

Huntington Elementary School

2024-2025 Family Handbook

Hello Huntington Families,

Welcome back to another great school year! Please review the family handbook for any questions about a variety of different policies and procedures that we utilize at Huntington Elementary School. In the event you still need assistance or have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to a successful year!

Thank you,

Zachary Maher, Principal

Key Contacts	
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About Us

School Vision

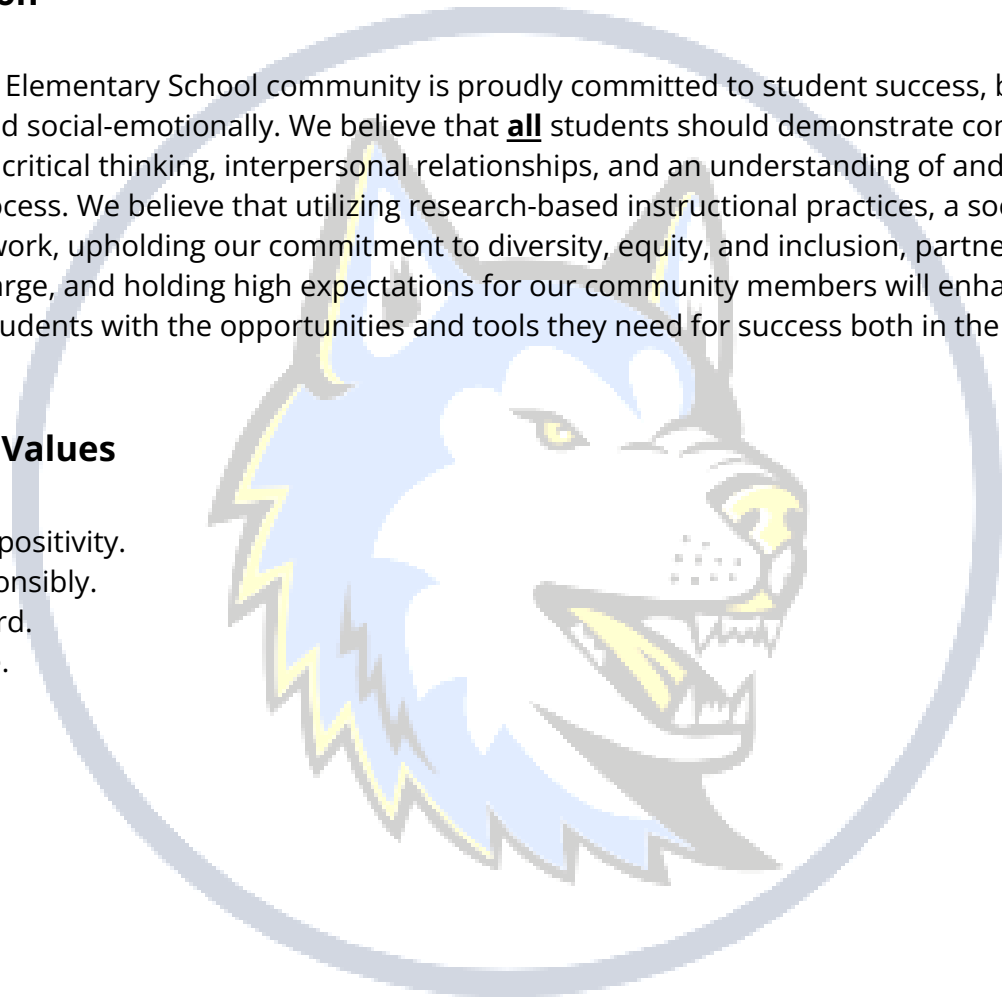
To ensure that each child reaches their full potential, the Huntington Elementary School community will provide opportunities for all students to develop the skill set necessary to be critical thinkers and lifelong learners, in order to participate in an ever-changing and increasingly complex world as their authentic selves.

School Mission

The Huntington Elementary School community is proudly committed to student success, both academically and social-emotionally. We believe that **all** students should demonstrate competence in academic skills, critical thinking, interpersonal relationships, and an understanding of and dedication to the learning process. We believe that utilizing research-based instructional practices, a social-emotional learning framework, upholding our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, partnering with the community at large, and holding high expectations for our community members will enhance our ability to provide **all** students with the opportunities and tools they need for success both in the present and future.

Our Guiding Values

- Practice positivity.
- Act responsibly.
- Work hard.
- Stay safe.



School Hours, Arrival & Dismissal

The hours for Huntington Elementary School are listed in the table below.

