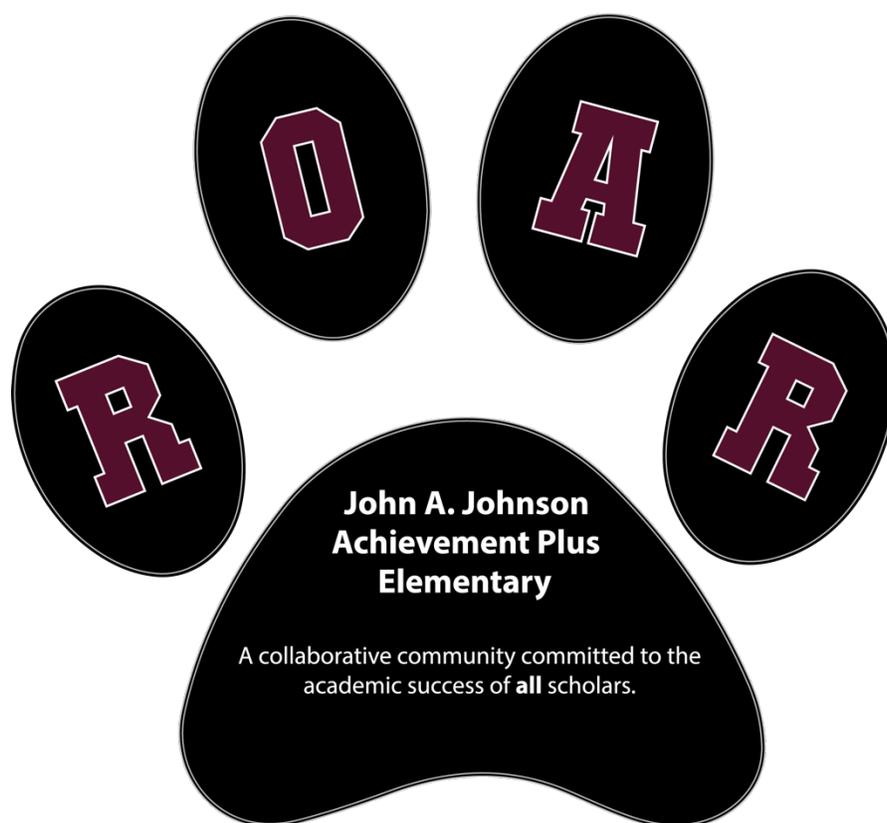


# JOHN A. JOHNSON ACHIEVEMENT PLUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## Family and Community HANDBOOK



John A Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School  
740 York Ave Saint Paul, MN. 55106  
Main Office: 651. 793. 7300  
Principal: Lisa Gruenewald  
Administrative Intern: Denise Jameson

# John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School

740 York Avenue  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106  
School Phone: 651-793-7300  
Fax Number: 651-793-7310  
[www.jaj@spps.org](http://www.jaj@spps.org)

## School Hours

8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

## Breakfast to Go Serving Time

8:15 a.m.

## Pre – Kindergarten/ECSE

8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

12:30p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

## Office Hours

7:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

## Dismissal

Patrols dismissed at 2:50 p.m.

School Dismissal- 3:00 p.m.

**Principal:** Lisa Gruenewald

**Admin Intern:** Denise Jameson

**School Clerk:** Shannon Platzer

## Saint Paul Board of Education

Zuki Ellis, Chair

Steve Marchese, Vice Chair

Jeanelle Foster, Clerk

Jon Schumacher, Treasurer

John Brodrick, Director

Marny Xiong, Director

Mary Vanderwert, Director

## Superintendent

Dr. Joe Gothard

## Assistant Superintendent

Andrew Collins

# JAJ Handbook

Getting to know who we are and what we do at JAJ!

