Northwood Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook **2023/2024**



"Home of the Knights"

Principal: Michelle Zimnisky

9805 24th St E.
Edgewood, WA 98371
253-841-8740
24-Hour Absence Line: 253-864-5202

Welcome to the 2023-24 School Year, Northwood Knight Families!

We are honored to serve and support each one of our families here at Northwood. As a growing community, we look forward to meeting our new families and welcoming back those returning.

This year, we look forward to more in-person events and broadening our net of opportunities for students, families, staff, and community partners to connect with each other and our school.

As in years past, as a community of learners, we will emphasize the importance of being Knights of Integrity in all we do. Please review our mission statement and Coat of Arms, and school-wide expectations with your child.

Our staff is committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive learning environment that engages and empowers all students to be effective problem solvers, advocates for themselves and others, and confident to take on challenges while understanding that mistakes build resilience and are part of learning and growing.

I look forward to a year of actively engaged students and continued partnership with families.

In service and support,

Michelle Zimnisky, Principal

PUYALLUP SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

To prepare and empower every student to reach their full potential and to thrive in school, society, work, and life.

NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY MISSION STATEMENT

We're here to learn,
We're here to grow
To work really hard, so that you'll know
We're Northwood Knights through and through
We do our best, that's what we do!

NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY COAT OF ARMS

NORTHWOOD KNIGHTS ARE:

Honest
Respectful
Responsible

We are people of integrity.



Be here, be you, belong…

PROCEDURE TO REPORT AND ABSENCE/TARDY

- A parent/guardian is to call or email the school office to report a school absence by 9:15 a.m. on the day of the absence.
- Voicemail on the school attendance phone is available 24 hours a day to report an absence. **253-864-5202.** Calls prior to 9:15 a.m. are encouraged and much appreciated.
- A call is needed **EACH DAY** a student is absent.
- For your child's safety, if we have not heard from you, we will call and verify the absence either through Parent Square system or through a call from our office personnel.
- **PLANNED ABSENCE:** Parents who are aware that their student will be absent from school due to non-school related activities, or a parent/guardian request, should complete a ***Planned Absence Form*** which is available in the main office. Please note, **Planned Absence Forms need to be completed by parent/guardian at least two weeks in advance of planned absence.** Planned absences are not guaranteed to be excused. Attendance laws still apply. Please allow at least 24 hours for teachers to prepare materials. Any student excused for a personal planned absence must make up all work missed as determined by his/her teacher.
- Vacations should be taken during school breaks (Summer, Winter & Spring)

Please see attached Planned Absence Information.

ABSENCE

Absences are generally excused if they are for illness, medical/dental appointments-services, bereavement, family emergency with administrator approval, court appearance, or if the student has received an approval by administrator. Planned Absence forms can be picked up in the office. Please note, you need to have the Planned Absence form filled out at least two weeks in advance of planned absence.

After a student has been absent for one day, you may request student assignments through your students' teacher. **Please allow 24 hours for teachers to prepare materials**.

We understand that exceptional circumstances do arise which may impact a child's attendance. Should your family encounter such a situation, please contact your school administrator to discuss the situation.

Regular and prompt attendance cannot be stressed enough. Students who miss 10 or more days of school are at risk of falling behind peers. Thank you for your support in ensuring your child attends school each day, on time, unless too sick to do so. Learning good attendance and punctuality is important and invaluable life skill.

WASHINGTON STATE ATTENDANCE POLICIES:

The Becca Bill requires that children from age 8 to 17 attend a public school, private school, or a district-approved home school program.