Program	Full Day	Early Release	Delayed Opening
K-5 Students	8:45-3:35 p.m.	8:45-1:35 p.m.	1 Hr Delay 9:45-3:35 p.m. 2 Hr Delay 10:45-3:35 p.m.
School Day Pre-K	9:30-3:30 p.m.	9:30-1:35 p.m.	1 Hr Delay 10:30-3:35 p.m. 2 Hr Delay 11:30-3:35 p.m.
AM Pre-K	9:30-12:10 p.m.	9:30-11:10 a.m.	No AM Pre-K
PM Pre-K	12:50-3:30 p.m.	No PM Pre-K	12:50-3:30 p.m.

Arrival Procedures

Bus Students

Families that live within the Huntington attendance zone will receive information regarding bus pick-up time, drop-off time, and bus stop location from First Student. **We recommend that families have their students at their bus stop 10 minutes prior to their assigned pick-up time and expect that the bus may arrive up to 10 minutes after their designated pick-up time.**

K-5 school buses will queue on the Pleasant Street side entrance and will unload once designated staff greet them upon their arrival at 8:45 a.m.

Family Drop-off & Walkers

Students who are being dropped off will enter the building through the front entrance of the building.

Doors open promptly at 8:45 a.m. regardless of weather conditions.

There is NO staff supervision prior to this time. Please try to remain with your student.

If you are dropping off your student using a vehicle, families do not need to park and exit their vehicles. You can line up in our traffic loop and staff will begin greeting students at 8:45 a.m. Please remember that our parking lot is a one way loop and we ask that families do not line up prior to 8:30 a.m. as staff are still arriving and need to access the parking lot.

Dismissal Procedures

Changes in Dismissal

Students are dismissed by the default method chosen by families at the beginning of the school year. A form will be sent out via ParentSquare for you to complete. We understand that changes in dismissal will be necessary from time to time. Sometimes, your child may need to be picked up earlier than our 3:35 pm dismissal time. **Should a change in dismissal become necessary, please call the main office staff by no later than 1:00 PM.**

Changes communicated after this time **may not** be able to be accommodated.

Early Dismissal

When picking up your student early:

- Families must park in the parking lot and come to the front door.
- Families should buzz into the main office, identify themselves, and state who they are picking up.
- Families will then be permitted to enter the main office.
- In order to dismiss your child, you must present photo identification. If you are designating a family member to pick up your child, they must be on the pickup list prior and must provide photo identification.
- If you are planning to pick up your student early, please do so by 3:00 P.M. Otherwise, they will be dismissed at 3:35 P.M. with all other students.

Regular Dismissal

For students who ride the bus:

Families that live within the Huntington attendance zone will receive information regarding bus pick-up time, drop-off time, and bus stop location from First Student. We recommend that families have their students at their bus stop 10 minutes prior to their assigned pick-up time and expect that the bus may arrive up to 10 minutes after their designated pick-up time. In the event of a late bus, we will send out a notification via ParentSquare letting you know the expected arrival time to Huntington and again once the bus departs from the school.

For students who are walkers:

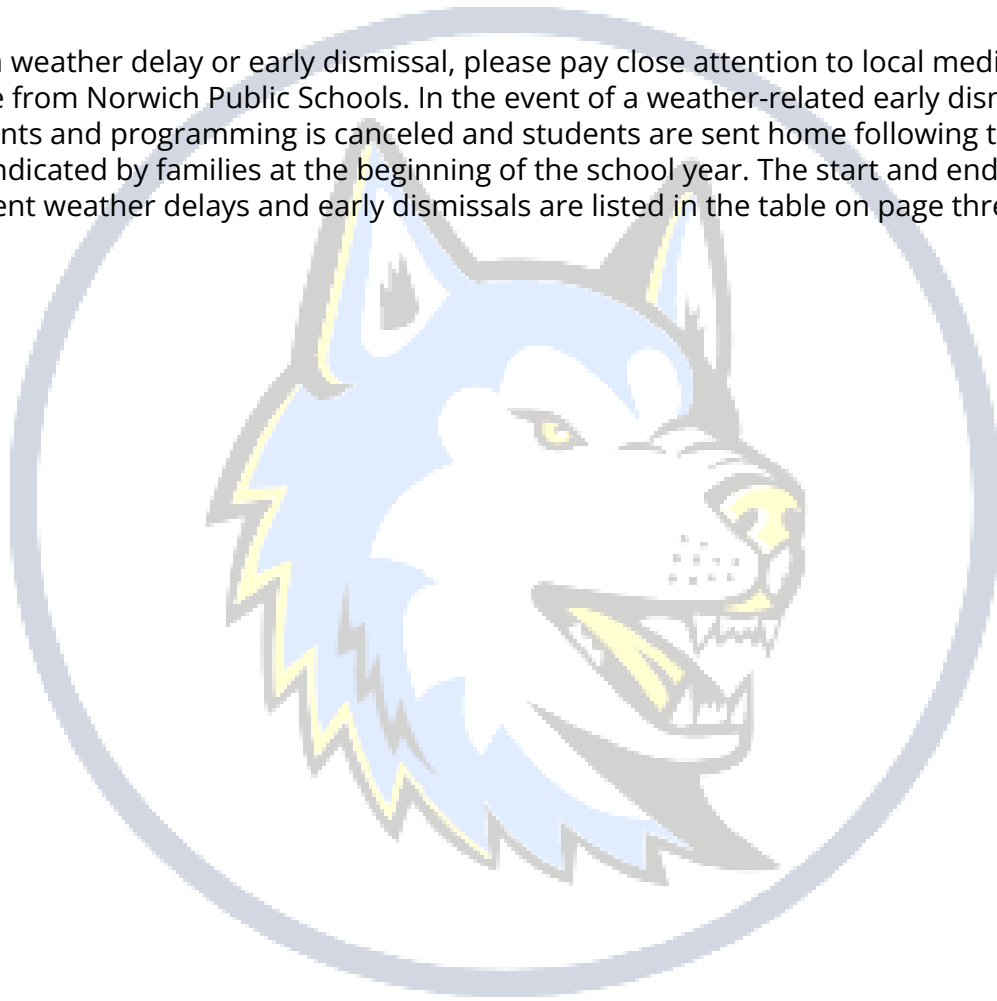
Students enrolled in grades 1-5 may be considered walkers at Huntington School if they live within the designated walker zone. As a walker, students are released by staff at 3:35 p.m. to walk home.

