



# *STUDENT HANDBOOK*



*James River Elementary School: An authorized IBYP World School*



Dear James River Family:

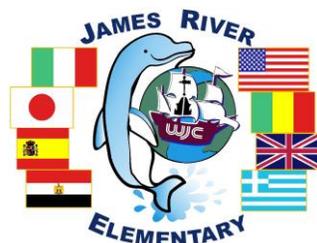
Welcome to the new school year! It is with the utmost pleasure that we extend a warm welcome to *all* of our Dolphin families- those who returning as well as those are joining us for the first time. As your principal, I am thrilled to be partnering with you, our parents, the community, and our fabulous PTA, to provide a high-quality educational program for our students that challenges them to reach their potential. We are very excited about this year. The dynamic learning opportunities that our children will have access to are plentiful.

The James River Elementary School Student Handbook is a valuable resource tool. It contains answers to most questions that you might have about our school operation, our academic and IBPYP program, expectations for our students, and other important guidelines. ***Keep it close at hand as you may wish to refer to it throughout the year as a reference.*** We encourage you to take some time to read through the information yourself and then with your student to establish a strong and positive home school partnership for the year.

Our commitment will continue to focus on ensuring academic success for all of our students. It is our ultimate goal that all of our students grow up to become independent thinkers, lifelong learners and responsible citizens as a result of their learning experiences at James River. We welcome you as our partners on the learning journey and wish you an exciting and successful academic experience this year!

Sincerely,

Mike Stutt  
Principal



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

James River students, parents, staff and community members share in the mission of providing a safe environment in which all children can develop academically, socially, physically, and emotionally in order to become independent thinkers, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens prepared to be active and compassionate participants in an international society.

## **VISION**

We envision a school that encourages all students to achieve their highest potential by supporting the development of knowledgeable and compassionate young people who help to create a more peaceful world through inquiry, intercultural understanding, and respect.

## **BELIEFS**

We Believe...

- All students are entitled to research-based and developmentally appropriate instruction that challenges and engages them in their own search for knowledge and understanding.
- The love of learning fosters creativity and higher-level thinking skills in all students.
- Learners benefit from an understanding and appreciation of other cultures.
- James River is a safe place, a caring place, and a learning place in which all learners can flourish.

**We are a Community of Learners  
at James River Elementary!**

**Have a wonderful and successful year!**

## GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

### Main Office Staff

Mike Stutt ..... Principal  
Ms. Marie Vallone .....Assistant Principal  
Mrs. Amy Zrakovi .....PYP Coordinator  
Mrs. Katherine Haramis..... School Nurse  
Ms. Denise Hall.....Sr. Administrative Assistant  
Mrs. Andrea Clark .....Admin. Assistant/Registrar  
Mrs. Isabelle Cantrell .....Office Receptionist

### Elementary School Hours

Students: 8:30 a.m.- 3:16 p.m.  
Teachers: 8:15 a.m.- 3:45 p.m.  
School Office: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Parents are requested to be certain that your children do not arrive at school before 8:20 a.m.**

Teachers and other school staff are involved in meetings and planning and are not available to supervise children in the office, main hallway or other areas of the building. To ensure the safety of our students, all parents are requested to observe the 8:15 a.m. arrival time for your child/children.

### Telephone Numbers

James River School ..... 887-1768  
Attendance Messages before/after office house..... 887-1768 ext. 201  
W-JCC Public Schools Central Office.....253-6777  
Transportation.....565-0808

\*Note: Cox Cablevision, Channel 47, carries updated information on the W-JCC Public Schools.

\*Channel 3(WTKR), 10(WAVY), 12(WWBT), and 13(WVEC) carry weather updates

\*Radio stations WCV3(88.9FM), WHRO(90.3FM), The Tide (92.3FM), The Planet (96.5FM), W404(100.9FM) and WBG (740AM) carry weather updates.



## **INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANIZATION (IBO)**

James River Elementary is an officially authorized International Baccalaureate World School with a **Primary Years Program (PYP)**. As an authorized PYP school we continue to work with the IBO to synthesize the key elements of the PYP into our instructional program. PYP focuses on teaching and learning of six units of inquiry at each grade level. We continue to receive training and work collaboratively as a school community of learners to develop research-based practices that support our educational program and further our progress in “reaching every child”. The International Baccalaureate Organization requires a Program Evaluation visit to evaluate the progress that James River has made since authorization in 2006. Three representatives of the IBO visited James River October, 2009.

### **IBO MISSION STATEMENT**

The educational philosophy of the IBO is expressed in its mission statement as revised in 2003:

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### **What Is the PYP Program?**

PYP is a transdisciplinary program of international education designed to foster the development of the whole child. The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program is designed for students aged 3 to 12. It focuses on the total growth of the developing child, touching hearts as well as minds and encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic development. See [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org) for additional information about the PYP.



### **How Does PYP Enhance My Student’s Learning?**

The PYP draws on research and best practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools to create a relevant, engaging, challenging and significant educational framework for all children.