## A

**Achievement Plus Model:** Achievement Plus is a private/public partnership between the Saint Paul Public Schools and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. The primary goal of Achievement Plus is to improve student achievement in schools located in low-income areas of the city, while serving as a model for urban education. The three main components of Achievement Plus are academics, out-of-school learning opportunities, and learning supports that assist students, families and community members. Achievement Plus was created in 1997. The Achievement Plus model has provided an opportunity to host several Partners on site, in service to the greater community.

**Arrival:** Students **should not** arrive at school before 8:15 a.m. Students may enter the main, north-facing(nearest park) doors beginning at 8:15 a.m. for breakfast. After 8:15 a.m., families who drive their students to school should drop them off at the rear of the parking lot at the southwest corner of the school. After 8:30 a.m., the southwest doors are locked and everyone must enter the building through the main, north-facing doors facing the playground. **School starts at 8:30 a.m. Students are considered tardy if they are not in their classrooms at 8:30 a.m.**

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is very important to experiencing success in school. Please call our school clerk, at 651.793.7300 or the JAJ Health Office at 651.793.7319 if your child will be/has been absent from school and include the reason for the absence. After three absences, our school's attendance committee will discuss your child's attendance and parents will be notified of concerns. All absences require a written/verbal excuse from a parent/guardian. **If we do not receive a phone call or note of explanation, the absences will be considered unexcused.** JAJ has multiple support systems for students and families experiencing barriers to attending school.

**Attire:** We ask that children dress appropriately so their clothing (or lack thereof) is not distracting to the point of interfering with learning. School reserves the right to require a student to change their clothing if it is determined to be inappropriate for the learning environment. Shirts must be long enough to cover the midsection and back and cannot be low cut in front. Pants and shorts may not be low-cut. Students are expected to wear belts and not "sag" their pants. No headwear (except for religious purposes) is allowed; this includes rags, bandanas, or caps. Jackets, boots, gloves and hats should be labeled on the inside with the child's name. Teachers may require all outerwear to be hung in student lockers or on hooks outside the classroom if it becomes a distraction. For Physical Education your student's clothing should allow for safe movement, neither to tight nor to loose. Girls wearing skirts or dresses should either wear tights or have shorts to wear underneath.



## B

**Behavior Intervention Specialist:** The Intervention Specialist(s) is an individual(s) who has/have been trained to assist students in refocusing and to de-escalate behavior concerns. The adult(s) is/are mobile throughout the entire school and works with students, parents, and staff. The primary responsibility is to provide assistance to children who may be having difficulties with school rules, routines, and rituals. This proactive approach will enable students to participate more fully in the classroom and not miss valuable academic information.

**Bullying:** Bullying will not be tolerated at Johnson Elementary School. **Bullying is the consistent unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.** The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. If you have concerns about bullying, please contact your child's classroom teacher immediately, or the Family and Community Liaison. The classroom teacher will work with the school counselor, when necessary. **At no time should a parent confront another student regarding the bullying of their child.**

## C

**Conferences:** Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in fall and spring. We encourage all families to attend; interpreters and transportation are available as needed. Conferences give families and teachers an important opportunity to review progress and to plan goals for the future. Progress reports are distributed at conferences and mailed home at the end of the year. **Please see the school calendar for conference dates and plan accordingly.**

## D

**Departure:** At the end of the school day, parents can sign-out students at the southwest corner of the building after 2:50 p.m. During Extended Day of Learning sessions, teachers will dismiss *registered* Extended Day of Learning students to go to their after school class. All other students are expected to leave the building promptly and go directly home. Children may return to our community playground after they have gone home and checked in. School is not responsible for children's supervision and safety on the playground after 3:00 p.m. (except for registered Extended Day Learning students). **Although we realize emergencies occur, it is important that families contact the main office before 2:00 p.m. if they would like to make any change in their child(ren)'s transportation home, also children must be picked up by 3:00 p.m. If we are not able to contact you per the designated emergency contact for your child, they will be considered "abandoned". If this happens, your child will be turned over to the St. Paul Police Department as our licensed staff are not contracted to stay in the building past dismissal time.**

## E

**Electronics:** Students with parent permission to bring cell phones and other electronics to school **must check them in with teachers at the start of the day.** All devices will be returned at the end of the day. In the event that a student fails to turn in their cell phone and it gets in the way of learning, it will be taken by the teacher and returned to the student and/or parent at the end of the school day. In the event the phone gets in the way of learning repeatedly, the phone will be confiscated, given to the principal and the parent will need to retrieve the phone. Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones or other expensive electronics to school. The school is not liable for misplaced, lost or stolen devices. Students are allowed to use office phones with permission.

