



**2024-2025**  
**ELEMENTARY PARENT**  
**HANDBOOK**

**NORTHERN YORK COUNTY SCHOOL**  
**DISTRICT**  
**DILLSBURG ♦ NORTHERN**  
**SOUTH MOUNTAIN ♦ WELLSVILLE**

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## NYCSD MISSION STATEMENT

Intellectually Prepared,  
Civically Engaged,  
Personally Responsible

## FOREWORD

This information booklet has been prepared to assist parents of school children with the policies and procedures of the Northern York County School District's Elementary Schools. Home and school should work together for the child's welfare. We shall do everything in our power to help your child develop fully and happily. In turn, we need and welcome your cooperation. When in doubt about any school policy or practice, please confer with the school officials. Read this information booklet carefully and keep it for future reference concerning your schools. Any parents wishing to discuss problems should contact the teacher first and then the Building Principal.

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Steve Kirkpatrick ..... Superintendent  
Dr. Matthew Meakin .....Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Matt LaBuda ..... Assistant to the Superintendent  
Mr. Jason Young ..... Chief Financial and Operations Officer  
Mr. Matt Johnson..... Director of Buildings/Grounds  
Mr. David Borrell ..... Director of Student Services  
Ms. Rhonda McMullen ..... Assistant Director of Student Services  
Mrs. Suzanne Sentman ..... Director of Human Resources  
Mr. Scott Shedlock ..... Director of Food Services  
Mr. Matthew Sullivan..... Technology Director

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Zachary Kile..... President  
Mr. Greg Hlatky ..... Vice President  
Mr. Steve Becker ..... Member  
Mr. John Gunning .....Member  
Mrs. Alyssa Eichelberger..... Member  
Mr. Joe Rudy ..... Member  
Mr. Paul Miller ..... Member  
Mr. Gerald Schwille ..... Member  
Mr. Gregory Weir ..... Member  
Mr. Steve Kirkpatrick ..... Superintendent (Nonmember)  
Mrs. Maureen Ross ..... Secretary (Nonmember)  
Mr. Jason Young ..... Treasurer (Nonmember)  
Mrs. Brooke Say ..... Solicitor (Nonmember)

**NORTHERN YORK COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

**DILLSBURG ELEMENTARY**  
202 South Chestnut Street  
Dillsburg, PA 17019  
Telephone 717- 432-8691 (Ext. 1400)

Mrs. Lyndsey Quintana, Principal  
Mrs. Tina Welker, Secretary

**NORTHERN ELEMENTARY**  
657 South Baltimore Street  
Dillsburg, PA 17019  
Telephone 717- 432-8691 (Ext. 1500)

Ms. Joyce Cal, Principal  
Mrs. Cindy Gayman, Secretary

**SOUTH MOUNTAIN ELEMENTARY**  
711 South Mountain Road  
Dillsburg, PA 17019  
Telephone 717-432-8691 (Ext. 1700)

Mrs. Kristi Janosco, Principal  
Mrs. Amber Shearer, Secretary

**WELLSVILLE ELEMENTARY**  
1060 Zeigler Road  
Wellsville, PA 17365-9764  
Telephone 432-8691 (Ext. 1600)

Mrs. Melinda Vazquez, Principal  
Mrs. Jennifer Bechtel, Secretary

## HOURS OF OPERATION

<b>School Hours</b>	
<b>Grade K – 5</b>	9:00 AM - 3:40 PM
Children should <b>not</b> arrive at school <b>before</b> 8:45 a.m.	

<b>Early Dismissal Schedule</b>	
ALL Elementary Schools	<b>Dismissed at 12:00 PM</b>

<b>Two Hour Delay</b>	
ALL Elementary Schools	<b>11:00 AM Start of School</b>

## **ANIMALS ON CAMPUS (Policy #904.1)**

Per School Board Policy 904.1, dogs, other than trained guide or therapy animals, are not permitted on school property while school is in session, unless approved by the school principal. This would be during the hours of 8:45 - 4:00 at the elementary level. Parents walking to drop off and pick up their student to/from school **may not** bring dogs onto the property.

## **ANNUAL NOTICES**

### **ANNUAL NOTICE/PUBLICATION OF POLICES AND GUIDELINES**

The Northern York County School District, in accordance with Article V Section 510.2 of the Pennsylvania School Code, posts its policies and guidelines annually on its publicly accessible internet website. The policies can be viewed at <https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/nyor/Board.nsf/Public> and the annual notice can be viewed at [www.northernpolarbears.com](http://www.northernpolarbears.com).

### **ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF FERPA RIGHTS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides parents the right to inspect and review their child's education records, the right to seek to amend or supplement the records, and the right to deny the release of directory information. For more information, parents should visit the "For Parents" tab on our district website, choose the "Annual Notifications" option, and then click on the "FERPA" link.

- a. Annual FERPA Notice  
<https://www.northernpolarbears.com/Page/14536>
- b. Parent request for school not to disclose directory information  
<https://www.northernpolarbears.com/domain/61>

### **ATTENDANCE: ABSENCE AND TRUANCY (Policy #204)**

Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in district schools during the days and hours that school is in session. Regular attendance is necessary to ensure the continuity of the educational process, and to ensure that students are able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them.

**Excused absences** result from illnesses, family emergencies, recovery from accident, death in family, prearranged medical appointments, authorized school activities, participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countrywide group, observance of a religious holiday observed by a bona fide religious group and approved prearranged travel. District policy states that parent excuses will be accepted with limitations; the cumulative limit of parental excuses is 10 days per school year. **Any absence beyond ten (10) cumulative parent excused days will require an excuse from a licensed physician.** Students will be required to complete any/all work missed, due to absences, at the instructor's discretion. Absences may be marked unexcused if they do not comply with these guidelines.