The Primary Years Program curriculum framework aims to achieve a balance between the search for meaning and understanding and the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge. In addition to the academic program PYP offers encourages nonacademic learning that supports the development of the whole child including social, physical, emotional and cultural awareness by teaching the PYP attitudes and student profile attributes.

The PYP uses six themes at each grade level that cross the traditional subject disciplines to create “big ideas” that are universally relevant and therefore could be studied in any school around the globe. The content for the themes includes the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) and the Williamsburg-James City County curriculum that we are required to teach and extends it to include a more global perspective for learning about other people and cultures.

This curriculum content fits naturally into the units of inquiry, although the instructional approach changes dramatically. The instructional approach for these units is inquiry-based which extends the students prior knowledge and provokes further inquiry on the part of the student. For example, teachers in Fourth Grade are required to teach Virginia history and the events that have impacted our history as a state. A PYP unit would use the SOL for Virginia history to share a wider context such as how the state’s history parallels a pattern repeated by migration of people around the world. (Singh, 2002).

### **Six Organizing Themes**

The six units of inquiry are developed around six organizing themes that provide the K-5 scope and sequence of the international program and are organized to reflect global concepts.



**Who We Are:** An exploration of the nature of the self; or our beliefs and values; of personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; of our families, friends, communities and cultures; of our rights and responsibilities; of what it means to be human.

**Where We Are in Place and Time:** An exploration of our orientation in place and time; of our personal histories; of history and geography from local and global perspectives; of our homes and journeys; of the discoveries, exploration and migrations of humankind; of the contributions of individuals and civilizations.

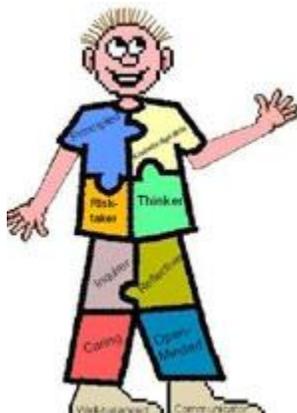
**How We Express Ourselves:** An exploration of the ways in which we discover and express our nature, ideas, feelings, beliefs and values through language and the arts.

**How The World Works:** An exploration of the physical and material work; of natural and man-made phenomena; of the world of science and technology.

**How We Organize Ourselves:** An exploration of human systems and communities; of the world of work, its nature and its value; of employment and unemployment and their impact on us and the world around us.

**Sharing the Planet:** An exploration of our rights and responsibilities as we strive to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; of communities and of the relationships within and between them.

### **Primary Years Program (PYP) Student Learner Profile**



James River seeks to develop students and graduates of the PYP who reflect the attributes and dispositions characterized in the PYP student profile. These desired attributes and traits characterize an international perspective. The language of PYP is imbedded in the culture of the school as well as being incorporated in the instructional program within the classroom. The following are the traits of the James River PYP student:

**Inquirers:** Their natural curiosity has been nurtured. They have acquired the skills necessary to conduct purposeful, constructive research. They actively enjoy learning and their love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

**Thinkers:** They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to make sound decisions and solve complex problems.

**Communicators:** They receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language, including the language of mathematical symbol.

**Risk-takers:** They approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence and independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are courageous and articulate in defending those things in which they believe.

**Knowledgeable:** They have spent time in our schools exploring themes, which have global relevance and importance.

**Principled:** They have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning. They have integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice.

**Caring:** They show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a sense of personal commitment to action and service.

**Open-minded:** They respect the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures and are accustomed to seeking and considering a range of points of view.

**Well-balanced:** They understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being.

**Reflective:** They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and analyze their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

### **PYP Student Attitudes**

While recognizing the importance of concepts, skills and knowledge, the PYP also believes that these alone do not make an internationally minded student. PYP focuses on the development of positive attitudes towards people, the environment and learning.

James River Elementary integrates character education and development into the daily activities at school. Displays throughout the building and in the classroom focus on the attitudes we expect students to demonstrate in their interactions with others. JRES awards the “Dynamic IB Dolphin” award each month to students who are “caught” demonstrating the attitudes of the PYP student.

All of James River’s teachers and staff promote and foster the development of these PYP attitudes in our students:

**Appreciation:** appreciating the wonder and beauty of the world and its people

**Commitment:** being committed to their learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and responsibility

**Confidence:** feeling confident in their ability as learners, having the courage to take risks, applying what they have learned and making appropriate decisions and choices

**Cooperation:** cooperating, collaborating and leading or following as the situation demands

**Creativity:** being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas

**Curiosity:** being curious about the nature of learning and of the world, its people and cultures

**Empathy:** imaginatively projecting themselves into another’s situation, in order to understand his/her thoughts, reasoning and emotions

**Enthusiasm:** enjoying learning

**Independence:** thinking and acting independently, making their own judgments based on reasoned principles and being able to defend their judgments

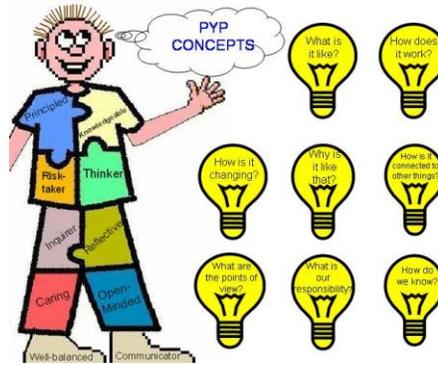
**Integrity:** having integrity and a firm sense of fairness and honesty

**Respect:** respecting themselves, others and the world around them

**Tolerance:** feeling sensitivity towards differences and diversity in the world and being responsive to the needs of others.

