

St. James Early Learning Center

NEWSLETTER



September
2026



IMPORTANT DATES

- Aug 31 (4th/5th) & Sept 2 (K-3rd) | Youth Group Begins
- Sept 7 | **CENTER CLOSED** for Labor Day! 🚫
- Sept 9 | Chapel for Preschool / Pre-K Begins
- Sept 13 | National Grandparent's Day
- Sept 21 | No School For GASD / No KC All-Day Care
- Sept 22 | First Day of Fall 🍁🍂

Staff Birthday's

- Miss Courtney on the 13th
- Miss Mya on the 29th

Staff Anniversary's:

- Miss Kylea: 9 years on the 11th

Looking Ahead.. Picture Day 📷, Halloween Fun!! 🎃

WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE?

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 - Doors/Gates, Pick Up's
 - Breakfast
 - Naptime Items
- Labeling Items
- National Grandparent's Day
- Scholastic
- Staff Changes
- No School / No Care
- Chapel - Preschool / Pre-K
- Youth Group / Parking
- Kindergarten Readiness
 - Self-Help/Social Skills, Books
- Phone Use
- Keycards
- Primary Care Groups
- Facebook Page/Website
- Flyers
 - Outdoor Play Information
 - Sickness / Illness Policy
 - Giving Spree Acceptance

GO'DBYE
SUMMER

Hello
AUTUMN

CENTER INFO



Center Hours:

St. James ELC is open from 6:30AM to 5:30PM. Tuition rates are based on a 10-hour daily enrollment. Please keep your drop off and pick up times as consistent as possible with what is stated on your Fee Agreements. We use this information to schedule staff accordingly, and to ensure accurate state regulations of staff-child ratios.

Doors/Gates, Adult Pick Up's

Enrolled children may only be released to parents/legal guardians that are pre-listed on their Emergency Contact Forms. Siblings are not permitted to be left alone anywhere on the premises and/or to collect children even when an adult is in the building - an adult must be present before staff can allow children to leave the room. Along with this, please make sure gates and/or doors are closed behind you or other adults/children that are with you. Doors/Gates are in place to help ensure safety to all children in the room.



Breakfast:

Breakfast is served every morning from 7:00-8:00AM. If you would like your child to eat breakfast at school, please have them here before 8:00AM.

Naptime Items:

All naptime items need to be taken home on Fridays or on the last day your child is enrolled for the week to be washed and returned on Monday morning. This will help minimize the spread of germs from week to week!

LABELING ITEMS



With transitions happening and kiddos moving back and forth between rooms and teachers getting used to new kiddos belongings in the coming weeks; we ask that all families please take a few extra minutes to label ALL of their child's belongings that enter our program.

We have 100+ children mixed within six different classrooms. Things get lost and misplaced VERY easily, ESPECIALLY when things are not labeled. This includes: extra clothing and shoes, hats and gloves, coats or jackets, naptime items (sheets, pillows/pillowcases, blankets, stuffed animals, infant sleep sacks), cups/water bottles, diapering items (packs of unopened diapers, wipes, creams), feeding supplies (breastmilk bags, bottles - the bottle and the caps), binky's/nuk's, show and tell items, bags/backpacks, medication... literally anything your child brings in must be labeled.

We understand that labeling is time-consuming and that it may not eliminate the "lost item" concept, but it definitely decreases it when things can be found and returned to the owner by simply having their name on it. Thank you for your help in ensuring items get back to their rightful owners!



NATIONAL GRANDPARENTS DAY

Sunday September 13th is National Grandparent's Day! Use this day to celebrate the wisdom, guidance, and overpouring love that your parents give to your children as they grow older. Share stories, talk about family history, heritage, culture, and what things were like when their grandparents were young like them! Share a meal, go somewhere special, or just spend time with the generations who came before us. 💕

SCHOLASTIC

Scholastic book orders will be resuming this month! Keep an eye out for the flyers that will be available in the hallway by the side door entrance! If you are interested in ordering books, you can order through the scholastic website by searching Gettysburg's zip code (17325) and finding "St James Early Learning Center", or "Ashley Drechsler", OR by our center code: GZT46



STAFF CHANGES

With the new school year, comes some new changes in staff! First, we would like to welcome Miss Nikki, you will see her around the younger end of the building (especially infants) in the early mornings and for the afternoons! Miss Amanda and Miss Angela will continue to be in the infant room as well, along with Miss Cianna, who may also float around the rooms where needed in the AM and PM's.