For students who are parent pickups:

Parent pickups will be conducted in the parking lot loop starting at 3:35 p.m. Staff will come up to your vehicle to verify your identification and release students at that time. As a parent pickup, your student is signed out by a designated family member. If you are designating someone else to pick up your student, you must do so prior to pickup or have them listed on the authorized pickup list. Photo identification is required. All students who are considered pickups after 3:30 p.m. will be picked up from this designated area.

Inclement Weather and Emergency-Related Early Dismissals

In the event of a weather delay or early dismissal, please pay close attention to local media stations and correspondence from Norwich Public Schools. In the event of a weather-related early dismissal, after-school events and programming is canceled and students are sent home following the default dismissal plan indicated by families at the beginning of the school year. The start and end times in the event of inclement weather delays and early dismissals are listed in the table on page three.



Attendance Policy

Your child's attendance is critical to their academic success. Students should arrive at school each day, on time and prepared for learning. School hours are 8:45-3:35 p.m. each day. Students are considered tardy starting at 9:00 am and this will be marked accordingly on your child's attendance record. In addition, students who are picked up early will be recorded as an early dismissal. Your child must be present in school for at least half of the school day in order to be considered present.

Excused & Unexcused Absences

The first 9 days of absences will be excused upon receipt of written documentation describing your child's absences within 10 school days of the student's return to school. Acceptable written documentation includes signed notes from students' parents, a doctor, court documentation, or a note from the nurse's office.

For students who are absent from school for 10 days or more, the absences will only be considered excused for the reasons listed below upon receipt of the required documentation.

Excused Absence Reasons (10 days or more)	Required Documentation
Student illness	A signed note from a medical professional and/or note from the school nurse who has evaluated a student for illness with an expected return date.
Religious Holidays	No notes are required. Please notify the school that the reason for the absence is a religious holiday.
Mandated Court Appearances	Police Summons Subpoena Notice to Appear A signed note from court officials. Any other official, written documentation of the legal requirement to appear in court.
Funeral/Death in the Family/Emergency	A written note explaining the nature of the emergency, an obituary, and/or documentation of required travel.
Extraordinary Educational Opportunity	Must be pre-approved by district administrators in accordance with state law. Family vacations are not considered extraordinary educational opportunities. You can apply for an extraordinary educational opportunity using the form here .

Mental Health Wellness Days- In accordance with state law, students are permitted to take two mental health days per school year non-consecutively. These absences are excused and are not included in reporting truancy concerns. They do count towards chronic absenteeism. **Students who take a mental health day will be seen by the school counselor or social worker upon their return to determine if further support is needed.**

All other absences that are not provided written documentation for the reasons listed above are considered unexcused. Students who have four or more unexcused absences in any month or 10 or more unexcused absences per school year are considered truant. Students who miss more than 10% of school days are considered chronically absent.

When a student is truant, a meeting will be scheduled and held with the family and school staff to determine appropriate interventions and coordinate community resources to support the student with attendance at school.



Student Illness & Nursing Information

The goal of the health office is to ensure that students have access to medical care during school hours in the event of illness.

Reasons your child should be kept home from school or will be sent home from school by the nurse.