- After one (1) unexcused absence within any 30-day period, the parent will be notified by a Robocall.
- After three (3) unexcused absences within a 30-day period a conference will be scheduled with the parent (and student if age appropriate) for the purpose of identifying barriers to the student's regular attendance and provide support and resources to reduce barriers.
- Between two (2) and seven (7) unexcused cumulative absences in a school year, data-informed steps to eliminate or reduce student absences will take place.
- After five (5) excused absences in a 30-day period, or ten (10) or more excused absences in the school year, the school is required to schedule a conference to discuss the barriers to attendance and create a plan to support improved attendance.
- After 20 consecutive days of non-attendance, excused or not excused, the school will withdraw the student.
- No later than seven (7) unexcused absences an agreement will be made with the student and/or parent to establish school attendance requirements.
- Interventions consistent with the Assessment will be implemented.
- Community Engagement Boards are district level interventions that may be referred to.
- At seven (7) unexcused absences in a 30-day period or fifteen (15) unexcused absences in an academic school year, and if the above actions have been taken and are not successful, the district will file a Truancy Petition with the Pierce County Juvenile Court alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010 by the parent, student or both parent and student.

Teacher_____

PUYALLUP SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Tradition of Excellence

ELEMENTARY PLANNED ABSENCE FORM

Form to be completed by parent/guardian at least two weeks in advance of planned absence

Did You Know?

- Daily attendance is one of the most powerful predictors of school success and on-time graduation.
- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences (excused and unexcused) can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 18 days a year increases the chance that your student will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
- Absences can adversely affect student's grades.

What We Need From You:

- Please complete this form at least two weeks prior to the absence(s). This allows us adequate time to create a plan to minimize the adverse effects the absence(s) may have to your student's educational progress.
- Please assist your student in completing any missing assignments prior to leaving or upon return.
- Please follow, and assist your student in following, the plan outlined in this form.

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Current Date: _____

My child will be missing school for the following reason(s): _____

My child will be absent on the following date(s): _____Number of missed school days_____

Parent Signature: _____

.....

To be completed by the school:

CURRENT ATTENDANCE- Student has missed _____out of_____school days this school year

PLAN: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature of Teacher: _____**Date:**_____

Signature of Administrator: _____**Date:**_____

Distribution of copies: Principal Teacher Parent

Rev. 4/2020

Late Arrivals:

Being late causes students to miss important start of the day routines and instruction. Parents are encouraged to schedule their child's appointment during NON-SCHOOL HOURS or during Monday late arrival times. Students who arrive at school late for any reason must report to the office and receive a tardy pass to class.

Early Release from School:

If your child needs to be released early from school, call, email or send a note to the office the morning of letting us know the reason and what time you will be here to pick your child up. This allows the student and teacher to be prepared with all supplies and homework your child will need so that your departure will not be delayed. ***Please do not call us and ask to have your child waiting in the office when you get here. As a part of our school safety procedures, we only release students after you have arrived with identification and signed them out.***

If necessity requires your child to leave during the school day, please come to the school office to sign your child out. If you are sending someone else to pick up your child, please send a note or call the office with the person's name and make sure they have their ID. If possible, please schedule appointments before or after school. When students leave for appointments, they are missing valuable learning time.

CHANGES IN TYPICAL DISMISSAL

For the safety of your child, any changes in your typical going home procedure need to be sent in writing and/or email in the morning to ensure the change can be communicated and followed. Change requests after 2:00 p.m. can unintentionally be overlooked or miscommunicated, teachers and students are busy with instruction, homework, and end of day procedures. Please call before 2:00 p.m. for any unexpected changes.

The District uses **Parent Square** to make mass calls in a timely manner to notify families of school delays or closures due to snow or icy roads. Calls typically go out early in the morning. Information can be found on the school district website or watch KOMO, KING or KIRO on TV**. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE.** For **Parent Square** to work, our school office needs your current home phone number and email address at all times. Please let us know if your phone number or email address changes so that we can update the system.

ILLNESS

According to the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department, students should stay home if they have:

- A fever: Temperature over 100.4 degrees F. along with behavior changes or other signs and symptoms of illness such as sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, or irritability.

- Please check with the school prior to returning if your child has had any of these symptoms: Pinkeye, rash, ringworm, chickenpox, whooping cough, strep throat, or COVID.

- Temperatures must be less than 100.4 degrees without fever reducer for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

ACCIDENTS

If a student is ill/injured during the school day the nurse will assess and treat the student with first aid. Guardians will be called if the nurse deems necessary. In case of emergency, guardians will be called. If the guardian cannot be reached, the "emergency contact person will be called. ***(It is extremely critical to let the office personnel know immediately if your contact information changes).*** If a student needs to go home, they will stay in the health room until picked up.

