

2022—2023

St. James Elementary School

FAMILY INFORMATION HANDBOOK

Principal — Adam Javidi



St. James Elementary School

**SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ST. JAMES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
580 Lake Avenue, St. James, NY 11780
(631) 382-4455, FAX (631) 382-4456**

Board Of Education 2022—2023

Matthew Gribbin—President
Michael Saidens—Vice President
Michael Catalanotto
Jerry R. Martusciello
Stacy Ann Murphy
John Savoretti
Karen Wontrobski-Ricciardi

Central Administration

Mark Secaur, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

Kevin Simmons, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Administration

Daniel J. Helmes
Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services

Neil Katz
Assistant Superintendent for Personnel

Paul Strader II
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Assessment

Andrew R. Tobin
Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

September 2022

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. James Elementary School. We, at St. James, are looking forward to working with you and your children. Elementary school years are critical in shaping a child's values and sense of responsibility. Adhering to policies of one's school promotes this sense of responsibility. We hope this handbook is helpful in understanding and appreciating the guidelines set forth at St. James Elementary School.

We say "YES" at St. James. Throughout the school year we pose the following questions to the children:

Are you:

Taking care of: Yourself?

Taking care of: Each other?

Taking care of: St. James?

Children who can honestly answer these questions positively serve as wonderful role models for others.

Please discuss the rules in this handbook with your child. Remind them to say "YES" at St. James.

It's going to be an incredible year—filled with discovery—reading, writing, thinking, math, science, social studies, laughing...and more! Remember the wonder of being a child.

*Sincerely,
Adam Javidi
Principal*

NOTES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Page #</u>	
5	Dates and Hours/Arrival/Dismissal
6	Authorization for Student Release
6	Dismissal Procedures (non-bus)
7	Directions for School Bus Riders
8	Transportation
8	Identification Tags – Kindergarten and First Grade only
8	Emergency Closing, Late Arrival, Early Dismissal
9	Attendance
9	Emergency/Health Information
9	Medication in School
10	School Lunch
10	Personal Safety
11	School Safety and Security
11	Visitors
11	Discipline
11	Requests for Work
12	Celebrations/Birthday Celebrations
12	Birthday Book Club
13	Party Invitations
13	ENL Information
13	Performances/Moving Up Ceremony
13	Physical Education
13	Student Belongings
13	Insurance 2022—2023
13	Pesticide Notification Law
15	Where to Call

NOTES

DATES AND HOURS/ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

- A. All pupils in grades K through 5 will report on **Tuesday, September 6th**, for their regular sessions.
- B. All elementary schools will be on the same schedule.** The official hours for the school day will be **9:30 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.** Children may begin to enter the building at **9:10 a.m.** Students who are not in their classrooms by 9:30 will be marked late. If you are bringing your child to school, please make every effort to have your child enter the building between 9:10—9:20. This will provide children with enough time to get to their classrooms prior to the beginning of the school day. Dismissal begins at 3:35 p.m. and the buses will depart by 3:50 p.m.
- C. To ensure the safety of all children, please do not arrive at school prior to 9:10 a.m. We do not have supervision prior to 9:10. Only children registered for our School Age Childcare Program or a Before School Club will be admitted into school prior to 9:10 a.m. Parents in need of before school childcare may call (631) 360-7517 to make arrangements for on-site childcare. Your cooperation in helping us provide a safe and supervised environment is greatly appreciated.
- D. Instructional time is of paramount importance. We strongly suggest that all students remain in school until dismissal time. Signing a child out early, particularly during the last period of instruction, between 2:50 and 3:20 p.m., interferes with the dismissal procedures outlined under TRANSPORTATION in this handbook. If it is absolutely imperative to sign out your child before the usual dismissal time, please send a note to your child's teacher. The teacher will then forward the note to the office.
- E. Parents frequently call the school to alter their plans for their child's dismissal. Last minute dismissal changes are confusing to students. Such changes are extremely disruptive to the learning environment and to the office. While the office staff will be pleased to assist a parent in the event of an emergency, all too often telephone calls requesting change of dismissal occur in non-emergency situations. **Parents are advised that verbal or telephone requests to alter the normal dismissal procedures can not be granted except in emergency situations. Please do not call the school to request such changes except for emergencies.****
- F. Children are encouraged to use bus transportation to and from school. Only staff and mini buses will be permitted in our parking lot during arrival/dismissal times.** Parents/guardians who choose to transport students to school may drop off/pick up children via one of the options as follows:

Student Drop-off

1. **Cars are to drive to the curb on Lake Avenue between St. James Elementary and the St James train station. Students disembark from cars and proceed to school using sidewalk path. Parents are to remain in their cars.**
2. **Parents wishing to walk child to the front doors may do so after parking along approved areas on Lake Avenue or at the St. James Train Station. Please be certain to have a resident parking permit if you are exercising the train station option.**

3. **Parents, please do not pull into the school parking lot or bus circle at arrival or dismissal time. These areas are reserved for large buses and mini-buses. Thank you.**

Additionally, please adhere to the following:

- Parking is permitted in designated areas along Lake Avenue.
- You may enter the parking lot and bus circle to drop off for before-school clubs if prior to 8:30 a.m.
- **Do not block driveways or bus circle.**
- **Do not pull into bus circle at arrival or dismissal.**

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES (Non-bus)

- A. *Parents must indicate, in writing, if their children are not riding the bus home. Letters should state if parent pickup will be "library pickup" or "walker".*
- B. **Sign Out Students:** Parents choosing to "sign out" children at dismissal will do so from the library entrance. Please report to the side door under the overhang adjacent to the library. In addition, a non-parent/guardian adult will be permitted to "sign out" a child at the library entrance during dismissal-*if and only if* the school has received written authorization from the parent. Parents and other adults picking up students should always be prepared if asked for photo ID. Once dismissed, students are to remain with their parents. Families interested in providing their children with some physical activity at dismissal may walk to our back fields and playground where children may run and play safely while others are being dismissed.
- B. **Walker:** If you prefer that your child be dismissed as a "walker", your child will meet you outside of the school building each day. This option streamlines dismissal and is reserved for older students. If you choose this option, arrange a predetermined meeting place outside of the school. **Remember to** send in a note indicating the length of time your child is to be dismissed as a walker. **Please note**, this is **not** an option for Kindergarten students.

AUTHORIZATION FOR STUDENT RELEASE

Under New York State law, a student can be released only to parents, legal guardians, or persons who have been authorized by the parent or legal guardian to assume responsibility for the student. A student will not be released to anyone who does not have a government-issued photo ID. Schools must maintain a list of persons who are so authorized.

Students will be released to either parent unless a court order or decree indicates otherwise. The school must be given a copy of any such court order or decree.

All persons whose names appear on the **Student Release Authorization Form** must also present written permission from the parent to request the student's release. Your child will not

pesticides for which any prior notification would be required. If such a pesticide were to be utilized, the use would occur only when the building would remain unoccupied for 72 continuous hours. Nevertheless, the District is required to remind parents, guardians, and staff that they may request to be placed on a 48-hour prior notification list by contacting Mr. Daniel Leddy in written form, or by calling the above-listed telephone number.

WHERE TO CALL

<u>Concern/Question</u>	<u>Person to Call</u>	
Questions about child's progress/ classroom situation	Classroom Teacher	382-4455
To report an absence	Health Office	382-4460
Bus/bus stop questions	Mrs. Mohlin	382-4463
School Psychologist	Mr. O'Brien	382-4464
Health	Mrs. Aprahamian	382-4461
Reading Specialist	Mrs. Gayer Mrs. Keane	382-4469 382-4469
Lunch Charges (prepaid, free/reduced lunch)	Mrs. Gilligan	382-4462
Instrumental music	Mrs. Irmischer	382-4455
Social Work Services	Mrs. Sellitto	382-4466
Speech/Language Service	Mrs. Perrone Ms. Wilcox	382-4455 382-4466
ENL	Mrs. McErlean Mrs. Moore	382-4467 382-4473
Smithtown Parent Resource Center (School-aged childcare)	Mrs. Fiorello	360-7517
PTA President	Mrs. Brittany McGrath	379-3495
All other questions	Main Office	382-4455

