

St. Johnsbury School  
PreK Program  
Family Handbook

2025-2026 School Year



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## Welcome

Welcome to the St. Johnsbury School PreK Program!

This PreK Parent Handbook serves as an addendum to the St. Johnsbury School Parent Handbook, which you can access by going to the school website:

[St. Johnsbury School Student and Family Handbook](#)

# Calendars and Schedule

## School Calendar

### St. Johnsbury School Calendar 2025-2026

PreK students attend school for 166 days

## School Hours

Main Office Hours: 7:30AM-4:00PM

School Academic Day Hours: 7:55AM-2:40PM

Early Release Hours: 7:55AM-12:30PM

\*Student supervision begins at 7:30AM. Students should not arrive before 7:30AM. Students are dismissed at 2:40PM and are expected to leave school grounds promptly.

## SAMPLE OF DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30AM - Arrival

Morning Meeting

Breakfast

UARTS (P.E./Art/Music/Library/Health)

Songs, stories and movement activities

Outside Play

Activities (focusing on numeracy, literacy, science exploration, social-emotional learning, etc.)

Lunch

Story time

Rest time

Art projects/crafts

Afternoon snack

Outside Play

Closing circle

2:40PM - Dismissal

# Emergency Information

## EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

All parents are required to provide emergency telephone numbers in case of sickness or injury. Through the Parent Portal or on the emergency card provided for you in the first day packet, please provide at least two numbers where you can always be reached, such as your work number or your neighbor's number. Inform the school of any address or telephone changes that occur during the school year, as well.



## CANCELLATIONS AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS



When school is closed for any reason, all parents will receive a call, email and text from our alert system. A pre-recorded message will come directly to your home as soon as the designated school administrator makes the decision to either close school or have a delayed start due to stormy weather.

In addition, an announcement will be made on radio stations **1340 AM, Magic 97.7 FM, and KIX 105.5 FM**, between 6:00AM and 7:00AM. Postings for school closings or delays are posted on the **WCAX** Channel 3, **WPTZ** Channel 5, and **WNNE** Channel 31. Unexpected early closings due to weather conditions or other situations are also communicated in this way.

## EMERGENCY DRILL PROCEDURES

The alarm for a fire will be a continuous blast. Exit procedures are posted in each room. Teachers will exit rooms last and shut doors. By state statute, each school is required to conduct a fire drill or other emergency drill each month and record both the date and the time. These drills are held at the discretion of the principal, giving consideration to such factors as program, weather, and health. Normally, children do not remain outside of the building for more than 5 minutes. These drills are important to the safety of each child.

## About our Program

The PreK program at the St. Johnsbury School strives to nurture the social-emotional, physical, artistic and academic development of the children in our care. Our goal is to make school a safe and enriching environment that honors and respects the unique skills and needs of each child. We have loving, qualified teachers and paraeducators that have many years of experience and diverse backgrounds.

## **CERTIFICATION**

The St. Johnsbury PreK Program is licensed by the State of Vermont Child Development Division and all teachers hold at least a Bachelor's Degree and a valid Vermont state teaching license. The CBCCPP (Center Based Child Care and Preschool Programs) is governed by the Child Care Licensing Regulations. These rules are minimum requirements established to protect the health and safety of Vermont's children in out-of-home care and ensure that children in care, early education and afterschool programs in Vermont are provided with wholesome growth and educational experiences.



The St. Johnsbury PreK Program has 4 STARS (STep Ahead Recognition System). STARS is Vermont's quality recognition system for child care, preschool, and afterschool programs. Programs that participate in STARS are stepping ahead — going above and beyond state regulations to provide professional services that meet the needs of children and families.

Universal PreK Pre-qualification: The St. Johnsbury School PreK program is a Vermont Prequalified Prekindergarten Education Program. A public school or private prekindergarten education program shall be considered pre-qualified only if it meets all of the following criteria:

- a minimum of 4 stars in the Vermont STep Ahead Recognition System
- currently licensed by the Department of Children and Families
- the program curriculum is aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards

## **SAMPLE REPORT CARD**

Here is a link to the St. Johnsbury School Preschool Program report card for PreK students. Reports for PreK students go out twice/year, based on the results of each student's TS GOLD assessment administered by the classroom teacher.