### **Do You Know the Primary Years Program Concept Questions?**

The PYP is committed to using questions as a vehicle for learning. There are eight essential questions that all students need to ask when investigating a concept or topic. The example questions are based on science units.



**Form: What is it like?**

- ✓ Where did it come from?
- ✓ What is it made of?
- ✓ Where is it found?
- ✓ How is it different from other things in the same group?
- ✓ What form is it found in?

**Function: How does it work?**

- ✓ What is it used for?
- ✓ What would happen if it was made of a different material?
- ✓ How does it move?
- ✓ How does it communicate?
- ✓ Why does it choose to live in a particular environment?

**Causation: Why is it like it is?**

- ✓ How was it formed?
- ✓ What environmental factors affect it?
- ✓ Is it in its natural form or has it been changed?
- ✓ What factors are necessary for it to function?
- ✓ How has its dependence on other things affected it?

**Change: How is it changing?**

- ✓ What changes have occurred in its appearance?
- ✓ What happens as it changes?
- ✓ Can it change back to its original form?
- ✓ What influences will cause it to change its appearance or behavior?
- ✓ Are there different ways to change it?

**Connection: How is it connected to other things?**

- ✓ What was it before and what will it become?
- ✓ How can we use it?
- ✓ How does it interact with other materials?
- ✓ What is its effect on other things?
- ✓ Is it part of a system or cycle?

**Perspective: What are the points of view?**

- ✓ What is my point of view?
- ✓ What is it based on?
- ✓ How valid is the evidence?
- ✓ Does my point of view differ from those of others?
- ✓ Are these different points of view supported by evidence?

**Responsibility: What is our responsibility?**

- ✓ How should we behave to insure that it will continue to exist?
- ✓ How will it be affected by changes in the environment?
- ✓ How can we reuse or recycle this material?
- ✓ How can we conserve what we have?
- ✓ How can we protect it?

**Reflection: How do we know?**

- ✓ What did I already know?
- ✓ How did I know this?
- ✓ Did I conduct my own research?
- ✓ What form did this research take?
- ✓ Did I check the information?



*Adopted from International Baccalaureate Organization (September 2000). "Making the PYP Happen".*

**OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM CONTENT AREAS**



**READING/LANGUAGE ARTS**

The reading/language arts curriculum consists of a literature-based, integrated program. This program requires students to listen effectively, speak with clarity, construct meaning from text, and commune through writing. Reading and writing should be viewed together, learned together, and used together.

Reading is a dynamic process that requires readers to combine their existing knowledge with text information as they read. The major goal of a reading program is to develop students who apply a variety of strategies in order to understand and interpret what is being read and to reflect and respond in a thoughtful manner.

Writing is also a dynamic, interactive, and constructive practice. Our instructional focus is to develop writers who can communicate with an intended audience, incorporating appropriate elements of composition and the conventions of language.

**MATHEMATICS**



The elementary mathematics curriculum stresses students' ability to apply mathematical skills to school, home, and daily life experiences and stimulates creative interactions among the learners. The content of the curriculum supports four goals for the students: becoming mathematical problem solvers, communicating mathematically, reasoning

mathematically, and making mathematical connections. The specific topics that make up the elementary mathematics curriculum are number and number sense; computation and estimation; measurement, geometry, fractions and decimals; probability and statistics, and patterns, functions and equations. Houghton Mifflin's *Math Expressions* textbooks, hands-on manipulatives, and tools of technology are used to support the Virginia Standards of Learning and the WJCC objectives.



## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

The primary purpose of the social studies program in Williamsburg-James City County Schools is to prepare young people to be responsible citizens. They will be encouraged to actively participate in civic affairs, understand their role in a changing global society, and apply knowledge and skills from history and the social sciences in order to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good. Goals for the social studies program fall into three major categories: knowledge, skills, and democratic understanding and civic values.



## **SCIENCE**

Our science curriculum encourages a “hands-on” approach to instruction. Students K-3 will be introduced to the basic scientific process skills of observing, predicting, measuring and classifying. Students will have many opportunities to work in small groups on activities centered on these skills. This introduction will lead our students to formal experimentation in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and inventions in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Students at this level will continue to work with the basic scientific process skills but will be introduced to more advanced process skills such as inferring, collecting and organizing data and writing up formal lab reports. Students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades also participate in a Hands-On Science Program supported by the PTA and organized by teachers and parent volunteers.

