environment. Children are provided freedom within limits while they grow and mature into members of a community. Daily routines are supported as they show toilet awareness and toilet learning readiness, working to become independent in this process in preparation for Preschool.

## Preschool 3 yrs

The **Preschool** years are an exciting time at IMA! At age 3, we will work with you to select from one of the many targeted language models we offer across our three campuses. Based on your child's needs and your family's long-term plans for global language acquisition, parents can choose from our full immersion or bilingual learning programs.

Mornings encompass hands on and theme-based engagements that are multidisciplinary with exposure to Language Arts and Mathematics milestones. In addition, the children develop conceptual understanding of major social studies and science themes related to the monthly unit of inquiry.

Preschool children focus on confidence within a larger community of friends, navigating learning targets associated with social and emotional milestones in addition to foundational academic skills. Preschoolers transition into the afternoon nap room each day to enjoy a time of rest and rejuvenation!



# Sample Schedule and Unit Plan

# Toddler

**8:00** IMA opens for morning care.

**9:00** School Day Begins/Morning Work Cycle: daily circle with songs and movement, independent and group lessons, language immersion circle or food presentation lessons.

**10:00** Morning snack, diapering and toileting routines.

**10:30-11:00** Outside recess.

**11:00-12:00** Morning work cycle continued.

**12:00-12:30** Lunch, diapering and toileting routines.

**12:30-2:30** Nap | Students nap within their classroom

**2:30** Transition awake, afternoon snack, diapering and toileting routines.

**3:00** Dismissal and transition to afternoon extended care.

**3:00-5:30** Extended Care: outside play, individual and group activities, free play, afternoon snack.



<b>Grace &amp; Courtesy Focus</b>	<i>Students focus on group lessons that foster normalization to the classroom environment, daily routines and self-care skills which promote independence.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Asking for help</li> <li>✓ Pulling chairs out, pushing them in</li> <li>✓ Putting on jacket</li> <li>✓ Using a tissue to wipe nose</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Care Focus</b>		
<b>Practical Life</b>	<i>Children transition through a series of works that focus on the control of movement (fine motor development) and concentration and stamina.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Pumpkin seed pouring</li> <li>✓ Apple slicing</li> <li>✓ Pumpkin seed transferring using spoons and tongs</li> <li>✓ Washing a pumpkin</li> </ul>
<b>Fine Motor</b>		
<b>Gross Motor</b>	<i>Skills that require full body movement and large muscle control.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Walking feet vs. running feet</li> <li>✓ Push and pull motion</li> </ul>
<b>Language</b>	<i>Children build beginning skills related to listening and spoken word while expanding their vocabulary. Engagements focus on pre-literacy skills and fostering a literacy-rich learning environment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Classification cards</li> <li>✓ Fall and pumpkin themed read aloud – focusing on asking questions and exploring the illustrations</li> <li>✓ Fall themed object tray</li> <li>✓ Fall "I Spy" vocabulary walk</li> </ul>
<b>Sensorial</b>	<i>Sensorial works build an awareness of small details and develop a sense of perception. The foundations for mathematics, Sensorial works incorporate colors, shapes, textures, sounds and smells as children learn to distinguish similarities, differences and patterns.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Pumpkin and squash sorting</li> <li>✓ Sensory table with dissected pumpkin</li> <li>✓ Smelling jars with cinnamon and pumpkin spice</li> <li>✓ Pumpkin counting</li> </ul>
<b>Inquiry</b>	<i>Children observe, explore and begin to ask questions as they learn about the world around them.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Observe and dissect the parts of a pumpkin</li> <li>✓ Life cycle of a pumpkin</li> <li>✓ Continue season study: Fall</li> </ul>
<b>Art</b>	<i>Creative engagements drive expression and appreciation of color, texture and varying art techniques.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Color study of: orange</li> <li>✓ Cutting works with "orange"</li> <li>✓ Tissue paper glue and paste pumpkin art</li> <li>✓ Pumpkin painting</li> </ul>
<b>Music</b>	<i>Music engages the child's oral and physical being through song and movement.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Good morning &amp; Goodbye Song</li> <li>✓ 5 Little Pumpkins Song</li> <li>✓ Clapping on beat</li> </ul>
<b>Language Immersion</b>	<i>Children focus on listening skills as they start with the comprehension of a world language. As they become more verbal, basic words and phrases will be reinforced.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ "Please and Thank you"</li> <li>✓ "Wash hands"</li> <li>✓ "More please"</li> <li>✓ Unit words: pumpkin, apple, leaf</li> <li>✓ Songs: 5 Little Pumpkins in Chinese</li> </ul>



# Sample Schedule

8:00 IMA opens for morning care.