[Sample PreK Report Card](#)

## **IEP and Early Intervention**

Special education services are available for students with disabilities. To be determined eligible for services, the Evaluation and Planning Team (EPT) must determine that the student:

- Meets the disability criteria;
- Exhibits an adverse effect on educational performance; and
- Is in need of specialized instruction.

The Evaluation and Planning Team (EPT), includes parents, teachers, and people with knowledge of a suspected disability, works together to determine eligibility for additional services. Referrals to the Evaluation and Planning Team can be made by a parent and/or a teacher. If the student is found eligible for special education services, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) team will develop an IEP to outline specific goals and services that the student needs. For information about Special Education, contact Kara Lufkin, Director of Student Support Services.

### **ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL**

Children may be dropped off at school **no earlier** than 7:30 A.M. Please do not wait outside the door waiting to possibly be let in before 7:30am as the teachers have work to do to prepare for the day. Students must report directly to their teacher's classroom when they arrive in the morning. Students will not be supervised by school staff before 7:30 A.M. or after 3:00 P.M.

Students are expected to be in their classroom at 7:55 A.M.. Students arriving after 8:00 A.M. must obtain a late slip from the main office and they will be marked as "tardy".

Dismissal is 2:40 P.M. Students who are riding a school bus home will be dismissed by their teachers and will exit the building to buses via one of the bus loop doors. Students in grades PK-3 may be picked up at the back loop (accessed from the lower parking lot).

### **PARKING AND STUDENT DROP OFF**

Several parking spaces in both parking lots are provided for "visitors" during the school day. Please do not park in any loop at any time because they are designated fire and emergency lanes.



- **Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up**

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify the office in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of this policy.

- **Right to Refuse Child Release**

We may refuse to release children if there is reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence

of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger your child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up your child or may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The St. Johnsbury school uses the Butler Bus service. If you would like your child to take the bus to and/or from school, call the bus company directly: 626-4712. You are required to inform the teacher of the bus and address where your child will be going after school. Also, you must notify the teacher if there is any change in your bussing needs.

- **BUS EXPECTATIONS**

The St. Johnsbury School contracts Butler's Bus Service to provide transportation for our students. They provide us with state-of-the-art buses. Cameras are located in the front of every bus and are used to monitor bus behavior. Cameras are monitored by school bus staff and administration only.

Due to confidentiality issues, only authorized school and bus company personnel may view these videotapes.

Please take the time to read and discuss the following information with your child/children.

Riding a school bus is a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such.

### **Please Follow These Bus Rules**

1. Stay in your seat and keep all body parts out of the aisle and sit facing forward.
2. Observe the same respectful conduct as in the classroom
3. Use only language that is appropriate for the school setting.
4. Do not eat or drink on the bus, and help to keep it clean
5. Cooperate with the bus drive
6. Do not be destructive
7. Keep head, hands, and feet inside while riding the bus.
8. Keep hands and feet to self.



*Remember, the bus driver has authorization to assign seats, and may*



*do so at his or her discretion. Any student having to cross a road must wait for a signal from the driver before crossing the road to board the bus.*

Please read more about what is expected when you ride on the school bus by clicking on this [link](#).

- **CHANGE OF BUS TRANSPORTATION**

A parent or guardian must contact the school to change a student's bus plans. We strongly encourage a note be sent to school on the morning of the change. However, if plans need to be changed during the school day, a parent or guardian must call the school before 2:00pm. Without a written note or verbal permission, students will not be allowed to ride a different bus.

- **RESPONSES TO BUS VIOLATIONS**

Butler's Bus Service will be managing student discipline for bus violations. Butler's Bus Service will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of bus violations as they occur. Students who receive a bus violation will be asked to return the bus write-up with a signature from his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) acknowledging that they have been informed of the violation. Students who do not return a signed bus write-up may not be allowed to ride until the form has been signed and returned.

Butler's Bus Service will notify the Lower School and/or Upper School Principal of all bus violations within 24 hours.

## **ATTENDANCE**

- **Absences**

Please call the school if your child will be absent or tardy. If your child is absent, in order to make that absence "excused", you need to also send in a written and signed note stating the date and reason. You can also email the school [attendance@stjisd.org](mailto:attendance@stjisd.org).

- **Tardiness**

We understand that there are days that getting to school on time is challenging. However, when your child arrives late, they are missing a very important part of the day. The time we join together to say good morning and greet each other sets the tone for how we move through our day together. Please make your best effort to arrive on time (by 7:55) every day!