## **FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION**

The WJCC School Division designed the Family Life Education Curriculum to provide a framework of knowledge and understanding of human relationships that will enhance students’ respect for self and others and influence responsible decision-making and personal behavior.

The sequential nature of this curriculum, which begins in kindergarten, gives great care and attention to the development of age-appropriate instructional units.



## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- The Physical Education program is designed to promote social and emotional development as well as instruction in group games, sports, fitness, and basic developmental skills. Group relationships, team play, and a sense of achievement are particularly emphasized for the elementary school students. In addition, Physical Education is a graded academic subject in grades 4 and 5.



## ART AND MUSIC

These areas of the curriculum are designed to include exploratory programs and special interest classes. Students in all grade levels attend art and music classes once each week as part of their homeroom class' centers schedule. In each area emphasis is placed on fundamental concepts and elementary skills. In fourth grade music, students learn to play the recorder. In fifth grade, students have the option to participate in school chorus that performs during the winter holiday season and in the annual division-wide fifth grade chorus festival.

## RESOURCE PERSONNEL AND SERVICES

**Orchestra/Band** - Fifth grade students are eligible to participate in the orchestra and/or the band program. The band teacher spends two mornings and one afternoon a week at James River working with students in groups of like instruments and large group/full band settings. The band gives two concerts each year to give students an opportunity to perform and demonstrate their skills.

**Gifted/Talented "Visions" Teacher** - Our Visions teachers collaborate with classroom teachers who have high ability students (K-4). They also provide direct instructional services to identified students in grade 5. Small groups of students also meet with Visions teachers to pursue areas of interest or independent studies.

**Counselor** - Our school counselor offers guidance lessons to all classes, meets with small groups of children, provides individual counseling as needed, and coordinates a highly active mentor program for students at all grade levels. The guidance counselor is also available to organize parent groups or initiate free family counseling upon request.

**Learning Specialist** - Our learning specialists works with students who have been identified as having a learning disability. Identified students receive instruction in an inclusion setting within the general education classroom as well as in small groups in a resource setting. The learning specialist works closely with the general education teacher to ensure adaptations or modifications to instruction are provided to meet individual student needs.

**Math Specialist**- Our math specialist coordinates the total mathematics program. The math specialist participates in the testing of students, monitoring progress, teaching selected students, coordinating the use of materials, and assisting teachers with classroom instruction and curriculum integration.

**Media Specialist** – A full-time media specialist and media assistant help students in the media center. The media center is open to all students for checking out books, learning library skills, developing computer literacy, working at individual stations, and for participation in enrichment activities. In addition to library books and children's magazines, the media center is well equipped with a large inventory of audiovisual aids, records for overnight lending, and a professional library available to staff and parents. The computer teacher supports the media specialist in efforts to enhance students' computer literacy.

**Nurse** – Our full-time nurse works cooperatively with teachers and administrator in identifying health problems and handling medical emergencies. The school nurse also teaches lessons at the request of the classroom teacher and instructs students in health and safety practices.

**Reading Recovery Specialist** – Services are provided on a daily basis for eligible students who are below grade level in reading. A special focus is on preventing reading problems through intensive tutoring in first grade.

**Reading/Student Support Specialists** – Our reading specialists coordinate the total reading/language arts program. They are members of the Literacy Intervention Team at the building level and participate in the identification of students who receive supplemental instruction in reading. They participate in the testing of students, monitoring reading progress, teaching selected students, coordinating the use of materials, and assisting teachers with classroom instruction and curriculum integration.

**Speech Pathologist** – Our speech/language pathologist provides diagnostic, consultative and direct remediation services for students identified with a Speech/Language impairment. Students who qualify under IDEA to receive services meet with the speech pathologist in small groups, individually, or in collaborative-integrated model. The speech pathologist also consults with classroom teachers to provide developmental language instruction as needed.

**School Psychologist** – Our school psychologist provides diagnostic services that include the evaluation and interpretation of student’s intellectual, social, and emotional growth and development, as well as being available for consultations with teachers, parents, students and other school staff regarding behavioral, academic and emotional concerns of students. The school psychologist also participates on the school’s Child Study Team, Crisis Intervention Team, and the Special Education Eligibility Committee.

**School Social Worker** – Our school social worker (SSW) provides a link between school, home, service agencies, and the community. The SSW facilitates the learning process by providing specialized support services to maximize educational benefit. Along with appropriate others, the SSW assesses the needs and develops strategies for intervention and/or prevention and participates in the implementation of reasonable solutions. Additionally, the SSW monitors student attendance and works with families and administration to ensure that compulsory attendance requirements are being met.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

(School Board Policy, Section JEA)

Your child’s attendance at school is very important. Our children learn early in life that they need to attend school regularly and be on time. The No Child Left Behind legislation recognizes the importance of school attendance by linking a school’s accreditation to maintaining a minimum of 94% attendance during the school year. **Please try to schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside school hours, when possible.**



### **Absences**

The Williamsburg-James City County attendance policy, in compliance with the Virginia Compulsory Attendance Law, defines a legal absence as one “caused by illness, quarantine, religious holiday, death in one’s family, floods, hurricane, and storms” **OR** educational family field trips not to exceed five (5) school days and for which **at least five (5) days prior notice has been given in person and writing by the parent to the principal.** Families are encouraged to limit their vacations to times that do not interfere with their children’s schooling.