Miss Megan, Miss Megs, Miss Dom, and Miss Erica are still in Young Toddlers and Twos, with the help of Miss Franzy in the mornings and afternoons. Miss Lupita is also staying with us more this year throughout the school year, and will be floating around the center during the day and helping in Young Toddlers in the afternoons as she did over the summer! Miss Emily, Miss Kylesea, Miss Courtney, and Miss Lisa are still in Preschool - although you may see Miss Courtney with school age before and after school and see Miss Lisa around Pre-K as well!

Pre-K has had some big changes! Miss Ashley and Miss Mya are excited to tackle this year with an almost whole new group of kiddos! You will still see Miss Jess around the center, as she floats around to help classrooms with planning time! Miss Ashton will also be helping out in rooms throughout the day when she's not with her School Age kiddos for before and after school! In the School Age room, you will see Miss Ashton, Miss Cassie, Miss Courtney, and even Miss Jess helping to get school age kiddos to and from school!

NO SCHOOL / NO CARE

Monday September 21st is the first day of the school year that Gettysburg Area School District is CLOSED. Information went out before school started about this years changes in care (also shown to the right →). School age children will need alternate care for days that GASD is closed. All other classrooms will remain open and operate as normal unless alerted otherwise due to weather, inservice days, ect.



CHAPEL: PRESCHOOL / PRE-K

On Wednesday mornings (beginning September 9th), Preschool and Pre-K will each have a half hour lesson with St. James' Director of Youth & Family Ministry - Mr. Adam! Each class will have a turn to join him upstairs in the Sanctuary for a short bible story, a few fun songs/activities, and to have a small peek into the world of Christianity.

Changes for 2026/2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Beginning this school year 2026/2027 the before and after school program will follow the Gettysburg Area School District Calendar and only operate as a **Before & After school Program.**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN:



Before and after school will be offered to those enrolled at St James.



Children will be picked up from school from early dismissal.



NO ALL-DAY care when schools are closed.



NO SNOWDAYS



St. James
EARLY LEARNING CENTER



Thank you for your support and understanding as we make these changes to better serve our families!



YOUTH GROUP/PARKING



Youth Group is held on **MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS!** On both days, Youth Group ends at 5:00PM. This will shake up our parking availability around 4:45-5:15 on Monday AND Wednesday evenings as children are being picked up. Please be patient with other families and plan accordingly.

Parking:

Reminding all families that St. James ELC parking is located at the back of the building (larger vehicles - please park at the top of the lot closer to the road so other vehicles can still get through). We are not responsible for tickets, tows, etc. if you are parking elsewhere.



KINDERGARTEN READINESS

BACK
TO
SCHOOL

Starting school can be an exciting but anxious time for families. We already think to look at their academic and motor skills as part of their kindergarten readiness. However, other key factors to your child's success that you may not think about is their self help abilities and social skills. Here are a few ways you can help your child be ready for their new start to a new school year!

Self Help Skills

- Proper handwashing
- Using the restroom independently
- Dressing/undressing, and putting on/off their shoes
- Putting on/off winter attire
- Zipping, buttoning, tying
- Opening/closing lunchboxes/backpacks/folders
- Opening food packaging/drinks on their own

Social Skills

- Knowing their first/last name (not just a nickname) and their age
- Following simple rules/routines and safety expectations
- Separating from parent/guardian easily
- Interacting positively with others
- Asking for help when needed
- Emotional regulation
- Completing short tasks independently
- Ability to sit and listen to stories/directions for 5-10 minutes

Books

A few books to read with your child to prepare them for school (there are also MANY others out there as well!)