the Smithtown School District is required to maintain a list of persons in parental relation, or any of its faculty and staff members, who wish to receive a 48-hour prior written notification of specific pesticide applications which will occur in the School District. In addition, we must also provide notification of any pesticide applications made during the school year using a specific schedule: within 2 days of the end of the Spring recess, within 2 days of the end of the Winter recess, and within 10 days of the end of the school year. This written summary must include the date and location of pesticide applications and the names of the products used, the name and phone number of a school representative to contact for additional information, and a reminder that we offer any individual an opportunity to register to receive written notification 48 hours prior to pesticide applications.

The Smithtown School District, since 1992, has utilized an integrated pest management program (IPM). The very purpose of an IPM program is to restrict or eliminate entirely the use of pesticides in or around its facilities.

The School District's IPM program includes the use of a contracted firm, expert in integrated pest management itself. This firm conducts monthly inspections of all District facilities and takes appropriate remedial measures to eliminate or reduce the presence of insects or other pests.

The first step in any successful IPM program is that the District's facilities be kept clean of material which attracts insects or other pests. If the presence of pests is noticed, the District uses anti-microbial products, nonvolatile rodenticides in tamper resistant bait stations, or other non-hazardous substances. In addition, glue traps are utilized to detect the presence of pests to determine which areas may need additional cleaning or sealant along edges or small spaces in rooms. This is only done in areas inaccessible to children. These applications or procedures are not subject to prior notification requirements.

In the event an emergency application of a regulated pesticide application is required, the District would not apply such chemicals unless the school was to remain unoccupied for a continuous 72 hours following the application. Here again, no 48-hour notification would be required.

While the District does not anticipate any situation where there will be a need to provide notification of a pesticide application 48 hours in advance, if you would like to receive such notification if one were required, please send a postcard or brief letter to Mr. Daniel Leddy, Smithtown Central School District, 26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, New York 11787 or telephone Mr. Leddy at (631) 382-4136, requesting pesticide application notification. Please include the school building that you would like to be notified about, and your name and address.

In summary, the District has utilized an integrated pest management program since 1992 and spends from eighteen to twenty-five thousand dollars annually for this program. The District does not maintain (certified) employees for the purpose of applying pesticides of any kind and will not do so. The IPM program is designed first to keep areas clean so that pests are not attracted within the building, and secondly to utilize means of control that do not use

be released to anyone whose name does not appear on the authorization list, nor will your child be released unless that person has written permission from you to assume responsibility for your child. The written permission should be delivered to the school with the student.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCHOOL BUS RIDERS

The following directions are being offered here so that every child and parent knows precisely what is expected in the way of proper student conduct related to the use of school buses. All parents are asked to periodically review the directions to help us insure safe and pleasant school bus experiences for their children. This is reinforced at school on a regular basis.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE DIRECTIONS CAN AND WILL RESULT IN THE SUSPENSION OF A CHILD'S BUS PRIVILEGES.

- A. All students on a school bus are under the authority of its driver and are required to follow the driver's instructions.
- B. Order must be maintained within the bus at all times. We want our drivers focused on the road and safely operating the bus.
- C. All students are to use their regular bus and established stop location, unless they have a written request by their parent and permission of the building principal or his designee to do otherwise. Permission for a bus pass will not be given if the additional child would create overcrowding.
- D. Students approaching the bus from the opposite side of the road are not to cross the street until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver signals them, at which time they are to immediately cross in front of the bus.
- E. Once on the bus, pupils are to seat themselves quickly, buckle up and remain in that seat until the bus has come to a complete stop and it is time to get off.
- F. Students are expected to be reasonably quiet, polite, and courteous in their speech and behavior on the bus and at the bus stop.
- G. Unacceptable behavior includes: shouting and screaming, name calling, pushing and shoving, poking, hitting, fighting, spitting, abusive language, and any other behavior generally deemed to be disruptive, impolite, or discourteous.
- H. Students are to help keep the bus clean and free of any damage.
- I. Children should not throw objects **on, from, or at** the bus.
- J. No part of the student's body or belongings are ever to be extended out the bus window.