When a child is absent, the parent/guardian should contact the attendance office to provide a reason for the absence. Parents will be contacted daily when a child is absent if the attendance clerk has not been notified of the absence.

To make sure an absence is excused, the teacher must receive a note from the parent stating the date and the reason for the absence. **Without this written communication, the absence will not be excused.** A doctor’s note is required for five consecutive school days of absences at the elementary level.

Excessive or chronic tardiness and absenteeism is monitored by teachers, assistants, attendance specialists, and the school social worker. If any child has excessive absences defined as 5 or more days, a letter from the principal will be mailed home to notify parents of absences. Further absences from school will result in the need for an attendance plan between the school and parents, and will also require intervention from the School Social Worker. Further excessive absences may result in the necessity to implement court action. For additional information on school attendance, see School Board Policy, section JEA.

## **Tardiness**

Tardiness is disruptive to the routine of the school. Acceptable reasons for excused tardiness are illness of student, medical and dental appointments that cannot be arranged out of school hours, or bus problems. **All children arriving at school after 8:30 a.m. must be accompanied by their parents to the office before going to the classroom.** Names are then removed from the absentee list by the attendance secretary in the office.

## **Truancy**

Truancy is defined as being absent from school without the knowledge of the parent or guardian. Any student who is found to be truant may not return to school unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Continued truancy will be grounds for court action.



## **Emergency Closings**

Due to weather conditions or other unforeseen emergencies, it is sometimes necessary to close school during the school day. In the event of severe weather conditions, listen to radio stations WDCK 96.5 FM and WMBG 740 AM for information regarding early dismissal of schools. The information hotline (259-4154) also provides emergency closing information as does Cable Channel 47 and the WJC website at [www.wjccschools.org](http://www.wjccschools.org).

Be sure your child knows where to go in the event of an emergency closing, and make sure your child's teacher has on file any special instructions requested by you. **Please go over this information with your child. If this information changes at any time during the school year, remember to notify your teacher and the school office.**

The WJCC School Division has a Radiological Emergency Response Plan (RERP) in anticipation of problems at the Surry Nuclear Power Plant. In case evacuation is required, the entire school will proceed to Toano Middle School where students may be picked up by parents or guardians or persons that have been authorized in writing by the parent or guardian to do so.

## **Scheduled Early Dismissals**

A number of days are identified in the school calendar as early dismissal for students in grades K-5. Lunch will be provided on those days. In addition, there are early release days in the calendar for staff development. On these days, students will receive lunch.



## **Students Leaving School Prior to Dismissal**

Parents are requested not to take children out of school before the school day has ended at 3:16 Learning continues until the end of the day and much is lost both for the individual student and the classroom through early dismissal. **When a student must be picked up early, parents must send a note with the child notifying the teachers.** This note will be forwarded to the office by the teacher with the attendance lists.

All authorized persons other than the parent must have a note from the parent/guardian in order to pick up your child. Identification of parents and other authorized persons will be verified by the staff prior to release of your child until the staff is familiar with the family members or designated individuals. We appreciate your support of this procedure to ensure the safety of your child at all times.



## COMMUNICATION

Good home/school communication is critical to the success of your child and to our mission as a school. The James River staff will make every effort to communicate appropriately and in a timely manner with you. We urge you to contact us by phone, email or in writing at any time.

### Communication with the Teacher

In the interest of your child, good communication between parents and teachers is essential. If you need to telephone your child's teacher, please do so **before 8:15 a.m. or after 3:16 p.m.** *Teachers will not be called away from instruction in order to take a call.*

Upon request, the school office will also be happy to relay a message to the teacher so that your call can be returned at a time when the teacher is not responsible for instruction. Written communication from parents sent by the child will also receive prompt attention.

Each grade level has an established method of sharing information and student work with parents through daily or weekly folders. The specific process will be shared with you and your student at the beginning of each year. Please establish a routine with your student to look together at the material sent home by the teacher or the school. It is important that any material requiring signatures be promptly returned to the teacher.

### Conferences and Meetings

In addition to regularly scheduled conferences, parent/teacher meetings are always welcome. Appointments for conferences should be scheduled in advance so that adequate time and attention can be devoted to the issues and concerns of all participants without negatively affecting instructional time. Parent/teacher meetings are almost always scheduled before 8:15 a.m. or after 3:16 p.m. Meetings with the principal, assistant principal or other resource personnel may also be scheduled upon request.