KEY CARDS



EVERY FAMILY SHOULD BE MAKING SURE THEY ARE BRINGING THEIR KEY CARD WITH THEM TO DROP OFF AND PICK UP THEIR CHILDREN EVERY DAY.

The call button next to the door is for emergency situations or individuals who are not a part of our program and would need to be let in by an employee. If you no longer have one and need to pay the replacement fee for a new one, please get in touch with a director.

Each time the call button is used, it is not always guaranteed that an administrator will be available to answer it. When that happens, teachers in the classroom would then need to answer the doorbell, and this takes supervision away from the children in their care. Please use your keycard!

PHONE USE

Please refrain from using cell phones or having other distractions during drop off and pick up times. Your full attention is needed during these moments to discuss your child's evenings at home, days at school, to share happy moments, and to guarantee full safety measures of children coming in and out of the classroom and building. Thank you for understanding.



PRIMARY CARE GROUPS



Every child enrolled in our program is assigned to a Primary Care Group (PCG) within their classroom. Every classroom has two or more teachers that are assigned a PCG of their own. A Primary Care Group is a small group of children that is assigned to one specific teacher. This specific teacher is responsible for most of the behind-the-scenes observations, documentation, planning, and the main point of contact for families in regards to the children in their PCG's. This is the teacher that families will have regular conferences with to build the best experience for their child here at St. James. PCG teachers foster individualized care, routines, education, and bonding to the children assigned to their group. PCG's are also used in day-to-day routines, transitions, and classroom play or activities. When children move in small groups verses a whole class, it helps to ensure attendance accuracy, fewer wait times, and less conflicts among children.

However, this does NOT mean that any other teacher in the classroom, is any less valuable when it comes to children not assigned to them. All of our teachers work collaboratively with ALL children in their care, in any classroom, to build long-lasting relationships and to ensure overall safety. Teachers share information with other PCG teachers to help them in their own planning and record keeping. Teachers sharing a classroom exchange observations, documentation, communication, and so much more with one another to balance the various needs of every child collectively. They work together to create lesson plans, activities, and other fun learning experiences that work for all children within the classroom, regardless of which PCG they are in.

If you are unsure who your child's Primary Care Group teacher is, please ask the teachers in their classroom. If families have education questions regarding their child's development, this would typically be the teacher you would reach out to. If your child's PCG teacher is unavailable, please ask the other teachers in the room, as they could answer your questions as well, or pass the information to their PCG teacher for them to get back to you when they can. If your child's PCG teacher is out of the room at any point, that teacher's group will be temporarily reassigned to another teacher subbing in the classroom until their original teacher returns, just for the day-to-day routines, not so much for behind-the-scene things. If families have any questions regarding PCG's, please let us know! Thank you! 😊



FACEBOOK / ELC WEBSITE

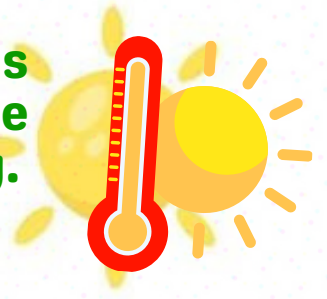


Whether you are new to our St. James family or have been with us for awhile, we want to put out the reminder that we have a private Facebook group for all of our enrolled families to join if they would like! On our Facebook page, you will see center events, photos, community activities and resources, holiday/weather closings/delays, and so much more! A place to share all the fun moments with other SJELC families!

Also, on the St. James website, under Early Learning, families can find center newsletters, menus, events, and information regarding each classroom. Classroom newsletters, calendars, show and tell's, photos, and other classroom news throughout the year!



If the real-feel temperature is between 25-90 degrees, we intend to go outside every day.



Please make sure your child has suitable outdoor clothing. If children have dresses on, please be sure to put shorts on underneath for when they are climbing, running/playing, and sitting on the floor.