**Prearranged absences** for the purposes of accompanying parents on educational trips are permitted, upon receipt of a written request from parents. These forms are available on the school's website.

Forms should be submitted to the school for teacher and principal's approval at least one (1) week prior to the trip. Students are permitted to take two (2) prearranged absences per school year, not to exceed a total of ten (10) school days. Trips may not be taken during the first two (2) weeks of the school term, during the last two (2) weeks of the school term, or during any state assessment window. The principal may grant special permission for trips not in compliance with these dates.

**Unexcused absences** result from an absence from school with parent's consent, for reasons other than those considered excusable (noted above) and/or leaving school during school hours without office permission. Additionally, an absence shall be treated as unexcused until the school receives an acceptable written excuse explaining the absence. This must be submitted within three (3) days of the student's return to school.

**Note:** The unexcused absence will become unlawful for students of compulsory age if an acceptable written excuse is not provided within three (3) days of the student's return to school.

**All written excuses for absences (medical and/or parent excuses) must be forwarded to the secretary responsible for attendance.**

- Three (3) unlawful absences will result in a certified first notice letter.
- Four (4) unlawful absences will result in a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP).



- A student with six (6) or more days of unlawful absence during a school year is considered Habitually Truant and may result in a referral to County Children and Youth Services as well as parents/guardians and/or student prosecution under the Compulsory Attendance Laws of Pennsylvania School Code.

It is important to note, a student may not participate in after school or evening activities unless he/she is in school the day of the activity. This restriction may be waived by the building principal due to extenuating circumstances.

**Excuse Blanks For Absences:** An excuse book with twenty (20) excuses may be provided for each child. If parents wish to use a district provided excuse blank, please contact the office of your child’s school for a new booklet. **Note:** All schools will accept written excuse notes other than the district excuse blank. This can be via an email with the scanned excuse (parent, doctor or otherwise) to the specific building office:

- Dillsburg Elementary – [desoffice@northernvork.org](mailto:desoffice@northernvork.org)
- Northern Elementary – [nesoffice@northernvork.org](mailto:nesoffice@northernvork.org)
- South Mountain Elementary – [smeoffice@northernvork.org](mailto:smeoffice@northernvork.org)
- Wellsville Elementary – [wesoffice@northernvork.org](mailto:wesoffice@northernvork.org)

**Tardiness** results from any unexcused lateness to school. The following time schedule will be used to record absences:

- Elementary Schools**
- 9:00 am - 10:00 am Tardy
- 10:01 am - 12:15 pm 1/2-day absence
- 12:16 pm - 3:40 pm 1 day absence

**Early dismissal from school**, in the case of emergencies and with parental permission, will be recorded in the following manner:

- up to 1 hour - no charge
- 1 hr. to 3 hrs. 15 minutes - 1/2-day absence
- 3 hrs. 16 minutes and beyond - 1 day absence

To validate the early dismissal for medical appointments (doctor, dentist, etc.), a medical excuse (appointment card) must accompany the student upon return to school, within three (3) days of the student’s return to school.

**Reminder:** Any absence beyond ten (10) cumulative parent excused days will require an excuse from a licensed physician.

## **ATTENDANCE HOTLINE**

An absentee verification program is in effect for the school district. Parents have the option of sending an email to the school office, communicating the child's absence and reason for absence or parents may call the school office before 9:00 a.m. whenever students are absent:

Dillsburg Elementary – 432-8691 ext. 5554  
Northern Elementary – 432-8691 ext. 5555  
South Mountain Elementary – 432-8691 ext. 5557  
Wellsville Elementary – 432-8691 ext. 5556

The telephone call does not eliminate the need for a written excuse upon return to school. Students should submit an excuse upon their return to school. This may be done via an email attachment, fax from provider, or written excuse via backpack mail.

## **BUILDING SECURITY**

The School Board recognizes the need to maintain security of school facilities for reasons of vandalism and theft. Toward this end, the Superintendent with the cooperation of individual building principals shall administer a program of building security. In addition to security procedures, Section 707 of the District Policy Manual provides guidelines for use of facilities by the faculty and public.

## **BUILDING SECURITY- VISITORS**

Our District has prioritized the implementation of SchoolGate Guardian, a web-based system that checks visitors into our buildings via the use of a driver's license or another form of valid picture ID. It is important to note that this system immediately cross-checks individuals with the offenders listed under Megan's Law, thereby ensuring that persons with such records are prevented from entering our schools.

Parents and visitors are expected to have a license and/or photo ID for each school visit.

## **BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING (Policy #249)**

The Northern York County School District will not tolerate actions by students, which could fall under the classification of bullying, intimidation, or extortion. Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting, and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

- Substantial interference with a student's education
- Creation of a threatening environment
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in school policy, includes cyberbullying.

Students who have been bullied should promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee. Complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

The highest level of discipline could be imposed if the misbehavior were of a persistent nature or if a single incident were sufficiently serious.

Incidents of bullying may be reported on the district's "See Something...Say Something" website at [www.northernpolarbears.com](http://www.northernpolarbears.com).

## **CARE OF SCHOOL BOOKS, TECHNOLOGY, AND PROPERTY**

Curricular texts, as well as other school supplies are furnished by the school district for students to use. Pupils are responsible for the loss or damage of both books and school property. When books are lost, report the fact to the teacher immediately, pay for the book and secure another. If the lost book is later found, the money will be refunded upon return of the second book.