**Emergency School Closing:** School is rarely closed because of weather. If school is to be closed, the Superintendent of Schools will make the decision by 5:00 a.m. and authorize a radio and television announcement soon thereafter. Radio station WCCO (830 AM) will have the official school closing information. Please discuss with your children where they should go in the unlikely event that the school closes early and nobody is at home to receive them. It is also **VERY IMPORTANT** that you provide the school office with current telephone numbers where you or an emergency contact can be reached at all times. Should you move or have a change of numbers, it is your responsibility to inform the office of the changes.

**Extended Day Learning (EDL):** The Extended Day Learning program offers extracurricular opportunities for scholars to engage in after school. The program offers a variety of recreational and enrichment opportunities for scholars. The EDL program closely collaborates with the Eastside YMCA of Saint Paul. For more information, contact the EDL coordinator at 651.744.1740.

## F

**Field trips:** All field trips will be connected to curriculum and JAJ's mission statement. Families will be notified of field trips and invited to join prior to the field trip.

## G

**Guided Reading Groups:** A small group (3-6) students that are reading at (or near) the same reading level. The teacher meets with this group for 15-20 minutes during Reading Workshop focusing on the specific reading needs of the group.

## H

**Home Visits:** John A. Johnson families are valuable partners; during the summer and school year, JAJ staff might contact families to do home visits. Families are not required to host staff, however, it is a great way to build a stronger community and get to know one another. Families also have the option of meeting at an alternative location. If you are interested in scheduling a home visit to get to know your child's teacher you are also welcome to contact the teacher directly or the Family and Community Liaison.

## I

**Insurance:** The school district provides no health or accident insurance for students.

**I-pads:** iPads are an "all-in-one" electronic tool that includes a camera, wireless Internet, word processor and access to all sorts of easy-to-use software applications. iPads come with built-in features that make learning accessible for everyone, including: students with special needs, multilingual students, creative students, advanced students, self directed learners, and even learners without access to technology at home. Management and security is streamlined because everyone has the same kind of tablet. Apple has extensive experience in education and will provide students and families with technical support. JAJ students have the opportunity to use their iPads to enhance and enjoy their learning.

# J

**The “JAJ Way”:** A term used by the Johnson Elementary community in accordance with the Mission statement and the 3 JAJ rules - “Be Responsible, Be Respectful and Be safe”. Families are encouraged to use the phrase the “JAJ Way” regarding their child’s behavior and interactions at JAJ as we partner to increase our scholars’ chances of being successful at school and in life.

**Johnson Journals:** Monthly newsletters with a personalized message from the principal, calendar reminders, Jaguar news and updates. Check your child’s backpack for Thursday folders and Johnson Journals to stay up to date on upcoming events and happenings. The Johnson Journals can be printed for families on site if they are not receiving them in Thursday folders.

# L

**Literacy:** This is one term used for the subjects of reading and writing and understanding.

**Literacy Block:** A 2.5-hour block of time divided into three parts: 1-hour Reader’s workshop, 1-hour Writer’s workshop and a 30 minute Skills Development session.

**Lost and Found:** If a student loses something at JAJ they are welcome to search the lost and found on site to find it. **The Lost and Found area will be cleaned out monthly;** families are encouraged to seek out and claim items as often as they are in the building. Those items not retrieved will be donated or re-purposed.