Children need to have a sweatshirt/jacket on outside if the real-feel temp is 50 degrees or below.

Periodically check with your children's teachers that their "extra clothes" bins are up to date and also have weather-appropriate clothing (and correct sizes) in case they would need to change clothes here at school.



SUNSCREEN

On those warm, sunny days, please apply sunscreen before bringing your children to school.

Sunscreen is treated like a medication through DHS and will need to have proper paperwork attached with it.

For peace of mind, please also remember that when temperatures (& feel-likes) are high, we always evaluate the conditions before playing outside.

Please DO NOT leave sunscreen in your child's bag.

APPROPRIATE SHOES

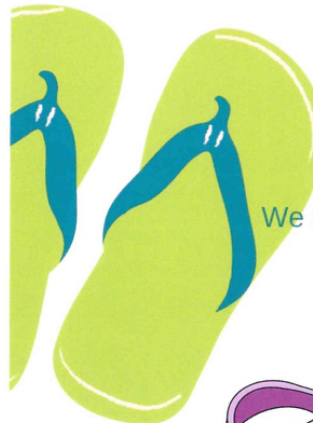
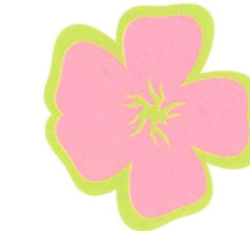


SHOES! SHOES! SHOES!



Clogs, toeless sandals and flip-flops too
All the new styles-
colorful and new!!

These shoes look great at home or at the pool.
But they're not very safe for play here at school!



On the playground and in class where we jump and run
We need to wear closed-toed shoes to be safe and have fun!

Crocs are OKAY!



SICKNESS/ILLNESS POLICY



We do our best to clean and disinfect classrooms, toys and materials used among the children daily. However, if and when your child(ren) get sick - we ask that you honor the 24-hour recuperation policy. **CHILDREN MUST BE SYMPTOM FREE FOR 24 HOURS!** You are not permitted to give your children medication that masks any sickness/illnesses. This includes medication for vomiting, diarrhea, and fevers.

100.4+ Fevers: Temperatures that are 100.4 or higher are considered a fever. Children may return to school when their temperature has been consistently normal for a full 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.

Vomiting: Children may return 24 hours after symptoms are gone and can consume regular foods again, including the consumption of milk.

Diarrhea: Children may return to school 24 hours after symptoms are gone and are back to consistently normal bowel movements. Bowel movements must be contained inside the diaper, or (if potty trained) - can make it to the bathroom in time.

Antibiotics: Children must be on an antibiotic for a full 24 hours before returning to the center. This helps prevent the spread of illness and allows parents to monitor their children for any reactions that may occur due to the medication.

We understand the importance of having your children with us, but also how crucial it is to keep other children healthy, and our staff in good health, so we can continue to care for everyone's children collectively.

It is important to know that if your child comes back to school and begins to show reoccurring symptoms halfway through the day, you will be called to pick up your child again and will have to restart the 24-hour recuperation period. Giving your children medication "to get through the day", does not keep other children (or staff) healthy. So please make sure you are doing your part and ensuring that your child is fully back to themselves and can function in day-to-day activities (this includes being able to actively play, take naps as normal, back to regular toileting habits, and the ability to consume all planned meals/drinks throughout the day) before returning them back to school.

Lastly, if your children are on medication for any other reason, we need to know about it in the case of an emergency. The last thing we would want is for your child to be over-medicated if emergency personnel would have to administer life saving medication. Thank you for understanding.



SPREAD THE WORD!



St. James Early Learning Center

has been

ACCEPTED

into the annual



Giving Spree

ADAMS COUNTY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



The Giving Spree will take place on



THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER 5, 2026



The Wyndham Hotel
Gettysburg, PA



3:00 – 7:00 P.M.



St. James
Early Learning Center

✚ CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENT

👥 CARING TEACHERS

🍷 PLAY BASED CURRICULUM

★ STAR 4

We appreciate the

SUPPORT

from the community!