



GEORGIA ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL
4416 Ethan Allen Highway
Saint Albans, Vermont 05478
Phone: 802-524-6358 Fax: 802-524-1781

Stephen A. Emery, Principal
Karen Lehning, Director of Teaching and Learning

Melissa Fisher, Dean of Students
Corrina Favreau, Director of Communications

August 12, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. We are excited to welcome you to the beginning of a new school year at GEMS with many new staff members and administrative team. Students in grades 1 through 8 begin on August 31st. We look forward to working with you, our parents/guardians, and the members of our community, to provide a safe, respectful, and responsible learning environment this year.

Our focus this year will be on PreK through 8th grade unification, creating and fostering a positive culture and climate, and student focused learning opportunities. We recognize the importance of student-teacher relationships and building a welcoming environment and have been planning over the summer ways to meet these expectations. To start the year, all staff and students will be provided with a new GEMS t-shirt unifying our school. Each classroom will begin their day with a morning meeting/advisory group and will be participating in activities around a monthly theme. In September classrooms will be focusing on respect. We will be providing more information through our regular family communication.

Important Back to School Reminders

Handbook

Changes have been made to the GEMS student handbook. Use [this link](#) to access the handbook:

Field Trips

Each PreK through 8th grade field trip will be paid for and planned by the grade level staff members. We want each of these out of school learning experience/celebration to be equitable and not a hardship on families. Please note, this is a change from our past practice and supports our current vision.

Arrival Reminders

As noted above, our focus is on building student-teacher relationships and creating a welcoming environment, therefore we ask for your support in having your child here at school no later than 8:05. This will allow for them to participate in their daily morning meeting. We understand and recognize that there are family obligations (or scheduled appointments) that may occasionally disrupt the daily routine.

Bus and drop off - pick up information:

- For the first couple of weeks, bus times may fluctuate by 5-10 minutes
- Buses begin to unload students at 7:55 a.m.
- Student drop off is in the bus lane at the main office entrance
- If students arrive after 8:05, they must check in at the main office before proceeding to class

- **Elementary school dismisses at 2:45, Middle school dismisses at 2:50**
- Buses leave the school at 3:00 p.m.
- There are two designated pick up locations for students after school for students not riding the bus:
 - Elementary students will be picked up at the 1/2 playground
 - Middle school students being picked up will be at the middle school entrance
- Buses will **NOT** drop off students in PreK-4 without a parent or other responsible adult being visible to the bus driver unless the office has a current note for the 2022-2023 school year on file giving the child permission to get off the bus alone or with an older sibling. Send a note with your child on their first day of school or email permission to Corrina Favreau at cfavreau@fwsu.org
- If your student is going to be picked up early or take a bus to a different home, please send a note to school with them.

Attendance:

- If your child is going to be absent from school, email Jen Follensbee at jfollensbee@fwsu.org or call the main office before 8:30 to report it.

Kind Regards,

Mr. Emery, Mrs. Lehning, Mrs. Fisher and Mrs. Favreau
The GEMS Administrative Team

August 29	August 30	August 31	September 1	September 2
1st grade meet & greet 2:00-3:00		1st day of school (grades 1-8) Preschool family visits	Kindergarten orientation 9:00-10:00 (no transportation provided) Preschool family visits	1st day of school for kindergarten Preschool family visits
September 5	September 6	September 7	September 8	September 9
No School	1st day of school for preschool School Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. Library			