# M

**Math Block:** A daily 75-minute block. Math blocks are divided into four parts: A 15 minute Math Review, a 15 minute mini lesson, 40 minutes of small group work and a 5 minute closing.

**Media Release:** Parents and guardians must sign a media release form at the beginning of the year to give permission for their child to have their picture taken and used for JAJ material.

**Medication:** Whenever possible, please have your child take medication before or after school. However, if a student is *required* to take medication during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, then only the school nurse or designated person may administer the medication in compliance with *the original container* and the regulations that follow. Written instructions signed by parent and physician are required and must include: the student’s name, name and purpose of medication, time to be administered, dosage, possible side effects and ending date for administering medication.

The school nurse or wellness educational assistant will inform appropriate school personnel of the medication, keep a record of the administering of medication and keep the medication secure. The parents of the student assumes responsibility for informing (written or verbal) the school nurse of any changes in the student’s health or change in medication. The school district retains the discretion to reject requests for administration of medicine. A copy of this regulation will be provided to parents upon their request for administration of medication in the schools. The prescribing of or lack of medication as determined by a physician will not affect the enrollment of a student in Independent School District #625. Students observed taking unauthorized medications will be reported to the school administration and their parents.



**Mission Statement:** JAJ's mission statement is: "A collaborative community committed to academic success for **all** scholars!"

## N

**Nurse:** JAJ will have a nurse on staff 2 days a week. The registered nurse and a full time wellness educational assistant staff Johnson's health office. When they are not in the building, teachers and office staff manage health issues. If your child has a chronic health problem (such as a heart condition, asthma or allergies), please contact the health office early in the year so this information is recorded on your child's health record and procedures for managing this condition are used in working with your child. It is also important to notify the school of any contagious conditions your child may contract such as strep throat, head lice, ringworm or scabies. Your information will allow the nurse to take appropriate measures to protect other students. Where public health is concerned, your cooperation is essential.

## P

**PBIS:** PBIS provides an operational framework for achieving positive behaviors and academic achievement. More importantly, PBIS is NOT a curriculum, intervention, or practice but IS a decision making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students. In general, PBIS emphasizes four integrated elements: (a) data for decision making, (b) measurable outcomes supported and evaluated by data, (c) practices with evidence that these outcomes are achievable and (d) systems that efficiently and effectively support implementation of these practices.

**Parent School Community Committee (PSCC):** A group of volunteer JAJ families and community members who meet regularly to partner with JAJ. The group creates and informs practices and protocols that insure a more successful learning environment for all JAJ scholars. They also are encouraged to volunteer around the building and lead parts of events. The group is led by the family and community liaison along with families to create the most authentic learning experience for families.

**Partners:** JAJ is an Achievement Plus School that houses and collaborates with a set of organizations for the betterment of the community. JAJ on site partners are: Eastside Family Center, a program of Neighborhood House, East Side Learning Center, Wilder Foundation, Project Halo, St. Mary's Clinic, the YMCA and Children's Dental Services. JAJ also partners with several off site community partners.

**Professional Development (PD):** Learning opportunities for teachers to participate in throughout the school year to enhance their teaching practice. There are designated "NO School days" for teachers to participate in professional development.

**Physical Education:** Our children receive physical education in the YMCA. For safety reasons, children must have appropriate tennis shoes for use during physical education. Students will not be allowed to participate in physical education without appropriate shoes. Shoes must have laces or Velcro to keep them secure; black-soled shoes should be non-marking. **See "Attire" for appropriate clothing.** Physical education at Johnson may include swimming lessons, with your written permission. Your child's teacher will let you know when these lessons begin and what items your child will need to bring to participate.

## R

**Reading at home:** We encourage every JAJ student to read at home every day for 20 - 30 minutes. We encourage families to support reading in other ways too. Reading aloud to younger children, listening to older children, listening

to stories electronically (with or without following along with a book) and taking children to the library are just some of the ways you can help. JAJ has a NEW Lending Library where families can borrow culturally relevant texts to read at home. Learn more about the Lending Library by contacting the Family and Community Liaison on site.