The deliberate destruction or defacing of school property is a serious and punishable offense. Students should not, at any time, write on desktops or walls.

The school and staff are not responsible for the personal property of students.

**Items of value should not be brought to school.**

Students will be provided with an iPad in grades K-2 and a Chromebook in grades 3-5. Accidental Protection Insurance is available and will cover two repairs per school year. If other repairs are needed after these two repairs, the student will be charged for those repairs or replacement. Insurance does not cover lost devices.

Accidental Protection Insurance Rates and the purchase of Bluetooth headsets will be communicated through the Sapphire Community Portal. Parents/Guardians should reference this portal information in the first week of school.

### **CHANGES IN BUS ROUTES**

The School Board policy requires that prior to the beginning of the fall school term, the Transportation Department establish bus routes for transportation of pupils on roads that are safe and in condition for bus service. Adjustments to established routes will be considered by the School Board when distance requirements of the School Code deem it necessary. During the school term, bus routes will only be changed with the occurrence of either a shift in population or a change in road conditions. Students are not permitted to ride a different bus to or from school unless an emergency arises.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT BELIEF STATEMENT**

The School Board shall establish fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory rules and regulations regarding the conduct of all students in the school district during the time they are under the supervision of the school or at any time while on school property, while present at school-sponsored activities, and while traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities. The Board shall adopt a Student Code of Conduct to govern student discipline, and students shall not be subject to disciplinary action because of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or handicap/disability. Each student must adhere to Board policies and the Student Code of Conduct governing student discipline.

## **CONDUCT OF CHILDREN TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

Instruct your child never to converse with a stranger, never accept a gift from a stranger, never to get into an automobile with a stranger.

1. Children must proceed directly to and from school. If a deviation is necessary (such as a parent or another adult picking up a child), a note should be sent to the teacher/school explaining the change.
2. Conduct to/from school must be such that it will not reflect adversely on school or home.
3. Parents of Kindergarten students MUST have an adult present at the bus stop for pick up and drop off.
4. Grade 1 students must have a note from parent/guardian before release without an adult present at the stop is permitted.

## **CONFERENCES: STUDENT PROGRESS**

In addition to the biyearly parent teacher conference, parents wishing to speak with teachers about their child's progress may arrange for a conference with the teacher, either directly or through the elementary school office. Staff may be contacted via email or by phone-call.

## **CYCLE DAY SCHEDULE**

All the elementary schools are on a six (6) day cycle. In the event of school cancellation, please check the school website for any updates or changes to the cycle days.

## **DEVICES (Policy 237)**

Per School Board Policy 237, all personal communication devices can only be used in designated areas for instructional related activities with the permission of the classroom teacher or school official. Otherwise, all personal devices need to be turned off and kept out of sight. Smartwatches may be worn during the day but may not be used to call, text, take photos or record.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The District Student Code of Conduct is on the District and Building websites and will be used in all disciplinary actions.

Student conduct is closely related to learning. An effective educational program requires a safe and orderly school environment, which includes during the time students are under the supervision of the school or at any time while on school property, while present at school-sponsored activities, and while traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities. The discipline of students by District staff shall be fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory.

Discipline should, at a minimum, have three objectives in mind:

- Preserve the optimum environment in which to deliver educational services.
- Respond to disruptive influences with corrective measures in a firm and consistent manner while attempting to correct deviate behavior and keep disrupters in school.
- Remove, as a last resort, the disrupters from the educational environment so that the majority may pursue their educational goals.

There are many behaviors that could be deemed inappropriate dependent upon the circumstance, age or grade level of the child, or the location or environment in which the behavior is exhibited.

Consequences to inappropriate behavior shall be issued in accordance with board policy, the school's student handbook, and judgment of the staff member responsible for issuing consequences.

Progressive discipline shall be used when appropriate, however the frequency and severity of the offense may require deviation from the progressive discipline model outlined below. This list of consequences is not an exhaustive list.

### **Progressive Discipline Model:**

- Verbal reprimand
- Parental contact
- Restriction of privileges / loss of recess
- Behavioral contract
- Temporary withdrawal of privileges
- Lunch detention

**Progressive Discipline Model cont.**

- After school detention
- Total loss of privileges, such as special events; e.g. Field Day
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Alternative Education
- Expulsion

**DRESS – STUDENT (Policy #221)**

Students at the Northern York County School District will dress in a neat, clean manner. School clothing must fit well and be appropriate for school activities. Extremes in clothing will be discouraged. **Discretion may be used based upon student age level and specific circumstances.**

## Administrative Interpretation:

- Transparent or immodest clothing, any indecent exposure will not be permitted. This includes but is not limited to the exposure of the midriff and/or undergarments and any other garment/clothing deemed inappropriate.
- Skirts, dresses, and shorts must be of an appropriate length (generally, mid-thigh or longer is considered appropriate).
- No hats, baseball caps, sunglasses, visors, bandanas, or head coverings of any type or kind may be worn without administrative approval. Refusal to comply will result in confiscation of the item.
- A form of foot apparel must be worn at all times with standard styles of shoes recommended. Students are discouraged from wearing flip-flops and beach/pool footwear. Footwear with wheels are not permitted due to safety concerns.
- Any clothing that presents a safety hazard or interferes with the educational process will not be permitted. Certain areas of the school program, such as technology education and physical education, have enforced special clothing regulations.
- Clothing or other personal belongings displaying slogans/pictures which suggest the use of tobacco, weapons, alcohol, drugs, obscene language, sexual innuendos, gang-related behavior, lewd or illegal behavior or are derogatory to any racial, religious, disabled, age, gender or ethnic group are not permitted.