### Progress Reporting



The school year is divided into four marking periods. Students will receive report cards at the end of each quarter reflecting their performance during the quarter. In addition, James River Elementary students participate in the completion of the *James River Elementary IBPYP Learner Profile Report* that is shared with parents at the end of the first and third marking periods.

Parent/teacher conferences are held at the completion of the first and third reporting periods. At the end of the second and fourth marking periods a written progress report is sent to the parents. The dates for interim progress reports are noted on the division calendar.

## MTSS (Multi-Tiered System for Support)

Dear Parent/Guardians:

James River Elementary School has always strived to create a safe and positive learning environment for all students. In an effort to continue to improve our school climate, staff at JRE have worked together to develop a MTSS (Multi-Tiered System for Support) Plan. The primary goal of this plan is to create a positive school climate that fosters be focused, be leaders, be independent and be positive.

The PBIS team trained in MTSS have created this plan to promote the School Wide expectations: Be Focused, Be Leaders, Be Independent and Be Positive. We will display posters around the building to continually promote positive behavior. All of the JRE staff will be teaching their students the positive behaviors they are expected to demonstrate at school. We will acknowledge and reward students who consistently demonstrate these positive behaviors.

Please take time to review with your family the positive behavior expectations described on the school matrix. Ask your child if they understand the expectations in different locations around the school or on the bus. Practice the schoolwide expectations at home and encourage your child to be focused, leaders, independent and positive.

Working together to promote positive behavior helps increase student achievement and get our students ready for the 21st Century learning skills. Research shows that when the home and school work together, student learning is more successful. We look forward to an exciting school year full of new learning.

Sincerely,

Mr. Stutt  
Ms. Vallone

	<b>Hallway</b>	<b>Bathrooms</b>	<b>Cafeteria</b>	<b>Recess</b>	<b>Bus</b>
<b>Be Focused</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep eyes forward</li> <li>- Keep hands to self</li> <li>- Keep voices off</li> <li>- Keep to the right</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Go, flush, wash, leave</li> <li>- Be quick</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Know your lunch choice and number</li> <li>- Stay seated</li> <li>- Walk carefully with tray</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be aware of surroundings</li> <li>- Line up quickly when called</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep feet down</li> <li>- Speak quietly</li> <li>- Stay seated</li> <li>- Face forward</li> </ul>
<b>Be Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Model for others</li> <li>- Walk at all times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stay quiet</li> <li>-Respect privacy and others</li> <li>-Report problems to adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use table manners</li> <li>- Eat your own food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include everyone</li> <li>- Report problems to adults</li> <li>- Take turns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow Bus Driver's instructions</li> <li>- Report problems to adults</li> </ul>
<b>Be Independent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be prepared and on time</li> <li>- Go directly to my destination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Place paper towels in the trash can</li> <li>- Keep walls, floors, mirrors, and sinks clean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Say please and thank you</li> <li>- Keep floor and table clean</li> <li>- Raise my hand for help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bring in equipment and belongings</li> <li>- Use equipment appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Go directly to your seat</li> <li>- Keep track of belongings</li> </ul>
<b>Be Positive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be polite and kind</li> <li>- Respect personal space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Wait patiently for your turn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use kind words and speak quietly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use kind words and play fair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Be kind</li> <li>- Respect the personal space of others</li> </ul>

# FLIP

## **Fund-Raising**

Fund-raising activities which involve students in door-to-door solicitation are prohibited. Fund raising for PTA events should be limited to relatives and family friends.



## **Items Not Permitted at School**

Students are not permitted to bring or use electronic devices such as beepers, radios, tape recorders, laser lights, electronic games, MP3 players or others similar devices at school. Cellular phones must be turned off and stowed away unless there is a need for it to be used that has been approved by school personnel.

## **Lost and Found**

Children frequently lose their personal belongings, articles of clothing and other personal possessions. These articles are placed in the cafeteria and will be returned to the owner upon identification. Parents are encouraged to put their child's name or initials in clothing to assist in returning items to the rightful owner.

## **Lunch**

Menus are available online or by request at the beginning of each month and provide three or four healthy choices for students. Additionally, two nutritious snacks are also available to students each day as part of the Division's Healthy Food Initiative.

Your child may either bring lunch from home or may purchase a lunch from the school cafeteria. He or she will be assigned an account made available with a personal identification number (PIN). You may make a deposit into your child's lunch account at any time by check or cash. Pre-pay through the internet is available. Check out the bottom right of JRE webpage for details.

Kindergartners have a snack time for which parents must provide a nutritious snack. Students are not allowed to bring canned soft drinks to school. We also welcome parents in joining their children for lunch.

## **Moment of Silence**

The 2000 General Assembly Session of Virginia passed legislation that requires local school boards to establish a daily observation of one minute of silence in each classroom in the division effective July 1, 2000. During the moment of silence, all students should remain seated and respectful.

## **Religious Activity in the School**

It is inappropriate for a blessing or invocation to occur before any school-sponsored event. Additionally, the school shall not advance nor advocate the beliefs of any specific or particular religion, nor shall discriminate based on religious beliefs.

