

Fifth Grade Handbook 2024-2025

Mrs. Hankins

Welcome to the 5th grade!



My name is Gina Hankins, and I am so happy to be your child's teacher for the 2024-2025 school year, one that is guaranteed to be like no other! This is my eleventh year teaching fifth grade at Lawson Elementary. It is so rewarding to be a teacher...watching students reach their goals, thinking more critically for themselves, and overcoming challenges. Keeping a positive attitude is more important now than ever before. If you are wondering what I did before coming to Lawson, I had a 15-year career in the field of Information Technology working for the State of Missouri. I returned to school in 2012 to earn a second degree in Elementary Education from Mizzou, and then completed my student teaching at Belair.

I love being a part of the Lawson family. I thoroughly enjoyed getting our classroom ready for the new school year, as well as checking out some of the Mark Twain Award-nominated books this summer (and I've got a favorite one picked out to read aloud with our class). I cannot wait to work together toward several of our 5th grade milestones, such as: learning all 50 States, researching and writing about historical cultures, discussing details of the World Wars & Great Depression, conducting experiments over different science phenomenon, learning everything there is to know about *Fractions*, and of course, reading, *reading*, READING using our new Amplify CKLA curriculum!

To help with understanding the expectations in our classroom, I have created this handbook for your reference. It details valuable information regarding classroom management and culture. **Please read through it carefully with your student and sign/date the last page for return during "open house" or the first few days of school.**

As a fifth grader, your student will be taking on more responsibility, therefore, communication between home and school will be critical to our success. Our collaboration will help your student reach their fullest potential and serve them well throughout the transition to middle school. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or comments you might have throughout the year. **I can be reached during my plan time each morning from 9:05-9:50 at (573) 659-3175 (Lawson office), or by email at gina.hankins@jcschools.us.** I do check email multiple times during the day, as well as offer an opportunity for subscribing to class text messages (via the Remind app).

Newsletters are sent at the beginning of each week. These include important information regarding classroom activities, test and project due dates, upcoming events, as well as some fun photos of us. Newsletters will be emailed and posted to our Lawson classroom website.

Thank you for your support and cooperation in getting this school year off to an awesome start! I'm excited about what is on the horizon for our classroom team and the relationships (friendships) we will build together this year and hopefully, for many years to come.

Best regards,



"Intelligence plus character, that is the goal of true education." —Martin Luther King, Jr.

School and Classroom Rules

Lawson School has three main behavior expectations for all students. They are often referred to as the “Big Three.” Students are expected to abide by them at all times and in all settings.



Curriculum

Students in fifth grade will follow our district curriculum, goals, and objectives based on the “Missouri Learning Standards.” Included below is a description of what we will cover this year:

- ♦ **English Language Arts** – We will follow the reading, writing, and speaking & listening model lessons using the district’s *Amplify CKLA* curriculum. Students will practice strategies to improve skills, such as: comprehension, identifying story elements (i.e. setting, theme, conflict/resolution), inferring, evidence-based skills, and grammar usage & mechanics. During reading class we will be using reading and learning strategies to encourage your child to be a stronger reader. We will complete a reader’s workbook over eight different units throughout the year, which includes both thinking and notes about our reading, as well as new vocabulary. Students will also work extensively with different types of writing: narrative, informational, opinionated, and research-based craft. (Social Studies & Science will be incorporated into the literacy block throughout the year, too.)



Since we know that reading is the key to lifelong learning, reading practice should not stop at school, but neither should it become a burden at home. Although students will be required to complete 100 minutes of independent reading as homework each week, this reading can come from books, magazines/newspapers, or other motivating pieces of writing found electronically or in print. **Reading logs are due each Monday morning complete with parent/guardian signatures.**

These go a long way in helping your student achieve the higher reading scores needed for middle school.

- ♦ **Math** – Fifth graders will be using the new *Eureka Math Squared* series. The workbook, interactive applications (using Chromebooks), and our hands on activities will further develop abilities to reason, problem-solve, and use a variety of mathematical models and language to evaluate expressions. Students will work through 6 units over place value, multiplication & division with expressions; operations with fractions, followed by operations with decimals; area/

volume & conversion of measurement, and foundations of geometry in the coordinate plane (graphing).

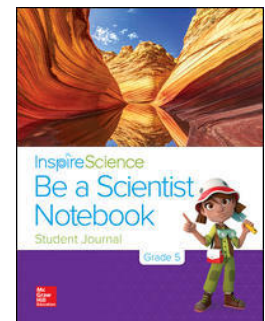
We try to practice math facts on a regular basis. Being fluent or “quick” with facts allows students to concentrate on new, higher level math processes with multiple steps. Students in the 5th grade are expected to be proficient in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts. We will use a variety of technology applications and activities to master these tasks.

We often use a workshop model to focus on the specific math skills being mastered in each unit. This model allows for assisted practice, small group and individual work, as well as hands-on activities to apply both new and previously acquired skills.