- Clothing with ornamentation that will scratch or mark furniture or presents possible danger of injury to the wearer or others (fishhooks, chains, spiked wristbands, studded bracelets, or extra length belts) will not be considered acceptable in school.

Students dressed in a manner considered inappropriate for the school setting may be sent to the nurse for a change of clothes.

### **EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION**

The transporting of students to and from school is a large responsibility for the school district. In order to resolve potential problems, we are providing the following information:

1. Whenever a problem occurs, the school district should be notified at 717-432-8691, ext. 1106.
2. The school district phones are answered during the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. with voicemail availability. This should allow an individual the opportunity to call regarding bus problems.
3. If school is canceled, delayed, or dismissed early, the following modes of communication are used:
  - NYCSD Twitter
  - NYCSD phone call and/or email
  - Local TV stations

### **ENCORE CLASSES**

Specialists in art, discovery lab, health, library, music, and physical education conduct classes on a six-day cycle. All programs are designed to develop aesthetic appreciation in the child while providing an atmosphere for creative development.

- Starting in fourth grade, children may choose to study an instrument in preparation for band or orchestra. The instrumental music instructor teaches individual lessons.
- Starting in fifth grade, students also have the option to join chorus.



## HEALTH INFORMATION

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (Policy #203)

Pennsylvania laws concerning communicable diseases and the **number of days before a child may return to school include:**

**Respiratory Streptococcal Infection**, which includes strep throat, scarlet fever, and scarlatina = Return permitted following 12 hours from initial dose of antibiotic.

**Chicken Pox** = Return permitted after crusts are formed on all vesicles (sores). A doctor's certificate is not necessary for chicken pox.

A doctor's certificate or a telephone call to the school nurse, along with the appropriate medical treatment, is **required before a child will be readmitted to school after the following:**

Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	Ringworm
Impetigo (crusty sores)	Scabies (itch)

**Head Lice (Pediculosis Capitis)** If a student has head lice, their parent (or a person chosen by the parent) will be asked to come to the school. The parent will be shown the live lice (if possible) and nits; and told how to treat the condition. They will be advised to contact a doctor or pharmacist to get the recommended treatment product. After treatment, the parent or a designated adult should transport the child to the school nurse to check for any remaining live lice. If none are found, the student can return to school. The school nurse will check the student again in 10 days. School nurses will provide the necessary information and instructions to help the family quickly get the student back to school.

### HEALTH SCREENINGS (Policy #209)

Students entering school for the first time in either Kindergarten or Grade One (1) are required to have a medical and dental exam prior to, or during, the first year of school.

Pupils in the kindergarten and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are required to have a dental exam. All students will have their height, weight, and vision checked each year. Students in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, and 3 will be given a hearing screening.

As part of the yearly school health growth-screening program, a Body Mass Index (BMI) for Age percentile will be calculated. This may be used as a guideline to help assess whether an individual may be overweight or

underweight. The BMI is posted to the student's Sapphire portal, or if requested, sent home with the student's report card.

### **SERIOUS INJURY/ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

Each school attempts to provide a safe and healthy environment for their students. However, if a serious accident or illness occurs, first aid will be administered and if warranted, 911 will be called. The parent will be notified, but if the parent is not reachable, one of the emergency contacts listed in the student's Sapphire portal will be called.

The school personnel will give no care beyond first aid, defined as the immediate temporary care given in case of accident or sudden illness. The school cannot assume responsibility of injuries that did not occur at school. Parents are requested to refrain from asking school personnel to treat such injuries. Parents are encouraged to take out the School Accident Insurance that covers accident expenses of private physicians and hospitals. The school is not responsible for physicians' fees or other charges connected with follow up treatment of injuries sustained.

### **FEVER, VOMITING AND DIARRHEA GUIDELINES**

If your child has been running a fever of 100 degrees or over, he/she should not attend school. Healthcare professionals recommend that your child be fever-free for at least 24 hours (**without the use of medications like Tylenol or Advil**) before returning to school. If your child has had antibiotics administered, the student must have received a minimum of 12 hours' worth of antibiotics and be fever-free before returning to school. Please notify the school if your child is ill at home.

Absences should be reported to the Attendance Hotline by calling 717-432-8691 and accessing your child's school extension as follows:

Dillsburg Elem: x 5554

Northern Elem: x 5555

South Mountain Elem: x 5557

Wellsville Elem: x 5556

### **IMMUNIZATIONS (Policy #203)**

The PA Department of Health regulations require that all students entering school be properly immunized.

#### Pennsylvania School Immunization Requirements

Children in ALL grades (KG – 12) need the following immunizations for school attendance:

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis\*  
(1 dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, and rubella\*\*
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

\*Usually given as DTaP or DTP or DT or Td

\*\*Usually given as MMR

On the first day of school, unless a child has a medical or religious/philosophical exemption, the child must have at least one dose of the above vaccinations or they cannot begin school.

If a child is missing medically appropriate *next* immunizations in a series, they must be received within the first five days of school or risk exclusion.