TAKING MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

Washington State Statute (RCW 28A.210260) defines the parameters for giving medication in the public schools. In conjunction with this law, Puyallup School District Policy requires a form (see following page) to be filled out and signed by a physician and the child's parent/guardian if a child is to take either prescribed or over-the-counter medication (including inhalers, Tylenol, aspirin, decongestants, or antihistamines, cough drops) at school. Medication cannot be given to a student until both the parent and physician sections of the form are completed and signed. Medication MUST be in the original container with the child's name and instructions written clearly on the container. Any change of dosage during the period of requested administration must be in writing from both parent and the physician. ********Controlled medication must be brought to school and picked up by an adult.**

TRANSPORTATION

Students who ride the bus are required to be at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to the stop time. Bus stop times can be found on the district website www.puyallupsd.org. Please click on departments/transportation.

Kindergarten students are transported on regular bus runs. If a kindergartener is the only student assigned to a stop and not parent is present, the bus driver will return the kindergartener to school, **unless** the parent notifies the Transportation Department in writing (email acceptable) to release student by themselves. If a kindergartener is assigned to a stop with other students, parents must notify the Transportation Department in writing (email acceptable) to release student by themselves.

BUS ZONE – PICKING UP STUDENTS AND PARKING IN BUS LOADING ZONE IS PROHIBITED

We realize that our front parking lot is extremely crowded during drop-off and dismissal times. We ask that you do not park or drive in the bus lane during drop-off and pick-up times, as our buses must use this area.

PICK UP/DROP OFF PROCEDURES

PICK UP/DROP OFF: Families must stay in their cars for drop off AND pick up if using the pick-up lane. Students should enter and exit passenger side. If your child needs assistance loading or unloading, please park.

Morning Drop Off - When dropping off students in the morning, please **pull all the way forward**. You can use the inside loop for drop-off as well. This allows for the maximum number of cars to drop off students and speed up the process. Students need to be ready to get out of the car in a timely manner. Students must cross at designated crosswalks where an adult is present with a flag.

Afternoon Pick Up – For the safety of all, we ask that parents not queue for pick up prior to 3:30. Families will drive up and stay in their cars. Color coded signs provided by your child's teacher must be visible in the vehicle window to speed loading. Students will load into cars immediately. Please pull as far forward as possible. Once space is created from cars as far front of you, as possible, please pull up to allow more cars to pull forward to speed up the process. Make sure your child knows which vehicle (color, make) to look for.

For the safety of all, please drive **SLOW**. Little ones are hard to see and move quickly, so please drive with caution and avoid speeding.

Adults may walk their students to and from the building, if they park in a designated space, and use the crosswalk areas. We would still like to emphasize the importance of minimizing traffic by having students ride the bus, but we also understand special circumstances.

COMMUNICATION

Please keep us informed of any changes in your family life that may affect your student. Feel free to call and make an appointment to talk to or visit with the classroom teacher, counselor, or principal. Open communication is highly encouraged at our school!

Make sure to regularly update your emergency phone numbers, parent work numbers, cell phone numbers, and emergency contact lists. Many times, phone numbers change and we are unable to reach a parent or emergency contact during an emergency because of this.

CHILD CUSTODY

For all custody issues, the school MUST HAVE ON FILE an official Court Order with current dates and an official Court Seal. Board Policy 3126 addresses in further detail issues regarding child custody and may be found on the Puyallup School District's website at www.puyallupsd.org. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with updated paperwork.

CONFERENCING

There are two semesters in the academic school year. These periods end in January and June. Student conferences are scheduled for all students in October and again in March by request. Parents, of course, may request a conference with their child's teacher at any time throughout the school year. Likewise, teachers may request a conference whenever they feel it is in the child's best interest to do so. We urge parents to call or email the teacher for an appointment or to send a note anytime there are concerns.

HOT LUNCH PURCHASES

A nutritious and well-balanced hot lunch is served each day. Students may purchase units of credit (1 credit = 1 lunch), preferably in units of 5 (such as 5, 10, 15, etc.) The cost for a single credit (lunch + beverage) is listed on the district website at www.puyallupsd.org.