♦ **Social Studies** – At the beginning of the school year, we will study government and the importance of its principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, & Bill of Rights. Next, we will focus on post-American Revolution politics, and how they influenced the Civil War, World War I & II, the Great Depression, & Cold War. Then we will cover geography and the physical characteristics of the United States, learning what each region has to offer and memorizing the location of our 50 states. During our last unit, students will concentrate on the local economics of Missouri, as well as the migration, impact, and interactions of various cultural groups.



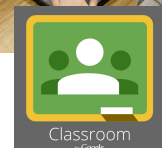
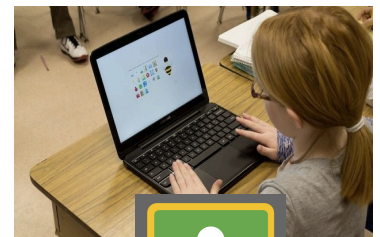
♦ **Science** – We will continue your student’s exploration of the *Inspire Science* series. Our learning will take a very collaborative, project-based approach to solve real-world challenges with more emphasis placed on closing the STEM gap. We will use a science notebook to work through the following units: Structures and Properties of Matter; Physical & Chemical Changes; Interactions of Earth’s Major Systems; Solar System & Beyond; Plant & Animal Needs; and Matter in Ecosystems.



🌀 **Study guides** and/or **practice worksheets** will be the primary method used to prepare for assessments in each of these subject areas. Students will become quite familiar with their iReady reading and math diagnostic scores. Each student will be encouraged to “stretch” himself/herself by targeting and reflecting upon progress toward individual goals, as well as cheering on the achievements of their classmates.

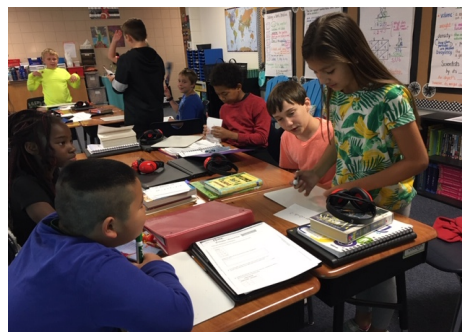
Technology

As in previous grades, fifth grade students will have several opportunities to use technology to enhance learning. In order to better prepare students for secondary schooling, we will utilize classroom Chromebooks and our interactive Newline panel. We will use these resources alongside *Google Classroom* to complete lessons, promote keyboarding and listening skills, research online, publish writing pieces, review for standardized testing, and present projects.



Behavior – The Lawson “Way”

Students in the fifth grade are role models for the younger students at Lawson. They are expected to set a good example by being safe, respectful, and responsible learners, by following directions the first time, allowing others to be successful, and coming prepared to learn every day. If behavior is inappropriate, a minor behavior sheet will be issued. The *first minor* in a week will result in the student missing five minutes of morning recess. A *second minor* will result in the loss of ten minutes of morning recess. *Three or more minors* in one week will result in the student losing morning recess privileges for the remainder of the week. If the situation warrants, I will also call the student’s parent/guardian (along with the student, when possible) to discuss the behavior and a corrective action plan, if necessary.



Each minor behavior sheet will include date & time, a description of the behavior with comments, and signature of the Lawson staff member documenting the behavior. If a minor behavior sheet is given, it will be stapled to the student’s daily planner. You will need to read and discuss the content with your student, then sign and return the form by the next school day. Each week the student starts with a clean slate.

If a student’s behavior results in an office or bus referral, guidelines will be followed per the *Lawson Procedures Manual*.



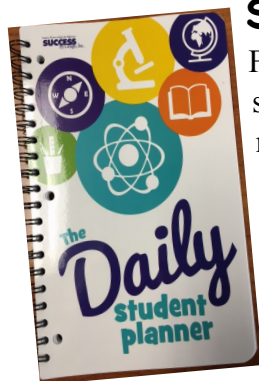
Homework/Grading

Although homework assignments will be minimal, fifth graders will occasionally be given homework to be completed that evening and returned the next school day. These assignments are designed to review a variety of topics and comprehension skills, and may also require parent/guardian assistance.

In addition, any work a student does not complete during the school day will become homework. I will try to give ample time in class for the completion of most assignments, but some students work at a slower pace and will be required to finish at home. In fifth grade, we spend a significant amount of time preparing for middle school through stressing accountability and organization; therefore, *students who do not have their homework assignments completed and ready for turn in at the start of the school day will be expected to complete work during recess.*

We want students to make the connection between being responsible learners and seeing his/her progress in school. If a student misplaces a reading log, study guide, or assignment, it is their responsibility to find another copy from the classroom “extras” box. If I contact you about “habitual” missing work by sending a note home, calling, or emailing, please partner with me to encourage your student’s role in becoming a successful learner.