9:00-11:30 Morning Block: circle with songs and movement, independent and group lessons on preschool learning targets, projects related to the monthly unit theme, lessons and activities related to the target language immersion model.

\*\*AM Snack provided within the morning work block

11:30-12:00 Recess

12:00-12:30 Lunch

12:30-2:00 Nap | Students transition to the nap room. Children who drop a nap continue with afternoon engagements in the work room.

2:00 Transition awake, afternoon circle time, preparations to go home and PM Snack

3:00 Dismissal and transition to afternoon extended care.

3:00-5:30 Extended Care

## Preschool Age 3



### Sample Units:

Things That Go:  
An exploration of  
Land, Air and Water  
Transportation

Into the Pond:  
An exploration  
of Habitats

Into the Garden:  
An exploration  
of Plants,  
Insects and Spiders



# IMA Pre-Kindergarten Age 4

## A Day in the Life of a Pre-K Student

**8:00** IMA opens for morning care.

### **9:00-11:30**

Similar to preschool programming, parents select the language model of choice that best fits language acquisition goals for the child's AM learning block (9:00-12:30). Parents select either a Bilingual or Full Immersion language model. Pre-K students spend the morning engaging with our multidisciplinary units of exploration, focusing on Pre-K learning standards and fine motor development as they become early writers and readers!

**11:30-12:00** Recess

**12:00-12:30** Lunch

### **12:30-2:30**

Children transition to the afternoon Pre-K classroom. In the afternoon, children attend a block of programming in English only where they begin the Pre-K curriculum sequence for Language Arts and Mathematics.

In this afternoon, single-age, classroom teachers incorporate Sound of the Week engagements, phonics and literacy development utilizing our Explode the Code curriculum as a resource. Pre-K students start the Jump Math curriculum sequence, leveling up to use the Kindergarten leveled materials as their first year of formal math instruction.

**2:30** Transition back to homeroom classroom, afternoon circle time, preparations to go home.

**3:00** Dismissal and transition to afternoon extended care.

**3:00-5:30** Extended Care: outside play, individual and group activities, free play, afternoon snack.

\*\*\* Curriculum Maps with grade level learning targets can be provided upon request.





At IMA we design classroom environments that make both language and learning interactive and visual.





# 3 PILLARS OF ACADEMICS

At IMA we know that there is more than one pathway to rich learning. And yet, when we look at the most enduring and promising models of education, we find that each of them share three powerful practices. These practices are our 3 academic pillars: Relational Pedagogy, Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Inspiring Learning Environments.



# RELATIONAL PEDAGOGY

When we refer to 'relational pedagogy' at IMA, we are pointing to our belief that positive relationships are at the heart of excellent teaching and learning. Great teachers are constantly inviting their students to engage in inquiry with them. When children and youth feel safe in a relationship with their teacher, when they feel known and trust that their teacher is 'for them', they are far more likely to accept that invitation. When teachers know their students well, they are able to choose the approaches that will best enable each student to access the curriculum. Indeed, in these powerful learning communities, children's ideas and questions drive curriculum decisions made by educators.

Relational pedagogy extends to the relationships between children as well. Perhaps the most influential and precious resource children encounter at school is their peers. Excellent teachers understand the importance of children's relationships with one another and work hard to support these friendships. These teachers build learning communities within their classrooms. They encourage children to seek support from peers rather than relying solely on the teacher. These teachers make community building a priority.

IMA classrooms and schools are places where children, teachers and parents come together to ensure that every child thrives. For this reason, relational pedagogy is a non-negotiable. Before our children and youth accept our invitation to learn, they must know that we respect them, value them and are 'for them'.

# DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

Developmentally appropriate practices are central to excellent education. These practices are rooted in research related to child development and best practices in education. Developmentally appropriate practice is essential for excellent teachers because at the heart of developmentally appropriate practice is the child.

Our educators seek to identify the learning 'sweet spot' for each child; that joyful place where learning is challenging enough to not be 'boring' but not so challenging that it is overwhelming. We aim for our learners to be engaged in a joyful, good struggle as they work to master new knowledge and skills.