### OUTSIDE PLAY (please see CLOTHING for more information)

We go outside to play every day unless the temperature or conditions are unsafe. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and season. Vermont's weather can vary widely. If in doubt, pack extra!



### FIELD TRIPS

We will notify and gain permission from you for all field trips. We welcome you to accompany us on any and all field trips we take over the course of the school year.

### REST TIME

We have a minimum of a 30 minute rest time every day at school. Children who need more rest are given that opportunity when needed. We provide resting mats, sheets, and fleece blankets for each child. These items are bagged separately and washed weekly. If your child would like to bring a special stuffed animal or blanket for rest time, please check in with the teacher.



### TOYS FROM HOME

Please do NOT allow your child to bring toys from home unless you have asked prior permission from the teacher.

### CLOTHING

Your child needs to have appropriate clothing and footwear for indoor and outdoor play. Indoor shoes are needed and it is preferable they remain at school. Slippers are NOT allowed, unless they are hard-soled. Sneakers/closed toed shoes that your child can run in and that they can put on by themselves are ideal. High-heels, flip flops and strappy sandals are not appropriate for school activities.

Your child should have a backpack that comes to school each day with a FULL change of clothes and an extra warm layer (sweater, sweatshirt or fleece).

In the colder months, please make sure they have a warm coat, mittens or gloves, winter boots, a hat, ski pants and warm layers as we do go outside EVERYDAY! If there is a possibility of rain, please send along a raincoat.

Please label your child's clothing with their name.

## CELEBRATIONS

In addition to acknowledging your child's birthday, we also have celebrations such as:

- Story book Dress up Day (end of October)
- Wildlife Tree
- Valentine's Day
- 100<sup>th</sup> Day (February)

Please be sure to review the school's nutrition and wellness policy around celebrations and foods allowable in school.

[St. Johnsbury School District Wellness Policy](#)

## SCHOOL VISITS

All parents and interested adults are welcome and encouraged to visit our schools. Please plan your visit with the classroom teacher beforehand. We invite you to attend school activities such as special programs, open house, and field days. All visitors are required to sign in at the main office and let the receptionist, Kristin McLean, know that you are visiting. Please note that we cannot allow student visitors.

## UARTS

All of our PreK students participate in 5 Universal Arts classes each week. These classes include: Art, P.E., Health, Library and Music. Universal Arts classes are taught by teachers with these disciplines. Universal Arts classes last for 30 minutes and happen in either the art room, small gym, health classroom and the music room.



## SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Our school counselor supports individual and group counseling, facilitates restorative practices and provides crisis intervention services. They also provide consultation services and act as liaisons to outside agencies, both public and private. Parents who have concerns or need assistance may get in touch with them by calling the school at 748-8912

## CURRICULUM

In addition to meeting Vermont state regulations and early education standards, the PreK program works with the following curriculum:

- Conscious Discipline/Second Step Curriculum (developing social/emotional literacy)
- Responsive Classroom (teaching approach that places emphasis on creating a positive learning climate)
- TS Gold (state-mandated student assessment system)
- Handwriting Without Tears

- Restorative Circles and Building a Culture of Care in the Classrooms

### **PARENT CONCERNS**

In order to maintain a positive school climate, it is important to us that the parents and school work closely together. Parents are asked to first address their concerns with their child's teacher and then if the matter is not resolved, to contact the Co-Principal for their child's grade. If still not resolved, parents may contact the Superintendent of Schools. Only after this chain of command has been followed through to the Superintendent, a parent who remains unsatisfied with the resolution may request a meeting with the School Board

## **Nutrition**

### **SCHOOL MEALS**

- **Universal Meals Program**

Students in Pre-Kindergarten through 8th Grade will be served breakfast and lunch with no charge. The St. Johnsbury School is committed to providing every student in our school with all the tools they need to succeed, including nutritious meals that we can enjoy together. In order for our meal program to be successful, we need your child to participate by eating breakfast and lunch with us every school day. We believe that sharing meals together helps make a great school culture. If your student has specific dietary needs based on allergies, please send a doctor's note to the school.



- **School Breakfast and Lunch**

Breakfast, Lunch and Snack are provided to ALL STUDENTS FREE OF COST.

You may choose to have your child eat breakfast and/or lunch provided from the school cafeteria. Meals and snacks are served in PreK classroom. We provide fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy items for snack every day.