When your student brings home papers with a standard-based grade (3-2-1) and/or a point score assigned, this indicates I have recorded the assignment/test/project for a grade. Students will bring home papers multiple times per week. Grades will also be entered weekly to Infinite Campus for access via the Parent Portal **Please give extra attention to paperwork that comes home on any type of “colorful” paper.**



Student Planners

Fifth graders are supplied with a planner for recording daily work and assignments. All students will be responsible for having **it signed each evening**. The planner serves as a means of sharing information about daily lesson content and contains a section for parent/guardian and teacher communication. Please use this as a way to correspond with me. At the beginning of the year, I will check the planner each day. Students will be allowed three “freebies” **each month**, permitting them to come to school three times without a signed planner. *After which, students who fail to get a parent/guardian signature will receive a consequence affecting their recess.*

Take-Home Binder

Each student will designate a binder for take-home. It will be brought home each night and used to keep the student planner, reading log/homework, flashcards & study guides, and any other important handouts secure while traveling to and from school. Graded papers will also be sent home within the binder. Please help to check your student’s bag for this each evening and return it each school day.

Absences

Although regular school attendance is invaluable to the learning process, we understand your student may be absent from time to time. Please call the Lawson office (573) 659-3175, when your student is going to be absent. Students are given one day to make up work for every day missed. I understand some activities will be difficult, if not impossible, for students to make up (such as experiments or “hands on” activities). In these instances, your child may be given an alternate assignment.



If you know in advance that your child will be absent for several days or an extended period of time, please contact the Lawson Office to complete a homework request form. This information can then be shared with the impacted teacher(s). If your child has another sibling attending Lawson, I will send home your student’s “absent folder” with him/her by end-of-day, otherwise I will make every effort to deliver this folder to the school office by 2:30 PM for parent/guardian pick-up.

Electronics and Toys

Electronics and toys are not allowed in school (**cellphones/technology devices must remain off and in backpacks unless permission is granted by the teacher**). If an item becomes a problem, the item will be placed on my desk until the end of the day. If an item becomes a repeated problem, parents/guardians will be asked to pick the item up from the school’s office.



Lunch, Water Bottles, & Snacks

At 12:05, the class will go to the cafeteria to be served lunch (*unless special circumstances force a schedule change*). Students will pick up their lunch trays and eat in the cafeteria. On 3-hour early release days, students will return to the classroom to eat a bag-type lunch.

If your student brings a lunch from home, it needs to be stored in a small box/bag that will remain at their backpack cubby throughout the day for safekeeping. Your student will be responsible for bringing the box/bag home after school each day.

It is recommended students bring their own plastic water bottle (that closes) for use inside our classroom. Since we have carpet and Chromebooks, student water bottles will often remain on the floor next to their desk. Water bottles should be filled before start of school, and can be refilled at a student break. Students will be allowed to bring a **healthy** and **easy-to-eat snack** to be enjoyed at the start of morning recess. Snacks and/or water bottles cannot be shared. Students who abuse their snack and/or water bottle privileges will not be permitted to bring them for a designated amount of time. (*Personal water bottles need to go home nightly for cleaning*).

Birthdays

Please let me know a day in advance, if you plan to bring treats to celebrate your student's birthday. All treats must be easy-to-serve and preferably prepackaged, such as Little Debbie snack cakes; drinks can be single-serve juice boxes or bags (please, no soda or drinks that need to be poured). Those students who have summer birthdays may celebrate on their half-birthday or another day of your choosing.



Please be considerate of students with potential food restrictions or allergies, particularly products with lactose and gluten.

Extra-Curricular Activities



Fifth graders may choose to participate in a variety of school-sponsored activities. Any student interested in playing music is invited to sign up for orchestra class, which meets twice per week during *Specials*. Fifth graders who enjoy reading can participate in Team Read, which is sponsored through the school's library. Coach has information on school sports teams & events; football is often offered in the fall, followed by a basketball season that competes throughout November/December; and Little Olympic tryouts are held each spring. *Lawson also offers running- & cooking-based clubs.*

Please be aware that students displaying unsafe or disrespectful behavior, students that regularly do not complete homework and/or have a failing grade, or students possessing an excessive number of absences/tardies run the risk of dismissal from school-sponsored extra-curricular activities.

2024-2025 5th Grade Handbook Contract

Please read, sign, and return this page during open house or on the first day of school!

Student:

I have read and understand the rules, expectations, consequences, policies, and procedures outlined in the fifth grade handbook. I will honor and abide by these policies while participating in Mrs. Hankins' class.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian(s):

My student and I have read and discussed the rules, expectations, consequences, policies, and procedures outlined in the fifth grade handbook. I understand the policies and will support my student in abiding by them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher:

I will be fair and consistent while administering the rules, expectations, consequences, policies, and procedures involving this fifth grade classroom.

Signature: _____ Date: _____