Because the children we serve deserve educational practices that support their optimal growth at their phase of development, IMA embraces developmentally appropriate practices as a non-negotiable when it comes to our work with children. We are a network of schools that engage in reflection and stand ready to embrace changes in our practice so that we can best support the growth and learning of the children and youth we serve. We seek to simultaneously harness the wisdom of a hundred years by tapping into the work of educational theorists of the past while also being informed of ongoing pedagogical research that will help us to continue developing our teacher craft knowledge so that the students in our care thrive.

# INSPIRING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The spaces children learn in and the materials they engage with deeply impact their learning. Learning environments set the tone for children's work. We have high standards for our learning environments. We know how important a carefully planned, clutter free, soothing and 'home like' classroom is. We believe that our classrooms should be beautiful spaces that inform children and celebrate their learning. We reject the institutional feel of the classrooms that many of us learned in as children. We know that the best learning does not happen while sitting and listening to a teacher, it happens when students engage in meaningful projects or with rich materials.

If classrooms are soothing places designed for children to work in small groups or independently with carefully selected materials, children are able to focus for long stretches of time. They are able to develop the ability to regulate their behavior.

Of particular importance is the utilization of our outdoor space. Research indicates that children are spending less and less time outside. This 'nature deficit' is resulting in increased behavior issues, depression, poor physical health and lower motivation in our children. At IMA, we are committed to offering our children as much access as possible to what may well be the most inspiring learning environment they encounter; the outdoors.

IMA educators know that the learning environment matters. As such, we believe that inspiring learning environments are a non-negotiable. We want the best for our students and our teachers so we work to ensure that our classrooms and outdoor spaces are inspiring places to work and learn.



# THE ELEMENTARY YEARS

## Curriculum and Standards

IMA delivers a curriculum sequence, Pre-Kindergarten through 5th Grade, that is set against both U.S. and international learning standards. Goals and benchmarks were designed to prepare children for the subsequent elementary grades as they progress each year. IMA implements a combination of carefully designed units and selective workbooks to prepare children across the various subject strands. Classroom engagements are both teacher-driven and student-led, allowing the children to be active participants in their learning. While curriculum and units tie to specific learning targets, teachers work with students individually to scaffold or tailor content to ensure their individual areas of strength and growth are addressed.





# West Bellevue Elementary

## Kindergarten

Exclusive to our West Bellevue campus, IMA now offers a dual language Kindergarten classroom. In this kindergarten-only classroom, children learn and engage in English for 80% of the day, with a 90-minute block of Mandarin instruction integrated into their daily schedule. This specially designed program will give your kindergartener the confidence to make a successful elementary transition while maintaining or learning Mandarin.

## Lower Elementary

IMA's multi-grade lower elementary classrooms are structured to promote mentoring and leadership among students of different ages in grades 1, 2 and 3. Core subject instruction takes place in English with 90-minutes of Mandarin, daily. Our seasoned teachers beautifully merge all disciplines within thought-provoking lessons and experiences.

## Upper Elementary

Upper elementary students in grades 4 and 5 are encouraged to take ownership of their own learning. From a comprehensive plan for dual language development, to perfecting a goal-setting strategy, we give kids the tools they need to become productive, adaptable, confident citizens of a global world. Classrooms naturally prepare children for the transition to middle school, partnering with parents throughout this journey.



# Elementary Chinese

IMA utilizes ACTFL global language standards as a framework for curriculum and instruction design and student assessment. Children are assessed upon entry so a language track can be specifically designed to meet the Chinese level of the individual student. Children who are heritage speakers may have a higher level of comprehension and oral fluency, but need focus on building reading and writing skills. A child who is brand new to the language, will need a non-heritage language track designed so they can begin with introductory skills to build comprehension and oral fluency. This level of assessment allows children to make constant movement throughout the school year, meeting goals and building their overall ability to speak and engage in Chinese.

Beginning in Kindergarten, IMA layers on the reading and writing elements in what we call Chinese Language Arts. While our early childhood programs first focus on the understanding and speaking of Chinese, Kindergarteners take the next steps as they develop reading fluency and build their library of Chinese characters and strokes. IMA teaches simplified Chinese in our programs.

Children apply their language skills to thoughtfully designed units that build vocabulary and depth. Whether these are integrating in a cultural celebration or something fun, like designing a food truck, the children are finding excitement in their growing Chinese levels. IMA believes that to grow and acquire a second language, excitement must be at the core!