### **MEDICATION POLICY (Policy #210)**

All medication to be given at school, both prescription and over the counter, require the following:

- A medication order form signed by parent/guardian requesting that the medication be given at school and signed by the ordering physician, or a written prescription completed by your physician requesting that the medication be given at school may be attached to the medication order form signed by the parent/guardian.
- The medication in its properly labeled prescription bottle with only enough medication for school use. In the event that parent has only one prescription bottle, please ask the pharmacist to provide a second prescription bottle with proper labeling to be used at school.
- The medication (including over-the counter medications) must be brought to school by a parent/guardian, or a responsible adult designated by the parent. Medications should be handed directly to the nurse. Please do not leave medications on a desk or counter. All medications must be counted and signed for by the adult delivering the medication and by the school nurse.

With yearly written permission from the parent/guardian, a student may be given the following if necessary:

- Generic Advil (ibuprofen)
- Generic Tylenol (acetaminophen)
- Generic Halls (cough drops)
- Generic Tums (antacid)
- Generic Benadryl (antihistamine)
- Generic Caladryl (anti-itch lotion)
- Generic antibiotic cream for skin
- Generic Bee Sting Relief (skin anesthetic)

Consent for administering the medications above **is required each year**.

Consent will be done by completing the **Medical Verification Form** in the Sapphire Parent (on-line) Account. Your cooperation in complying with these requests will help us to provide a safe and uninterrupted medication regimen for your child.

#### **POSSESSION AND USE OF SUNSCREEN (AG #210.2)**

Pennsylvania school code allows for the use of non-aerosol topical sunscreen by students in school if

- a. The product is approved by the Food & Drug Administration,
- b. The parent/guardian has submitted the District form allowing the student to use the topical sunscreen, and
- c. The student has submitted the District form stating that they are aware of the proper use and safety precautions of the product and will handle it appropriately.

*Permission Forms are available on the District website (Health Services).*

#### **STUDENT INJURIES REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS**

If your child has suffered an injury and will need special assistance, accommodations, or requires gym restrictions during the school day, please notify the School Nurse immediately.

#### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION (Policy #117)**

A child of school age who is physically unable to attend school for a prolonged period may be eligible for homebound instruction following recommendation by his physician. In such cases the Building Principal's office should be contacted.

## HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Students experiencing homelessness are afforded certain rights; such as, Free School Breakfast and Lunch. If you, or someone you know, may qualify, please contact the school counselor or principal. Questions regarding students and homelessness may also be directed to Matthew LaBuda, [mlabuda@northernnyork.org](mailto:mlabuda@northernnyork.org).

## HOMEWORK

Benefits of Homework:

1. Reinforces study habits
2. Offers additional practice for students who may need extended time beyond the classroom to achieve mastery
3. Improves reading comprehension and fluency when students read regularly at home
4. Allows parents to observe their child’s learning progression

Cons of Homework:

1. Students may need more help from teacher to meet their diverse learning
2. Too much homework limits the time students have to pursue interests outside of school
3. Students who struggle with time management may experience negative sanctions at school for work not completed at home. This may result in a loss of recess times, which allow for students to have needed breaks during the school day.

You are encouraged to discuss homework concerns with your child’s teacher to maximize the benefits.

The following is a general guideline for the amount of time your child should be spending when completing homework assignments.

Grades K, 1, and 2 .....	0- 20 minutes per night
Grades 3 and 4 .....	30-40 minutes per night
Grades 5 .....	45-60 minutes per night

If your child takes a significant longer amount of time to complete home assignments, please contact the teacher to make adjustments that meet your child's learning needs.

Parents are encouraged to read with their child or access additional resources for practice on the district's website.

### **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

Registration for Kindergarten children will be held for children who are legal residents of the district and who will have attained the age of five (5) years before September 1.

In order to enter first grade, a child must be **six (6) years old by September 1,** according to Section 1304 of the Public-School Code.

### **LIBRARY**

Students are encouraged to borrow books from the library during book exchange periods. You will be asked to replace or pay for books that are ruined or lost.

### **PARENT ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS**

The following information is provided to notify you of your rights and privileges under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, a federal law which protects the confidentiality of student educational records by limiting their disclosure.

The act guarantees parents and "eligible students" (eighteen years of age or older) certain rights. The rights are access to records, challenge to records, disclosure, directory information, policy, and complaints.

## **PARENT REQUESTS FOR CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS**

We strive to place each child in an appropriate educational setting. Parent requests for a specific classroom placement will be taken into consideration; however, placement is ultimately determined by the administration. Efforts will be made to ensure that siblings and relatives are placed in separate classrooms.

If you wish to make a request for your child's classroom assignment, please do so in writing to the building principal between April 1 and May 15. Requests received after this deadline may not be accommodated.

**We do not accept requests for specific teachers.** Instead, parent/guardian requests should specify desired teaching and management styles, as well as outline your student's learning preferences. Please understand that submitting a request does not guarantee a specific placement, but it will be given due consideration.

**We do not accept requests for students, other than your own, to be separated.** Emails should include "Classroom Placement Request" in the subject line.

Our school teams work together to create balanced and supportive classroom environments for all students. Placement decisions are based on various factors, including learning styles, special needs accommodations, and equity among different student populations.

## **PARENT VISITATION**

In order to promote a close working relationship between home and school, parents are encouraged to visit the school. We ask that parent visitors communicate their desire to visit in advance of the requested date. In this way, schedule conflicts may be avoided, and a more satisfactory visit assured.

Events such as Parent-Teacher Conferences and Open House nights provide parents opportunities to see their child's work and to talk to teachers.

## **PROCEDURE FOR EXCUSING PUPILS**

No student may be excused from school during school hours for reasons other than: (1) an appointment with a doctor (medical, dental, etc.) or (2) a sudden family emergency. Students excused will be released only to parents or legal guardian and in all cases proper identification will be necessary. Parents are urged to make medical and dental appointments after school hours, if possible.