- **Food From Home**

If your child is bringing their own breakfast and lunch, please send it in a lunch box or bag that fits in their backpack. Please make healthy choices that will fuel your child for a busy and full day of learning and playing. Please refrain from sending in candy or other sugary foods.

- **Gum/Soda/Caffeinated beverages**

Students are **not** allowed to have gum, soda, or drinks other than water (including drinks with caffeine, sugar, etc.) in the school building. Students are permitted to have a water bottle while at school.

- **Food Allergies**

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify the school nurse and the teacher. Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician. A copy should be given to the school nurse prior to enrollment.

## HEALTH SERVICES

Our nurses are available to help students when necessary for illness or injury. They are available from 7:30A.M. – 3:30P.M. to provide preventive care and to refer information to parents. They also serve as resources for staff members concerned with health-related issues.

The school nurses will administer prescription medication; however, school policy states that if medication is sent, we must have:

- An order from the physician
- Written permission from a parent; and
- Medication brought in a pharmacy or physician-labeled container.



In order to administer over the counter medication, parents must sign permission and send it in a properly labeled container.

To promote wellness in the school, students that have had a fever (more than 100 degrees), COVID symptoms, diarrhea and/or vomiting stay home until symptoms are gone.

### Immunizations

Vermont state law requires the following immunizations:

- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTP)
- Polio (IPV)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella (MMR)
- Hepatitis B (Hep B)

- Chickenpox (varicella). (If a child has had chickenpox, an immunization is not necessary but the school requires documentation of disease.)

### Hearing and Vision Screening

Students will have both a hearing and a vision screening. If a child fails the screening, the child is re-screened and parents are then advised of the need for follow-up care by a physician.

### Illness

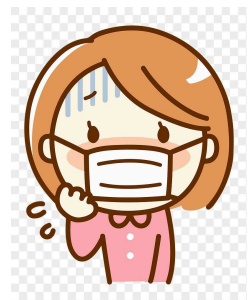
We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, please do not bring a sick child to school. We may make the judgment that your child is too sick to participate in activities and you will be called to retrieve your child from school. In the meantime, they will be given a space in the nurse's office to rest.

Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities:

- Illness that results in greater need for care than the school can provide
- Fever - if there is a behavior change or if the child is unable to participate in classroom activities
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting (free of vomiting for 24 hrs)
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease
- Mouth sores - if unable to participate and there is excessive drooling
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, free of vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours without medication
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling ,unless:
  - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;



- o The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to school is required

### **Communicable Diseases**

When a child in our program has a suspected reportable disease, it is the school's legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus Influenzae (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
- Head Lice

### **Allergy Prevention**

Families are expected to notify the school regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide a letter detailing your child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. Please submit this information to the nurse's office.

### **Medications**

All medications should be delivered to the nurse's office with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in your child's cubby or with your child to administer on their own.

- Prescription medications require a note signed by the family and a written order from your child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication

- A written consent form signed by the parent or legal guardian must be on file before medication can be given. ***Please do not send non-prescription medication to school.***

### Toilet Learning

We prefer that students have learned to use the toilet before entering school, but understand that this is not always the case. If your child requires diapers or pull-ups, it is YOUR responsibility to provide them daily (or make arrangements to keep a supply at school). Please make sure we have wipes on hand as well. Please see the toileting procedure we have developed for our students, and reach out to the school nurses or your classroom teacher if you need assistance in this area.

[St. Johnsbury School Toileting Procedure](#)

Resources:

[Ready, Set, Go!](#)

### Handwashing

All PreK students will be expected to wash hands:

- upon entering the classroom
- before eating, preparing or handling food
- after using the toilet
- after outside play

Handwashing procedures will include:

- warm running water and liquid soap or foam
- moisten hands with water, apply soap, and scrub for 20 seconds
- rinse hands under running water
- dry hands with single-use paper towels
- dispose of paper towel



## Parent Engagement

### Parent Engagement

As parents you have a unique and long-term interest in the growth and happiness of your child. We work closely with you throughout the year to help your child grow and learn in the happiest way possible. We know that when your child enters school for the first time it can be both scary and exciting. We want to hear how the school experience is working for your child and family. We need your voice to make our program strong. We invite you to visit the classroom, read a book, help with a special project, cook, sing a song, or just share a happy moment with your child.