# Frequently Asked Questions



## After IMA

- 98% of our graduates gain admission to highly competitive private, secondary schools
- 2% go on to attend top-ranked area public schools and gifted programs

Private middle school programs in our area begin in 5th grade, allowing most children the opportunity to finalize their 4th grade year at IMA before transitioning schools for grades 5-12.

## Our Class Sizes

	Max. Capacity	# of Teachers
<input type="checkbox"/> Toddler	14	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Preschool	16-18	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Kindergarten	16-18	2
<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten	14-16	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	14-16	1

\*Program enrollment is based on student's age as of Sept. 1

As parents, we often hear that the goal of education is to prepare children for an unknown future. While it may be true that this next generation will encounter countless advancements and likely pursue careers that are yet to be imagined, we do know what foundational principles are important to achieve success.

## What Do Modern Learners Need to Know?

It is important for our children to have skill sets that can lend themselves to any time, and any opportunity. So what does this look like? It begins by instilling confidence, resilience, and a willingness to take risks. Children who demonstrate a willingness trying new things, whether they achieve the assumed result on the first or tenth try, have a natural grit that drives them toward discovery. Understanding processes and how to design, reflect and adapt allows students to approach situations where problem solving and critical thinking are required and naturally move toward solutions. Building social and emotional resilience is important as students learn how and when to be a leader, but also know when it is more beneficial to be a strong and contributing team member. The ability to collaborate with others, consider various perspectives and engage in discussion and productive debate are lifelong skills that are already curating in the early years. By showing children how to find this balance, we help them become well-rounded, empathetic individuals who can apply their academic knowledge and life skills maturely and consistently.



## Is IMA a licensed school program?

IMA is licensed through the State of Washington. Early Childhood programs are licensed through the Department of Children, Youth and Families. IMA's K-5 classrooms are approved and accredited through the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), meeting all K-5 curriculum and program standards.



Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**



## Caring for the Whole Child

We believe a healthy school day includes exposure to the arts, time spent outside, and a well-balanced, nutritious diet.

Each of our three campuses feature **secure playgrounds** and **green space**, perfect for exploring and connecting with friends.

Daily snacks and lunch provided with tuition.





## Specialist Classes

Our dedicated specialist classes include music and movement, and art instruction. Classes are integrated into students' weekly schedules. These classes are instructed by teachers who are experts in early childhood and elementary art and music education

## Extracurricular Activities

IMA offers a variety of afterschool extracurricular classes on a rotating basis throughout the school year. These classes take place after 3:00 PM. Registration guides and fees are provided prior to the start of a new session. Example Classes: Yoga, Gymnastics, Music and Art.





# IMA PRIORITIZES SAFETY AND SECURITY.

Background checks on all campus visitors through Raptor Technologies.

Full campus video surveillance with indoor and outdoor cameras.

Facilities that are locked down to the outside public with key pad access and video intercom systems.

Campus safety drills including fire, earthquake and intruder protocols.

All staff have undergone Endeavor Schools intruder and lockdown training from retired CIA and secret service agents.

# The IMA Student Mindset

## At IMA we...

### Start things.

We solve problems & pursue interests. We start businesses. We don't just follow plans of other people — we make our own. We always have goals & projects in mind, and exercise control over how we spend our time. We're confident, and still ask for help.

### Understand people.

We understand people of different cultures, ages, beliefs, and personalities. We understand some of what they want (and don't), what they assume, and why they do what they do. We understand how we're all different, and how we're all the same.

### Understand systems.

We're curious about how things fit together — and we ask how they could fit better. We ask how things got this way. We zoom out to the big picture, and in to the details, spotting things others miss. We can see the world from different perspectives. We know that every solution will cause its own unintended effects. We think about the real world that spans all academic subjects.

### Communicate with others.

We can communicate through our words, our voice, and our bodies. We explain ourselves, tell stories, ask questions — and listen for an answer. We can communicate through our posture, our eyes, our gestures, and our tone. We can work on a team, and go it on our own. We can criticize carefully and take criticism ourselves.

### Work hard & work smart.

We work on all parts of a project — even those we don't like. We can focus deeply. We are motivated to do real work. We work efficiently: we don't just throw ourselves at a problem. We know how to gain new skills.