## **School Pictures**

Student photographs are taken twice during the school year and are available for purchase. Individual student photographs and group class pictures are taken during the fall. Individual and make up pictures will be taken in the late winter or early spring.

## **Textbooks, Library Books and Supplies**

The WJCC School System provides textbooks without charge for each student. Supplemental textbooks, library books, and other instructional materials are also available. All students are expected to keep all books clean and in good condition. In the event of lost or badly damaged books, parents are requested to replace the book at fair market value. Students should provide their own writing paper, pencils, crayons, and other school supplies throughout the school year as needed.

## **Visitors**

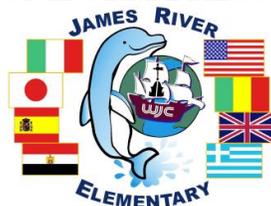
Parents are always welcome to visit and volunteer in our classrooms during school hours of 8:15 a.m. to 3:16 p.m. Parents should not go to classrooms before or after these times without an appointment. Teachers are frequently engaged in meetings, planning with their teams, or preparing for the instructional day.

Please consult your child's teacher to schedule an appropriate time for a classroom visit or conference. This is necessary to allow teachers to plan accordingly and to not interrupt instructional time.

In addition to being prearranged, we also ask that all visits to the classroom be limited to no more than 45 minutes per visit per day unless otherwise arranged by the teacher and/or the administration.

For the safety of every child, we request that all persons first report to the office where they will be issued a visitor's badge/pass and will be asked to sign the visitor's book. If the teacher has not notified the office of a scheduled meeting or visit, the office will contact the teacher to confirm his or her availability for the visit. Please respect both the safety of the students and the instructional environment of the classroom.

## JRES UNIFORM DRESS CODE



In 2001 the WJCC School Board authorized a **Uniform Dress Code** for James River Elementary School in 2001 as recommended by a steering committee organized by the PTA that included parents, teachers and administration. The Uniform Dress Code was adopted to give our student the opportunity to learn in an environment free from distractions. It has had a positive impact on student conduct and focus on their primary job of learning in the classroom. We ask all of our parents to please join our “JRE school team” and continue to do everything possible to help every child be academically, socially and emotionally successful. Help your child “dress for success” by wearing the James River uniform every day.

### **Dress Code Options for Students**

**Top Colors:** White, red, navy, light blue

**Bottom Colors:** Khaki, navy

#### **Boys**

Long sleeve shirt with collar  
Short sleeve shirt with collar  
Turtleneck  
Sweater  
Pants  
Shorts  
Belts (optional)

#### **Girls**

Long sleeve shirt/blouse with collar  
Short sleeve shirt/blouse with collar  
Turtleneck  
Sweater  
Pants  
Shorts  
Jumper  
Skorts  
Skirts  
Belts (optional)

James River Logo Sweatshirts and James River Logo shirts with collars may be worn on any day.

No leggings, denim, sweatpants, spandex, logos, carpenter/cargo pants.

Pants may be no more than one size larger.

Tights/socks should be solid colors that coordinate.

### **Other Guidelines for Student Dress:**

When students come to school out of uniform or are inappropriately dressed and are not opted out of the dress code, the faculty and administration will take steps to correct the situation which include contacting the parent and/or providing clean and size appropriate clothing that adheres to the uniform dress code.

Parents should help students to comply with the following:

- Shoes are to be worn at all times. Shoes with wheels or high heels are not permitted.
- Make-up and excessive jewelry is discouraged.

- Proper athletic shoes are required for physical education classes.
- Parents are responsible for keeping their children’s hair, body and their clothing clean.
- Clothing/accessories bearing obscene/offensive statements and/or pictures or statements advocating or advertising the illicit use of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted.
- Students are not permitted to wear hats once they enter the school building.
- Shorts and skirts should be no higher than three inches above the top of the knee. When in doubt, students and parents should follow the guideline of “the longer the better.”
- Shirts and tops must be long enough to cover the midriff and high enough to cover cleavage. Muscle shirts and net shirts are not permitted.
- Students may not wear heavy coats in their classrooms. Heavy coats must be kept in cubbies.
- Students must wear their pants at waist level and should be provided with a belt if their pants are too large.

### **Opt-out procedure**

We strongly encourage students to dress in the school uniform and support in the James River team. Parents may request to exempt their child or children out of the Dress Code by requesting a Non-Participation form or “Opt-Out” form from the school principal, Mike Stutt. The “OPT-OUT/NON-PARTICIPATION” Policy is applicable for the current year only and must be requested and approved no later than October 1 of the current school year. Parents must submit the form to the principal for her review and approval. A conference may be required to complete this process. Guidelines for Student Dress are still expected to be followed.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**



**Emergencies** – Should your child become ill during the school day or if he needs to be excused early, it will be necessary for you to come for him or send an authorized adult. An adult must sign out each child in the school office.