We love seeing parents and grandparents in the classroom and your child will be pleased to have you there.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences, Report Cards and Assessments**

As important skills occur, they are recorded by teachers and paraeducators. Informal observations assist the teachers in determining the child's development in skills and abilities. Children are assessed using Teaching Strategies Gold online assessment in the fall and spring. Two parent conferences are held during the school year, in the fall and spring. Please know that the Parent/Teacher conference for the fall in PreK will be on **October 31st** and not on December 5th like the rest of the school, and there will be no PreK on that day. Additionally two report cards are sent home each school year.

### **Communication & Family Partnership**

**FRIDAY FOLDER** Each week, school-wide, the teachers will send home your child's "Friday Folder" filled with information for you. Please empty and examine the contents of the folder EVERY Friday and return the folder to school with your child on the next school day.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

All parents and/or guardians are invited to participate in the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) in order to support our students and our school. The PTO meets monthly on a rotating schedule to meet the needs of an extended group of members. The PTO sends information about each meeting and activities via the school's electronic newsletter. All meetings take place in the Upper Library. Free childcare and light snacks are provided.

## **Behavioral Expectations and Social Learning**

### **GENERAL PROCEDURE**

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. We have clear and consistent expectations for the children and we communicate these expectations daily. In the St. Johnsbury School Preschool Program we use the Conscious Discipline program in our classrooms. Conscious Discipline stresses the importance of building a school on the core principles of safety, connection, and problem-solving skills. We believe in this approach and we work hard to implement the strategies aligned with this philosophy, which seeks to approach discipline as an opportunity for a child to learn a critical skill along with appropriate consequences.

## **CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR**

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. When a child struggles to be safe and meet appropriate classroom behavior expectations, we work with that child to better understand and be able to address the issue at hand. Depending on the circumstances, this may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to:

- involving parents to find out why there may be a cause for the behavior we are unaware of
- making a behavior plan unique to that child's needs
- evaluating how the classroom or curriculum could be adjusted to better meet that child
- working with our special education team and guidance counselor to request an evaluation
- If a child is conducting him/herself in a way that is unsafe to self or others, a behavior support team member will remove the child from the room until they are ready to re-enter our classroom safely. If there are ongoing concerns, preschool will follow the school-wide behavior protocol.
- If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with your family as the first step to understanding your child's individual needs and challenges.

## **RESPONSES TO STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Students are expected at all times to show respect for themselves, others, school property, and the school community. When students experience challenges during the school day, behavior will be initially managed by the classroom teacher, who will determine the next steps for a response to the misbehavior. If warranted due to regularity or severity, behavior may also be managed by members of the behavior support teams (student support center staff, behavior specialists, other support staff, and the PreK-3rd grade Principal) These behaviors are those that require a more specific response that can not be implemented within the classroom.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying and Cyberbullying are not tolerated at the St. Johnsbury School. Students should report situations of bullying to any St. Johnsbury School staff member. (See full description of bullying in the school-wide Family Handbook).

The following is the definition of bullying:

- Behavior that is repeated over time
- Behavior that is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate another student.

- Behavior that occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity.

## **HARASSMENT**

Harassment is not tolerated at the St. Johnsbury School. Students should report situations of harassment to any St. Johnsbury School staff member.

The following is the definition of harassment:

- “Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment includes sexual harassment, racial harassment or harassment of members of other protected categories. (See school-wide Family Handbook).

## **Directory Information**

The St. Johnsbury School  
257 Western Ave.  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

Telephone: 802-748-8912  
Fax: 802-748-1095

District Office Telephone: 802-745-2800

[www.stjsd.org](http://www.stjsd.org)

Find us and like us on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM!

Main Office Hours: 7:30-4:00

School Academic Day Hours: **7:55-2:40**

\*Student supervision begins at 7:30. Students should not arrive before that time. Students are dismissed at 2:40 and are expected to leave school grounds promptly after being dismissed unless supervised by another adult.

### **SCHOOL BUILDING**

The St. Johnsbury School is divided into four grade-cluster houses:

- Pre-Kindergarten / Kindergarten / First Grade - Downstairs and First floor, South Wing
- Grade 2 / Grade 3 - First Floor, West Wing
- Grade 4 / 5 - Second Floor, West Wing
- Middle School (Grades 6-8) - Third Floor, West Wing