- a) Up to 1-hour early release = no charge
- b) 1 hr. to 3 hours and 15 minutes early release = 1/2-day excused absence
- c) 3 hours 16 minutes and beyond = 1-day excused absence

To validate the early dismissal for doctor or dentist appointments, a medical excuse (appointment card) must accompany the student upon return to school.

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**

Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade-level standards. Early identification of learning difficulties is essential to provide prompt, effective treatment and avoid the development of a pattern of failure.

Decisions regarding the promotion or retention of students in grades K-5 shall be based upon whether the student has achieved academic success in mastering the grade level standards, as well as consideration of the needs of the student. Factors that should be considered regarding the needs of the student include, but are not limited to, ability, attendance, physical development, emotional development, and social maturity.

Retention will only be considered after the student has been referred to and has gone through the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process. Appropriate interventions must be attempted and documented prior to consideration of retention. Parental involvement in the MTSS process is considered critical. If the MTSS Team (involving family and school) recommends retention, the parents of the retained student should be notified of the recommendation in writing, by the building principal, prior to the end of the school year.



## RECESS

School regulations require all recess periods to be supervised by a teacher or a teacher's aide. Every effort is made to ensure the safety of the children.

In the interest of good health, all children are expected to go out in the fresh air during play periods. It is the feeling that in most cases a child well enough to be in school is well enough to spend a short period on the playground, if properly dressed. If, following a serious illness or injury, a child is unable to go outdoors during recess, a doctor's certificate should be sent to the school for explanation purposes.

Please ensure that students are dressed accordingly for the weather. The school monitor's wind chill and temperature with the following **guidelines**:

< 20F	21F-31F	> 32F
Inside Recess	15 Inside & 15 Outside	Outside Recess

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards provide information to parents about their child's progress in school. Report cards are issued four times a year, at the end of each marking period. These reports are posted to the online Sapphire Community Portal. Parents wishing to have a paper copy sent home should contact the school.

- Parent conferences for children are held twice a year (Parent Teacher conference and/or Student Led Conference)
- A Standards Based Report Card is issued in grades K-5.
- The descriptors below are used to report on student academic progress:
  - 4- Advanced
  - 3- Proficient
  - 2- Approaching Proficient
  - 1- Not Yet Proficient
- Marks of (O) outstanding, (S) satisfactory, and (N) needs improvement are used to report on Work Habits/Social Skills

## SCHOOL BUS

To provide the safest possible student transportation system, some school buses are fitted with a video/audio camera to monitor bus behavior to ensure that bus safety and conduct rules are being followed. Video/Audio cameras will be randomly rotated among all regularly scheduled buses based upon the number of incidents of misconduct.

The Northern School District provides transportation for pupils to and from school. As required by the School Code, buses for transportation of students living one and one-half (1½) or more miles from school will be provided by the school system.

Parents of pupils who ride the school buses are asked to review the rules of conduct with their children.

Please reference the **Transportation Handbook** located on the NYCS D website. Children should be reminded that breaking one or more of these rules could result in suspension of bus-riding privileges.

### **PRIOR TO LOADING:**

1. Students must follow school rules while they wait for the bus.
2. Students should wait for the bus at the designated bus stop and in a safe place, well off the highway, on the side of the street on which they live.
3. Student should cross the street to enter the bus, if necessary, **only** when the bus is stopped, and the red flashing signals are on.
4. Students must be at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to the time designated and be ready to board with the least possible delay. The bus will not wait for students to return home for forgotten items.
5. Students should respect the property rights of people who reside at /near the bus stop.
6. Students should not get into private vehicles with strangers.
7. Act 65 prohibits anyone from boarding a school bus without proper authorization. **Parents MAY NOT step up onto a school bus to speak with the driver.**
8. Students may board only assigned buses and may board only at the bus stop they are assigned. **Boarding another bus requires a bus pass. \*\***

**NOTE: Students are not permitted to ride a different bus to or from school unless an emergency situation arises.**

## **WHILE ON THE BUS:**

These rules below also apply to all field trips

1. All school rules and conduct of behavior apply to bus expectations. The bus driver has the same authority on the bus as a teacher has in the classroom. **\*\*Disrespect of the bus driver will be considered a severe violation.\*\***
2. No loud talking, laughter, and other similar conduct. This behavior diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.
3. Students may not block the aisle or emergency door with body, musical instruments, lunch boxes, books, or other possessions.
4. For the safety of the children, **students must remain seated** while the bus is in motion, when parked, and/or if the bus is delayed on the road.
5. Students must not extend arms, head, or any other items out of the windows.
6. \*Students must not damage or tamper with any parts of the bus or use the emergency door except in the case of an emergency.
7. \*No horseplay, fighting, vulgarity, profanity, throwing items in the bus, or other improper conduct.
8. Students may not eat, drink, smoke, use tobacco products, or chew gum while on the bus.
9. Students may not spit inside the bus or out of the bus windows.
10. The following items are not permitted in any school vehicle: weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, live animals/creatures, flammable liquids, matches/lighter, fireworks, firecrackers, smoke bombs, balls (except for team buses), water pistols, spray bottles, pea shooters, sling shots, glass containers, balloons, skateboards, laser pointers, any objects considered harmful to others, or any item too large for students to hold on their laps.
11. Musical instruments, large duffle bags and class projects may not be brought on the bus unless the item is small enough for the student to control on their lap. Students are not to take up additional space with their belongings.
12. Students should not bring toys to school. If a student brings a small toy to school (teacher permitted), it must keep them in their bookbag at all times while on the bus. Balls, yo-yos, etc. could roll under the driver's feet and/or pedals, causing an accident.
13. Handheld devices, i.e., phones, that omit noise must be kept in the student's book bag, unless they are played on silent mode or used with headphones. Devices, including personal cellular phones, must be kept on silent and remain in the child's bookbag during school hours. Reference NYCSD Student Code of Conduct, Electronic Devices (Policy #237).