**Health Care** – Children with complaints or symptoms of illness such as severe headaches, rash, nausea, or temperature should remain at home until well. Children with a temperature 100 degrees or higher should remain home until temperature is normal for 24 hours without medication. This is important for the child’s health and for the health of others.

**Immunizations and Physical Examinations** – Virginia law requires that each student entering kindergarten or any public elementary school for the first time must have a comprehensive physical examination by a qualified licensed physician. The child must have received the examination within twelve months prior to the date he first enters school.

Every student shall furnish a certificate from a licensed physician certifying that such student has been successfully immunized against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Poliomyelitis, Measles (Rubeola), Rubella (3-day Measles), Mumps and Hepatitis B. Results of a TB test done within 12 months prior to school entrance must be submitted.

Since minimal immunization levels needed for provisional enrollment vary with age and grade level, the Public School Nurse will advise the parent on the child's needs. The parent must sign an agreement to complete student immunization along with a plan and timeline for such completion. Failure to obtain or complete all immunizations will result in exclusion from school.

The Code of Virginia allows a child an exemption from receiving immunizations required for school attendance if the administration of immunizing agents conflicts with the student's religious tenets or practices. The parent or guardian must submit a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption.

A Birth Certificate and Social Security Number or the legal equivalent and proof of residence (lease, contract utility bill) shall be required of all students enrolling for the first time.

**Medications** – If possible, parents are advised to give medication at home and on a schedule other than during school hours. If it is necessary that a medication be given during school hours, the following regulations must be followed:

- Medication must be ordered by physician/dentist and permission granted to R.N. at school to contact physician/dentist if necessary.
- Medication must be brought to school by parent/guardian in original container with appropriate label intact.
- Parent/guardian **must** sign the Medication Administration Consent form granting the school nurse permission to administer medication.

**Playgrounds** – Playgrounds are always supervised. We encourage your child to observe rules of safety and respect for the rights of others. All injuries or complaints are reported to the school nurse or school office.

**Student Insurance** – The School Division does not carry medical or dental insurance for students injured on school premises, while under school jurisdiction, or through school division activities. For this reason, an optional student accident insurance plan offers both a school-time only and a 24-hour plan; both are designed to provide maximum protection at an economical premium. We urge you to avail yourself of the protection afforded through school insurance. A brochure and application form on the insurance plan may be obtained from the school office.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

James River is fortunate to have a very active and supportive PTA, involved parents and wonderful business partners to support the work of the school in "reaching every child". We welcome the participation of parents through regular communication with the teachers, attending conferences, volunteering, or whatever means each family may contribute. We are a true community school and value the contributions, ideas and opinions of all. We encourage all of our families to join us at school in support of the educational advancement of all of our students at James River by participation in one or more of the following activities and/or through volunteering to assist with the needs of the classroom in collaboration with your children's teachers.

**Classroom volunteers** assist the needs of individual classroom as identified by the teacher and in support of the instructional program. This includes assisting with special events, such as the Author's Tea, field trips, attendance on special trips, etc.

**PTA (School-wide)** provides an opportunity for parents to get involved in a variety of ways throughout the year by attending monthly meetings, fundraising, etc.

**Clubs-** A variety of after school clubs are offered to students by PTA volunteers, School Health Initiative Program and staff members. In the past these have included **Latin dance club, drama club, science and garden club.**

**Media and Book Fair Volunteers (School-wide)** assist the media specialist in maintaining the media center. They volunteer weekly and help with the Book Fair.

**Field Trip Chaperones (K-5)** assist our teachers, staff, and students during off campus trips that are scheduled to enrich the instructional program.



## MANAGEMENT OF SCHOLASTIC RECORDS

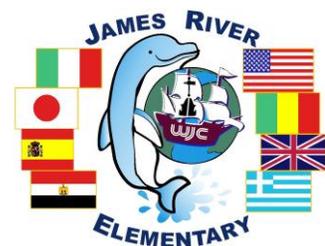
The Virginia Department of Education requires notification to parents and eligible students as to their rights concerning the management of scholastic records.

The principal of each school is responsible for the maintenance of scholastic records for each student within the school building in which the student resides. Other files may be found at central office for gifted and talented students under the auspices of the supervisor of the gifted and talented, while files for special education students are kept at the Student Services building under the supervision of the Director of Student Services.

Parents and eligible students have a right to review these records, to challenge the content of the scholastic records, and to file with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act Office a complaint concerning an alleged failure by the school division to comply with U.S. C. 1232g:

The school division maintains the confidentiality of these records. The files will contain the information as to who had access to the files, why access was permitted, and when such access took place. The following information, however, is designated as directory information and may be released to others without parent consent: name of student, address, date and place of birth, telephone listing, dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight if a member of an athletic team, awards and honors received, and other similar information unless the parents of an eligible student informs the school principal in writing of their wish to avoid such disclosure.

Parents may request copies of their student's records, however, a fee to meet the duplicating cost may be charged. A copy of the full policy for reviewing and expunging scholastic records can be obtained from the Office of the Superintendent.



*James River Elementary School: An authorized IBYP World School*