TRANSPORTATION

- A. Problems or questions concerning school busing should be directed to the office at 382-4463 or directly to the Transportation Office at 382-4101.
- B. Bicycle Riders: Parents are advised that it is NY State Law that all bike riders must wear a helmet when riding their bikes. A note must be sent to the school giving the child permission to ride his/her bike to and from school. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that his/her child wears a helmet when riding a bike. If a child does not wear a helmet, he/she will not be allowed to ride his/her bike home from school.
- C. Bus passes will be issued for emergency purposes or childcare purposes ONLY. In the event an emergency exists, and a bus pass is requested, please be certain to send in all pertinent information including the full names of all children involved. The bus number and bus stop requested are also appreciated. If a change in bus is due to a childcare

issue, please contact transportation for a **“Baby Sitter Stop Request” form. If a seat exists for the child in need of a change in bus service due to child care, this request will likely be granted.**

IDENTIFICATION TAGS – KINDERGARTEN & FIRST GRADE ONLY

- A. Identification tags have been previously sent home to be worn by youngsters who are entering Kindergarten and First Grade. Please continue to have this tag pinned to your child's outer clothing for the first week or two of school.
- B. Parents are to print either their child's bus number and bus stop location, or “walker,” or “sign out” or “car transportation” on the tags. Please note, Kindergarten students cannot be a walker.

EMERGENCY CLOSING, LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY DISMISSAL

It is important that all parents understand our school's procedures for advising you of school closing and/or early dismissal due to inclement weather conditions or other emergency conditions. The Smithtown School District will enact an automated telephone call for all families with students in the district informing parents of any school closings, delayed openings or early dismissals. The automated calling system will call the numbers listed on the emergency contact information provided by the parent. Please be certain that this information is accurate and up to date. Additionally, the District posts emergency closings on its website, www.smithtown.k12.ny.us, as well as News12 and WALK, WBAB & WBLI radio stations.

It is suggested that each family have a detailed emergency plan that the children thoroughly understand which provides for their protection and care if they were to arrive home earlier than usual and find themselves locked out of the house. This plan might be as simple as having them go to a neighbor who has previously agreed to the emergency plan.

PARTY INVITATIONS

Parents frequently ask teachers to distribute party invitations in school to a select group of students. This is often unnecessarily hurtful to the other children in the class. It will be the policy of this school that absolutely no party invitations are to be distributed unless every child in the class is to be included. If this is not possible, then parents are advised to distribute invitations out of the school setting

ENL INFORMATION

English as a New Language (ENL) classes are for students who need assistance learning English. For additional information, please contact the main office.

PERFORMANCES/FIFTH GRADE MOVING UP CEREMONY

Due to the Fire Code regulations at St. James Elementary School, we cannot accommodate large audiences during our evening concerts. For evening performances, a suggested number of guests will be sent home. Tickets may be included. So that every parent may have an equal opportunity to view their child, we ask that you please respect our seating restrictions. Also, siblings will not be able to attend daytime events, such as Fifth Grade Moving Up Ceremony.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students should be dressed appropriately to play and exercise. Choose non-platform, non-heelie sneakers that are laced on top, velcroed, zippered or slip-on with a back. Students should not wear jewelry on gym days. Please remember to send in a note if your child is unable to participate in physical education class.

STUDENT BELONGINGS

No toys or electronic equipment (including cell phones, Smart watches, laser pens) or any sports equipment that could pose a hazard to other students on the playground or bus will be permitted in school. If a child brings such an item to school, it will be confiscated.