EZMealAPP.com online service provides families quicker access, clearer instruction, and reduces processing time for those needing to obtain free/reduced price meal benefits. The online EZMealApp.com application is available in multiple languages and can be accessed at any time of the day or night. The online application process walks parents through a quick step by step application process, prompting them for the necessary information. All personal information is encrypted and secured via PCA compliant software. The application process also provides parent/guardians with an option to set up a free email address (if one is not currently set-up), in order to facilitate a faster notification back to parents/guardians once their application has been processed.

EZSchoolPay.com is the same web site used for payments into student meal accounts. You can access
payment options for student fees with the same email and password.

HOT LUNCH – NO BORROWING OF LUNCH MONEY OR CREDITS

RECESS

All students will be required to go outside during recess periods unless there are severe weather conditions. Regular rain is not considered a severe condition. Since we live in the Pacific Northwest and frequently have unpredictable weather, it is important that parents provide clothing and instructions to their child for the outdoor periods. If it is mandatory that a child stay in, **a note from a physician is required**. You may send extra clothes in your child's backpack if you feel they may need warmer/cooler clothing. Recess equipment is provided by the school. Items brought from home will be taken away if they are brought out at recess or during classroom time. ***Parents may pick the items up at school at their convenience if deemed appropriate to do so by the principal.*** **Students are expected to follow rules and directions to assure student safety on the playground.**

ITEMS BROUGT FROM HOME

No toys of any kind, including balls, bats, or electronic equipment of any kind, are to be brought to school, unless given directions by teacher for special events.

PARENTS VISITING SCHOOL

Parents are welcome and are encouraged to visit school when arrangements have been made with your child's teacher. If you wish to conference with a teacher or visit a classroom, please email your child's teacher to set up an appointment. School Board Policy 1240 requires that prior arrangements be made. **For student safety, all visitors and parents are required to sign in at the school office and wear a visitor badge while in the school.** Staff members are required to report all visitors that do not have the badges to administration, and immediate security measures will be taken. Please note that all Puyallup schools are closed campuses. When visiting Northwood, we ask that guest not remain idle in their vehicles. Lottering is prohibited. This is to ensure safety for all.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Our PTA invites all families to join our organization and to become active members in our school community. Look for membership information and events on their website at Northwoodpta.memberplanet.com or email them at thenorthwoodpta@gmail.com

GUM POLICY

Gum chewing at Northwood is not allowed. This is Northwood's and the Puyallup School District's policy. Gum chewing cause undue hardship for the maintenance staff and is unsanitary when gum is disposed of improperly. Gum chewing is forbidden on district buses.

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

The policy at Northwood Elementary School regarding distribution of birthday invitations is that unless the whole class is being invited, then we do **NOT** allow invitations to be sent home via students.

TELEPHONE USE, CELL PHONE & SMART WATCH INFORMATION

Limited use of office and classroom phones is available. With the teacher's permission, students may be allowed to use the classroom phone to call home if they have forgotten lunch money, instruments, or other necessary items. If a student uses a phone without adult permission, there may be disciplinary consequences.

Northwood will adhere to all Puyallup School District cell phone permission requirements. The rules are as follows:
Cell phones, Smart watches, and **all** personal electronic devices should be turned off during school hours. However, the school also recognizes that cell phones are used for safety issues/communications both before and after school hours.

1. Cell phone's and Smart watches can be on before and after school or while waiting to be picked up.
2. **Cell phone's & Smart watches should be turned off and not used during school hours. All communication between the student and the parent occurs through the school telephones via the classroom and/or the office.**
3. The student is to keep the cell phone & Smart watches in their backpack throughout the school day. There should be no reason for the student to have the cell phone or Smart watch on them during the school day.

The understanding is that the permission to have a cell phone and Smart watch at school is granted provided that the above guidelines are respected and followed and appropriate digital citizenship is followed.

Students are not to use technology devices including, but not limited to, cameras, cell phones, portable entertainment devices in a manner that disrupts the educational process, invades the privacy of others, or violates school rules. Also, refer to the section in the Puyallup School Districts Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying.