14. **Students may not take pictures, video, or access the internet/social media while on their device. No sharing of devices on bus.** Reference the Social Media Guidelines in the Student Code of Conduct.
15. No perfume, deodorant, hand lotion, magic markers, or anything that has a strong odor is to be opened on the bus. These items are to remain in the student's bookbag, as there may be some students or bus drivers who are strongly sensitive/allergic to these smells.
16. \*Any conduct that endangers the safety of the other students or driver will be considered severe and may result in **immediate** loss of bus riding privileges.
17. Students are not permitted to get off the bus any place other than their assigned stop. The only exception is when the student has submitted a parent note to the building secretary, thereby permitting her to issue a bus pass for a different stop (same bus). **NOTE:** The adult receiving the child at the new stop (indicated on the bus pass), must be aware of this change prior to submittal of the initial parent note.

(\* **Designates a severe violation.**

#### **AFTER EXITING THE BUS**

1. When necessary, cross the road at least 10 feet in front of the bus, but only after looking to be sure that no traffic is approaching from either direction. Always make sure approaching cars stop before crossing. **Never cross behind the bus.**
2. Students are to go directly to their building in the morning and directly home in the afternoon.

#### **ADULT SUPERVISION AT BUS STOPS:**

1. Parents of kindergarten students **MUST** have an adult with them at their bus stop for pick up and drop off.
2. Grade 1 students must have a note permitting release without an adult present at the stop.
3. It is important to alert the school office with a written note, giving an alternate person permission to receive your child off the school bus. The note must be written and provided by the parent, not the alternate person receiving the child. The building staff will then contact the bus driver with this information (person's name). The alternate person must show the bus driver ID when they come to receive the child at the bus stop.
4. A parent may personally give the driver the note with the alternate person's name as well, but again, that person must show the bus driver ID to receive the child. Once the bus driver is familiar with this person, ID is no longer necessary.

**BUS MISCONDUCT:**

At the discretion of the building administrator, the following steps may be observed. Severe or dangerous offenses could result in immediate suspension of riding privileges:

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** A conference between the administrator and student will be held, a warning will be issued to the student, and the parent or guardian may be notified.
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** A conference between the administration, student, and driver may be held to determine the consequence and the parent or guardian will be notified. Riding privileges may be suspended for a minimum of one school day.
- **THIRD OFFENSE:** Conference with parent and student. Riding privileges may be suspended for a minimum of three school days.
- **FOURTH OFFENSE:** Parents will be informed, and riding privileges may be suspended for a minimum of five school days.
- **FIFTH OFFENSE:** Parents will be informed, and riding privileges may be suspended for an indefinite period of time. Riding privileges will not begin until the parents and students meet with the administrator and provide assurance that the student is prepared to exhibit appropriate behavior.

**SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST**

Cafeterias are operated in each of the schools. Each school has a computerized accountability system. Parents may send money for meals daily, weekly, or monthly. All students will have an account and will be assigned an individual access code. When a student purchases a meal or milk, the cost will be deducted from the student's account.

A copy of the menu for the month is located on the school website unless the parent indicates desire for a paper copy. Children may purchase milk during their lunch time.

During periods of free breakfast, it is important to note that breakfast consists of milk and the meal. Buying milk in isolation of the meal will add a charge of milk to the student's account.

### **SCHOOL SAFETY/STUDENT DISCIPLINE (Policy #218)**

School Safety is a priority in all our schools. Students must realize that any threats or comments regarding the safety of others are not a joke, and in today's environment, must be taken seriously. An effective educational program requires a safe and orderly school environment, which includes during the time students are under the supervision of the school or at any time while on school property, while present at school-sponsored activities, and while traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities. The discipline of students by District staff shall be fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory.

There are many behaviors that could be deemed inappropriate dependent upon the circumstance, age or grade level of the child, or the location or environment in which the behavior is exhibited. Reference the NYCS D Code of Student Conduct Handbook.

Consequences to inappropriate behavior shall be issued in accordance with board policy, the school's student handbook, and judgement of the staff member responsible for issuing consequences. The consequences shall be fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory. Progressive discipline shall be used when appropriate.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The purpose of the special education program is to help children who are having difficulty progressing in the regular curriculum. Instruction is individualized to a great extent. The district psychologist and the action of the MTSS team can make assignment to this program only following examination.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION - QUALIFIED STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (Policy 103.1)**

The Northern York County School District is required to provide annual notification of the contents of this policy. The policy, in its entirety, can be obtained at any school or the district website: [www.northernpolarbears.com](http://www.northernpolarbears.com)

It is the policy of this District to ensure that all district programs and practices are free from discrimination against all qualified students with disabilities. The district shall provide academic and nonacademic services and programs equally to students with and without disabilities.

The district shall provide each qualified student with a disability enrolled in the district, without cost to the student or parent/guardian, a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes provision of education and related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to afford each qualified student with a disability equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits from educational programs and extracurricular activities without discrimination, to the same extent as each student without a disability, consistent with federal and state laws and regulations.