INSURANCE

If the need should arise, information about student accident insurance will be addressed through the Asst. Supt. For Finance and Operations office. Please be advised that the District does not maintain separate insurance coverage for personal (student or staff) property. The School District is not responsible for the loss, damage, or theft of personal property.

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION LAW

New York State Education Law, Section 409-H, effective July 1, 2001, requires all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to provide written notification to you, regarding actual use or potential use of pesticides throughout the school year. In addition,

CELEBRATIONS-

For the health and safety of our students, we are a “shared food” -free school. Students do not share food with one another. This includes parties and celebrations at school.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS -

In order to accommodate the increasing health and wellness needs of our student population, birthdays will continue to be celebrated as follows in grades K—5:

- Families may send in a “special snack” for their child on his/her birthday.
- Please do not send in birthday treats (food or trinkets) for the other students in the class.

In the interest of health, wellness and fairness, if class snacks are sent into school, they will not be distributed. As in the past, the class will honor the birthday child by singing “Happy Birthday” during each birthday celebration. We appreciate your cooperation and thank you for helping us to keep all of our students safe and healthy.

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS/PARTIES

Classroom teachers, in collaboration with the school principal, will determine class celebrations. Classroom celebrations will focus on playing games and/or making crafts. Students may bring in a special snack for themselves during these celebrations. Due to the increasing concern of allergies and other health-related issues, celebrations will not include shared food.

Also, please do not send in any “extra” treats or trinkets into school. We realize that families enjoy giving and sharing. If you would like to send in a little something extra during a time of celebration, please consider sending in a non-perishable food item. Such items will be donated to our Family Living Committee. This committee will put these items to good use.

BIRTHDAY BOOK CLUB

St. James students and their families have a lasting way to commemorate birthdays or any other special event by donating a favorite book to the school library. If you're interested in participating, simply send in a brand new book (either hard or soft cover) with your child on or around the birthday. (Children with summer birthdays can bring in their books anytime.) A specially designed bookplate in the front of the book recognizes your child's donation.

The books are displayed on a special shelf in the library. These books will be enjoyed by St. James students for many years to come. Parents wishing to donate a book may send a check for \$15.00 (payable to St. James Elementary PTA) to Mrs. Schuppert, St. James Elementary librarian, who could then make an appropriate selection.

Books (or money for books) may also be donated for any occasion, including memorial donations. This is a wonderful way to honor and respect the memory of a loved one.

A second alternate back-up plan is also advised. Parents are advised to review this on the mornings

when inclement weather is predicted and an early dismissal might occur. Any anticipated change in the usual dismissal procedure should be sent to the teacher in writing. This is particularly important if a child is to go home with another parent or in a way than in his/her usual manner.

ATTENDANCE

- Parents are asked to call the **Health Office (382-4460)** before the start of school to report an absence. If a call is not received, the attendance clerk will call the home to verify the absence. This is done for the safety of each child. You can help in this procedure by calling the Health Office early to report your child's absence.
- A child returning to school after an absence must bring a written note signed by the parent stating the dates of and reason for the absence. Tardiness should be handled in the same manner. Please be aware that written notes are required regardless if the absence was verbally reported.
- A child arriving after the official school day begins must report to the Health Office for a late pass. Students arriving after 9:30 a.m. will be marked late/tardy. **Children must NOT go directly to their classroom.**

Emergency/Health Information

Parents are to log on to the Parent Portal on the District website in order to update emergency information. You should have received a letter from the District with a username, password and directions regarding how to update your child's emergency contact information. Please log on right away to be certain that all information is updated. If you have not received this information from the District, please contact the District IT Department at 382-2045. The information listed on the sheets is used to contact parents in the event of an emergency. If the information listed changes during the year, please log on to enter updated changes. This information will also be used for Student Release Authorization.

MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

We would like to remind parents that **NO** medication is to be taken by children in school on their own. New York State Education Law has very specific regulations which **MUST** be followed in the event that a child is required to take medication in school. The law states:

- All medicine is to be labeled in an original bottle or container.