Personal devices used inappropriately or without permission may be confiscated.

TELEPHONE CALLS TO TEACHERS

If it is necessary to call a teacher, you may leave a message for them at the main office of the school by calling 253-841-8740. Class time is not interrupted for phone calls to teachers. Teachers are available for one-half hour before and after school each day if you need to contact them via phone. **A good alternate to phoning them is to e-mail them. Northwood link at https://nor.puyallupsd.org/**

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

- No clothing with words, depictions or themes related to alcohol, tobacco, drug use, violence, weapons, or gang affiliations including bandanas or colors that create real or foreseeable disruption of the educational process.
- No sexually oriented text, themes, or depictions.
- Clothing and/or accessory styles that create conflict or an atmosphere of intimidation are prohibited, some examples include flags worn as capes, jewelry with concealed weapons, and/or ammunition.
- Clothing styles that are excessively revealing, creating a substantial disruption to the educational process are not allowed.
- All students must wear shoes.
- Shoes at Elementary: For safety reasons flip-flops, slippers and shoes with wheels "wheelies" are not allowed; sandals providing adequate support may be worn.
- Sunglasses must not be worn inside unless for medical reasons.
- Hats at Elementary: No hats may be worn in the building during school hours, except as authorized by building administration; such items must be stored in backpacks or cubbies once a student arrives on campus.
- No hoods pulled up over head are allowed inside.
- Face paint's prohibited.

LOST & FOUND

Please mark your child's clothing and lunch boxes with their name. All unmarked clothing, lunch boxes, and other personal items found at school are taken to the Lost & Found. All small items such as keys, glasses and jewelry are kept in the office. Unclaimed clothing will be donated throughout the year. Reminders of these dates will go home in the Northwood News. Please check the Lost & Found and the office for lost items as soon as possible. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Northwood Coat of Arms	I will be safe.	I will respectful and honest.	I will be responsible.
Bus	• Look to the bus driver before crossing the street. • Remain seated • Keep my hands, feet and objects to myself.	• Follow adult directions the first time they are given. • Use a quiet voice. • Wait my turn. • Respond honestly when asked a question.	• Eat or drink later, not on the bus. • Walk straight to my destination. • Make alternative arrangements for after school the day before the change is needed. • Accept responsibility for my actions, both good and bad.
Hallway	• Walk, facing forward in line. • Stay to the right. • Keeping my hand, feet and objects to myself.	• Walk quietly in own space. • Respect the property of others. • Follow adult directions the first time given • Stay in line. • Respond honestly when asked a question.	• Go straight to my destination. • Carry a hall pass if not with an adult. • Accept responsibility for my actions, both good and bad.
Lunch in Classroom	• Only eat my food. • Remain seated. • Keep my hand, feet and objects to myself.	• Use a quiet voice. • Follow adult directions the first time they are given. • Help clean up. • Respond honestly when asked a question.	• Eat your lunch appropriately. • Accept responsibility for my actions, both good and bad.
Classroom	• Keep my hands, feet and objects to myself. • Use materials and furniture safely. • Use materials and furniture for their intended purpose.	• Follow adult directions the first time they are given. • Honor others' space • Be positive and encourage others. • Respond honestly when asked a question.	• Ask for help when needed. • Complete quality work on time • Take care of the materials • Accept responsibility for my actions, both good and bad.
Restroom	• Use soap to wash hands • Keep bathroom area clean and dry. • Keep hands, feet and objects to myself.	• Use a quiet voice • Wait my turn • Follow adult directions the first time they are given. • Respond honestly when asked a question.	• Use bathroom materials and equipment for their purpose • Report any problems to an adult • Go, flush, wash, leave • Accept responsibility for my actions, both good and bad.
Playground	• Use equipment safely and take turns. • Keep my hands, feet, and objects to myself • Walk to the playshed when the bells rings.	• Follow adult directions the first time they are given. • Honor others' space • Use acceptable language • Include others • Solve problems appropriately • Respond honestly when asked a question	• Keeping my hands to myself. • Playing well with other students.