# The Benefits of Global Education

- With early, adequate exposure, children have the capacity to acquire full competence in multiple languages. Bilingualism is also closely associated with improved academic outcomes and higher executive functioning. (1)
- Children raised in a bilingual environment rely more heavily on social cues and observation. Bilingual learners as young as 3 demonstrate advanced social emotional skills that can lead to a more finely developed sense of empathy. (2)
- Dual-language learning naturally enhances students' metalinguistic awareness and may improve reading scores. One four-year study found that some dual-language learners outperformed their peers by as much as one year. (3)
- In a study conducted by the Center for Early Care and Education Research, dual-language learners demonstrated better focus and self-regulation, making them less likely to act out and better equipped to adjust to changes within their peer groups.

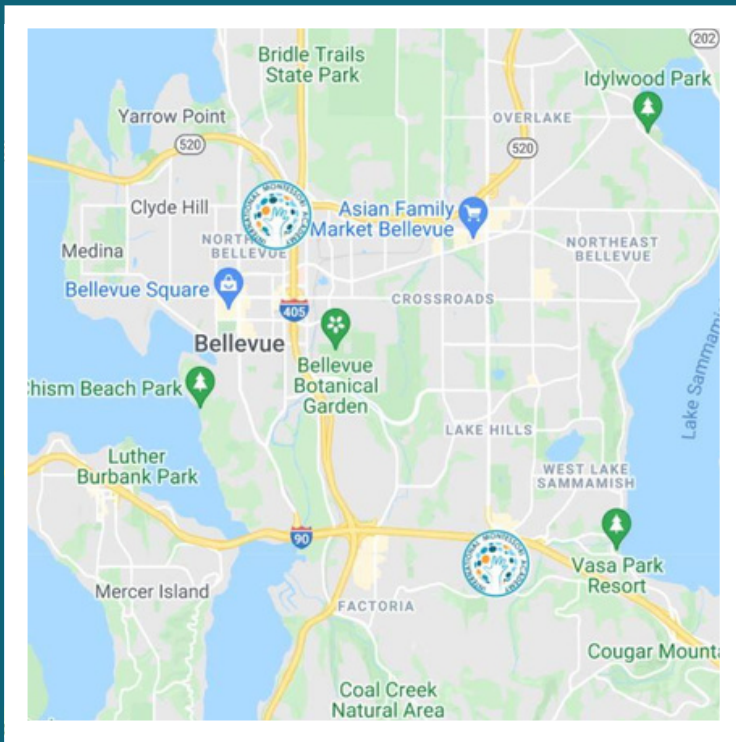
(1) *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures*, published by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

(2) *The Effects of Bilingualism on Theory of Mind Development*, published by Cambridge University Press

(3) *The Effect of Dual-Language Immersion on Student Achievement in the Portland Public Schools*, research funded by the Institute of Education Sciences



# Our Campuses

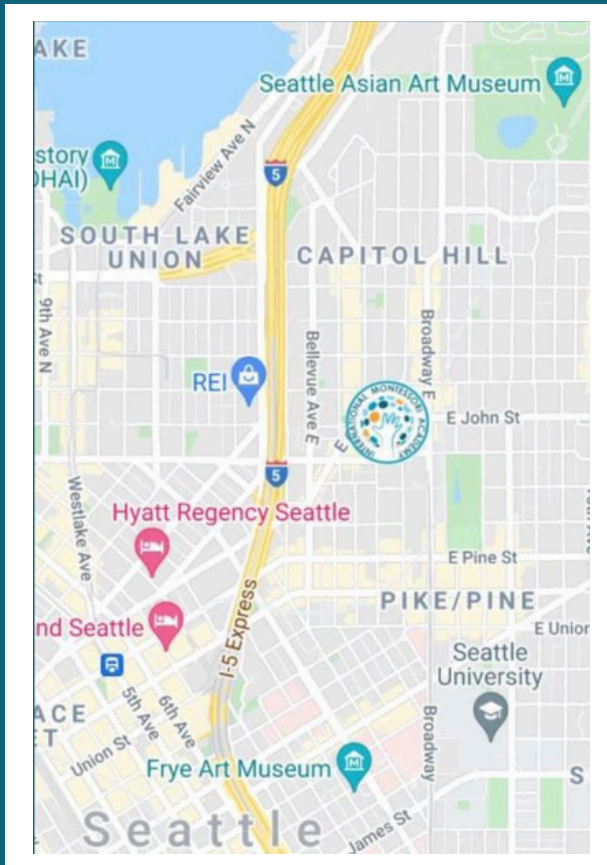


## Eastgate

14929 SE Allen Road | (425) 223-5798

## West Bellevue

2227 112th Ave. NE | (425) 454-5600



## Capitol Hill

1715 E Olive Way | (206) 566-6869