- B. A doctor's note specifying the name of the medicine, amount of dosage, and time of dosage is to be written to the school.
- C. A parent's note authorizing the school nurse to administer the medicine must be written.
- D. Medication is to be transported to and from school by the parent.

This law applies to all medication, including over the counter medication. It is important that parents recognize the necessity for us to strictly enforce the law. Please do not ask us to violate the spirit nor intent of this law.

If you have any questions regarding medication or any other health related issue, please call the school nurse, Mrs. Aprahamian, at 382-4461.

SCHOOL LUNCH

- A. School lunch is available each full day of school at a cost of \$2.75. If you would like your child to purchase drinks or snacks, an online payment system is available for depositing money to your child's lunch account through myschoolbucks.com. Please see our website at www.smithtown.k12.ny.us for further instructions.
- B. In order to meet Federal and State regulations with regard to Dietary Guidelines, children may no longer purchase just one "a la carte" item (such as pizza or hamburger).

Students must choose food items from at least three of the five food groups in order to buy lunch. Further questions about this should be directed to **Jeannette Frabizio, Director of the School Lunch Program at 382-5505**.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Parents are asked to instruct their children on how to handle situations regarding personal safety and strangers. Precautionary measures should be discussed openly and honestly.

Your child should have an understanding of the topics of strangers, traffic, and alternate safe houses, giving him/her the necessary skills and information to deal with possible dangerous situations.

Children are expected to dress appropriately. Any child wearing clothing that is deemed inappropriate, offensive or distracting will be asked to call home for a change of clothing. If appropriate clothing can not be brought to school, the Health Office will lend the child appropriate wear. "Heelie" sneakers are not permitted in school. Any child wearing flip flops or other footwear that is not safe for outdoor play will not be permitted to run or to play on the playground equipment. Also, "wheelie" type backpacks are dangerous and should not be brought to school. Children are expected to wear outerwear according to the season. As long as there are dry conditions and the temperature is at or above 32 degrees, classes will have outdoor recess.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

All visitors must stop at the greeter's desk at the front office to sign in through our Raptor System and obtain a visitor's pass sticker. The sticker must be worn when visiting school. After obtaining a visitor's sticker, report directly to the designated classroom and ***only*** to that classroom. ***Do not attempt to visit other children, other classrooms or other teachers. Those who fail to abide by this rule will lose their visitation privileges.***

VISITORS

All visitors must produce a drivers license or other picture identification in order to enter the building or sign out a child. Please be sure to bring photo ID to the building. Thank you.

DISCIPLINE

Please review the District Code of Conduct as well as the "YES" information on page 3. We will also review these expectations at school. Your cooperation in reinforcing the expectations of our school is very much appreciated. Your child benefits when he/she hears consistent messages from the school and home. A sound educational climate, one in which children feel comfortable and supported, is the goal for all of our students.

REQUESTS FOR WORK

Frequent requests are made to prepare work for absent students. Classroom teachers are generally happy to comply with such requests. If a child is ill, it is important to determine if he/she is able to concentrate on school assignments before requesting work. The following are guidelines for requesting work:

- A. Children are required by New York State law to be present on days when school is in session. Work should not be requested for single day absences or for vacations. The school will **NOT** provide work for students on vacation.

Attempting to "make up" missed school work does not have the same effect as being in the class and participating in the discussions and learning environment. The staff works hard to meet each child's needs, and children must be present in school to benefit. Please avoid illegal absences. Your cooperation is very much appreciated.
- B. A parent must call the school prior to 10:00 a.m. and request work at that time. Such calls should be directed to the nurse's office (382-4462). Work will be available in the main office after 2:00 p.m. This will give the teacher sufficient time to prepare the work.
- C. Work is to be picked up by the parent or a "designated buddy" in the main office. The parent requesting work is to pick up the work at the Greeter's Desk or inform the school of the name of the student transporting work. If a classmate is bringing homework for your child, please make sure the child and his/her parent are aware of the request.