**Records:** State and federal laws allow parents and legal guardians to examine their child's school records. Non-custodial parents have rights to information on their child unless there is a court order to the contrary or there is sufficient reason to believe that the health and welfare of the child or custodial parents are in jeopardy. Parents also have the right to authorize or deny release of information requested by a third party. The accuracy of records may be challenged and changes requested by parents. Every effort is made at school to safeguard your child's records and your privacy. The Saint Paul Public Schools have adopted a data privacy policy in keeping with both state and federal regulations. If you wish to have a copy of a summary of that policy, you may request it from the school or from the Student Data Department (651 632-3764). Any questions you may have concerning the policy should be referred to Student Data.

**Responsive Classroom:** Responsive Classroom® is used at Johnson Elementary School to provide a safe and welcoming environment that students need to learn. We expect that everyone will conduct themselves with courtesy and respect while at JAJ. The following items are Responsive Classroom® terms you should be aware of:

#### Take a Break

The purpose of take a break is for students and teachers to refocus on the rules created in class by correcting minor issues. These issues include regaining control and making better choices. The teacher pays attention to the minor disturbances rather than waiting for the work of the class or the controls of the child to deteriorate. After a brief reminder or redirection, the teacher gives the direction to "take a break" and the student moves to the place in the room that has been designated for children to sit quietly and think until they are ready to rejoin the class. The amount of time a child spends in "take a break" and the number of classroom breaks depends on the individual situation. When scholars are having difficulty staying on task, taking a break helps them recover their controls and return to the group, following the rules again. Students may also self-select to "take a break."

#### Buddy Rooms

Buddy rooms are places where students can go when they need to take a break away from their classroom environment. Buddy rooms are adjoining or nearby classrooms. Teachers team up to become "buddy rooms" for each other. Students are directed to a "buddy room" when they continue to demonstrate distracting behavior in the "take a break" area or when the activities in the room are keeping students from regaining control. The amount of time a child spends in a "buddy room" is dependent on the individual situation. Buddy room time is generally about 10-15 minutes. When invited back, the student is expected to be ready to follow the rules again. Typically, the teacher will conduct a brief conference with the child when they return from the buddy room.

**Roar Rally:** Dedicated monthly assemblies where JAJ scholars, families and friends join together to celebrate and appreciate the accomplishments within the community. See calendar for monthly schedule. The Roar Rallies were previously known as **All School Gatherings**.

## S

**Scholar:** A learned person; a child who studies; someone who learns things at school in a particular way. Families will notice this word is often used in replace of student at JAJ. (Collins Dictionary)

**Specialists:** JAJ has licensed teachers who teach in the following subjects: Science, Art/Music, Physical Education, and Basic Skills. Students see specialists on a 10 day rotating schedule.



# T

**Transportation:** JAJ students get to and from school in several ways. They are walkers, bus riders and/or their families may pick them up. Parent Pick-up is a system that allows students to be picked up by their families/guardians in a more convenient manner. Specific questions regarding one of the listed modes of transportation should be directed to your child's teacher or our clerk.

**Treats:** The District follows a Wellness Policy that discourages consumption of unhealthy sugary treats. Therefore, if you would like to send a birthday treat for your child, please send a store bought, healthy treat.

# V

**Visitors:** Our Johnson Jaguar families are encouraged to come and visit at any time. It is vital to the safety and order of our building that every visitor properly sign-in and gets a visitor's badge at the main office. Visitors will not be "buzzed" to the third floor without a visible visitor's badge. In the event that a visitor is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor without a visible visitor's badge, they will be stopped by a JAJ staff and asked to return to the office to sign in and get a badge. Every family is welcomed into JAJ as partners for our scholar's

# W

**Weapons:** Weapons of any kind should not be brought to school and may result in a disciplinary consequence up to expulsion. Toys that look like weapons may also result in a consequence and should not be brought to school.