Students and parents/guardians who believe they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to designated employees. Any complaints of discrimination or harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action be taken for substantiated allegations. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations.

The district shall not intimidate, threaten, coerce, discriminate, or retaliate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by this policy.

Reports of discrimination against qualified students with disabilities shall follow the Complaint Procedure outlined below.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

#### **Step 1 – Reporting**

A student or parent/guardian who believes s/he has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report the incident to the Section 504 coordinator. A school employee who suspects that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the Section 504 coordinator.

#### **Step 2 - Investigation**

The investigator will conduct an investigation, which may include a review of relevant materials as well as interviews with the complainant, the accused, and any others with knowledge of the incident. If as a result of the investigation it

is determined there may be a violation of criminal law, local law enforcement shall be contacted.

### **Step 3 - Investigative Report**

The investigator shall prepare and submit a written report to the Section 504 coordinator within twenty (20) days, including a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual and whether it is a violation of this policy, and a recommended disposition of the complaint. The complainant and the accused shall be informed of the outcome of the investigation, including the recommended disposition.

### **Step 4 – District Action**

If the investigation results in a finding that the complaint is factual and constitutes a violation of Board policy, prompt and corrective action shall be taken to ensure that such conduct ceases and will not recur. District staff shall document the corrective action taken and, where not prohibited by law, inform the complainant.

Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, Board policies and administrative regulations, district procedures, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and state and federal laws.

### **Appeal Procedure**

If the complainant is not satisfied with a finding of no violation of the policy or with the recommended corrective action, s/he may submit a written appeal to the Section 504 coordinator within fifteen (15) days. The section 504 coordinator shall review the investigation and the investigative report and may also conduct a reasonable investigation. The Section 504 coordinator shall prepare a written response to the appeal within twenty (20) days.

## **STUDENT AND BAG SEARCHES (Policy # 226)**

While this is not usually necessary in elementary school, if the administration has a reasonable suspicion to conduct a search of a student, they may ask the student to empty their pockets or other area to be searched. If the student refuses, it will be considered insubordination, and it will be assumed that the student has contraband. The student will then be disciplined for both having contraband and for insubordination.



## **STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM - SAPPHIRE**

The NYCSD Community Portal via the website link: <https://northernYork-sapphire.k12system.org> allows parents to access grade and attendance information, as well as make changes to demographic and medical information. Parents should create a single parent account to be able to view and edit all of their children's information.

Be sure to update your contact information in the Sapphire Community Portal and identify the order in which you would like the school to place phone calls by: Signing into the portal, selecting your child, Student Backpack, Change Student Data, Emergency call order. If you have difficulty creating a Sapphire Community Portal Account, please email: [sapphirehelp@northernYork.org](mailto:sapphirehelp@northernYork.org) for assistance.

## **STUDENT INSURANCE**

Student accident insurance is made available at the beginning of each school year. During the first week of school, specific details concerning accident coverage are forwarded to parents along with the enrollment form.

## **TELEPHONE CALLS**

Calls to teachers during the school day will be transferred to the teacher's voice mail. In the event of an emergency, please contact the school office.

## **TESTING PROGRAM**

The Otis-Lennon School Ability Test is administered to students in Grade 2. The district also administers a series of grade level benchmark assessments at least three times per year.

Northern York County School District participates in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment Program (PSSA). This instrument will be administered to students in Grades 3, 4, & 5. Specific test dates are indicated on the school website and district calendar.

## TRANSPORTATION OF SICK STUDENTS

Parents will be expected to transport injured or sick children for medical care unless the condition is determined to be urgent by the school nurse. In this case, an ambulance will be called, and parents are expected to pay any charges incurred for this service.

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of the educational, athletic, and extracurricular programs at NYCSD. All Volunteer forms, including the Volunteer handbook, are available online at: [www.northernpolarbears.com](http://www.northernpolarbears.com)

### Required paperwork for all volunteers:

- Volunteer Information Form
- A Tuberculosis Examination (TB test – dated less than 90 days old)
- PA Child Abuse History Clearance (dated less than 5 years old)
- PA State Police Criminal Record Check (dated less than 5 years old)
- FBI Background Check (less than 5 years old) OR Volunteer Verification Form

Reference the NYCSD Volunteer Handbook located on the district website, for specific steps to becoming a volunteer.

## WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCY

When it becomes necessary to close schools due to inclement weather conditions or other unique circumstances, provisions are made for timely and appropriate announcements on the following radio and television stations:

WHP-TV  
WHTM-TV  
WGAL-TV  
WMPT-TV  
WNNK-FM

WGTY/WGET  
WSBA/WARM  
WHYL  
98 YCR/WHVR  
WRKZ

A Connect Ed phone call with important information will be placed to the phone number provided in the demographic section of the online Sapphire Portal. Parents should review their child's demographic information in the Sapphire Portal and update address, phone number, and emergency contacts to ensure accurate contact from school to home.

When an **early dismissal** is required due to inclement weather, it is necessary for the school to know the location for bus transport. If the student needs to be dropped off at a new location (other than the usual bus assignment/stop) this must be indicated on the Emergency Transportation form that will be provided to you by your school office on the first week of school.

### **WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS**

In order to keep accurate records of all children in each school, parents are asked to report promptly:

1. any change of address within the school Sapphire system and
2. advance notice of the date of withdrawal if the family is moving from the district.

This is important during both the school term and the summer vacation months.

When a move from the district is anticipated, parents should reach out to the school and complete a form indicating the exact date of withdrawal, their new address, and the name of the school district to be entered.

If the move is within the School District, the school should be notified of the new address.