- One of the following: fever 100.4 degrees or higher, chills, uncontrolled new cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell.
- Two or more of the following: fatigue, muscle or body aches, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea/vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher: Students should remain home until fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
- Episode of vomiting or diarrhea: Students should be home until either vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours.
- Nasal discharge: green/yellow in color or continuous.
- Cough: If a new cough, please call your school and ask for guidance, if your child has asthma, allergies, etc., they should stay home until the cough is controlled and please be sure the nurse has documentation of the acute or chronic illness of your student.
- Sore throat: Unable to be resolved with a drink of water.

Your school nurse will provide answers when your child should return and if there is paperwork that will be needed.

REMINDER: The best defense and great way to stay healthy is washing hands for 20 seconds or more, eating a healthy diet, bathing regularly, and drinking more water.

We also want to remind families that the following items are prohibited from school.

- Cough drops
- Over-the-counter medications (cold medicine, Tylenol, Advil)
- Sunscreen

Medications prescribed by a doctor may only be administered at school under the supervision of the school nurse with signed and written authorization from your child's doctor. Please reach out to the school nurse for more information.

Sunscreen can be self-applied by a student by completing and submitting the authorization form [here](#) to the school nurse's office.

Dress Code

In accordance with Norwich Public Schools policy, the following items are prohibited from wearing during the school day:

- Coats, jackets, or other attire normally worn as outerwear. Outerwear includes: coats, jackets, windbreakers, nylon pullovers, down vests, and other that administration deems inappropriate. Outerwear shall not be worn or carried and must be stored in designated classroom areas.
- Head coverings of any kind, including but not limited to bandanas, masks, visors, kerchiefs, hats, caps, or hoods. Head coverings shall not be worn, carried, hung on belts or around the neck, or kept in the classroom during regular school hours. Head coverings must be stored in designated classroom areas. Approved coverings worn as part of a student's religious practice or belief or as required or permitted in conjunction with school district health and safety protocols, shall not be prohibited. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prohibit protective hairstyles that include but are not limited to wigs, headwraps and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros and afro puffs.
- Footwear which mars floors or is a safety hazard.
- Sunglasses (indoors), whether worn or carried, unless required pursuant to a documented medical issue.
- Metal clothing or other oversized metal belt buckles and all metal belts or combinations of metal and leather belts.
- Spiked or studded bracelets, oversized or multi-finger rings, belts or any other article of attire with spikes or studs attached, or any other clothing item that may present a safety hazard to the student, other students or staff.
- Attire or accessories to contain vulgarity or contain offensive or disruptive writing or pictures (as defined by administration), which are likely to disrupt the educational environment.
- Attire or accessories depicting or suggesting violence (as defined by administration) so as to disrupt the educational environment or that provokes others to act violently or causes others to be intimidated by fear of violence or that constitute "fighting words," including but not limited to attire or accessories depicting the Confederate flag and/or Nazi swastika.
- Attire or accessories that depict logos or emblems that encourage the use of drugs, tobacco products, or alcoholic beverages.
- See-through clothing and clothing that reveals the abdomen, chest, or undergarments.
- Shorts, miniskirts, or pants that reveal the upper thigh or undergarments.
- Backpacks and/or book bags must be secured in the designated classroom storage area. Items not stored will be confiscated by administration.
- Pajama tops, bottoms and slippers (except as expressly permitted by the principal during a fundraiser, attendance or spirit celebration of the school.)

Students who fail to comply with Board policy and regulations concerning student dress will be subject to school discipline up to and including expulsion in accordance with the Boards' policy on student discipline.

Student Discipline

The staff at Huntington Elementary School use a progressive discipline approach aligned with district policies and state laws. You can view the district policy on student policy [here](#).

In order to promote positive social development, the staff at Huntington use a variety of strategies including but not limited to Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS), Restorative Practices, Responsive Classroom, and daily social-emotional learning (SEL).

At Huntington, we strive for all members of our community to follow the Huntington PAWS.

- **P**actice positivity.
- **A**ct responsibly.
- **W**ork hard.
- **S**tay safe.

Students work to earn Huntington Bucks to participate in a variety of fun activities and events by demonstrating prosocial behaviors and following school rules. Students who do not earn the required amount **may not** participate in such events and will participate in a re-teaching of school rules and behaviors targeted to address specific skills (e.g. completing work, playing appropriately, name-calling).

In the event a student engages in misbehavior, staff document this in our PowerSchool portal as a behavior incident report. When this occurs, you will be contacted by the staff member who is issuing the behavior incident report and/or a member of the school administration.

For misbehaviors that are severe in nature and require additional consequences, these may include detention (lunch or after school), in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension. These consequences are given in accordance with Norwich Public Schools policy detailed above.

For students who are engaging in repeated misbehavior, in addition to the actions listed above, the school SRBI team will meet to discuss additional interventions and support that can be provided to support the student. Families will be asked to attend these meetings to provide valuable input.

Cell Phones & Other Electronic Devices

You can view the full NPS Board Policy- 5122- Use of Private Technology Devices by Students by visiting [here](#).

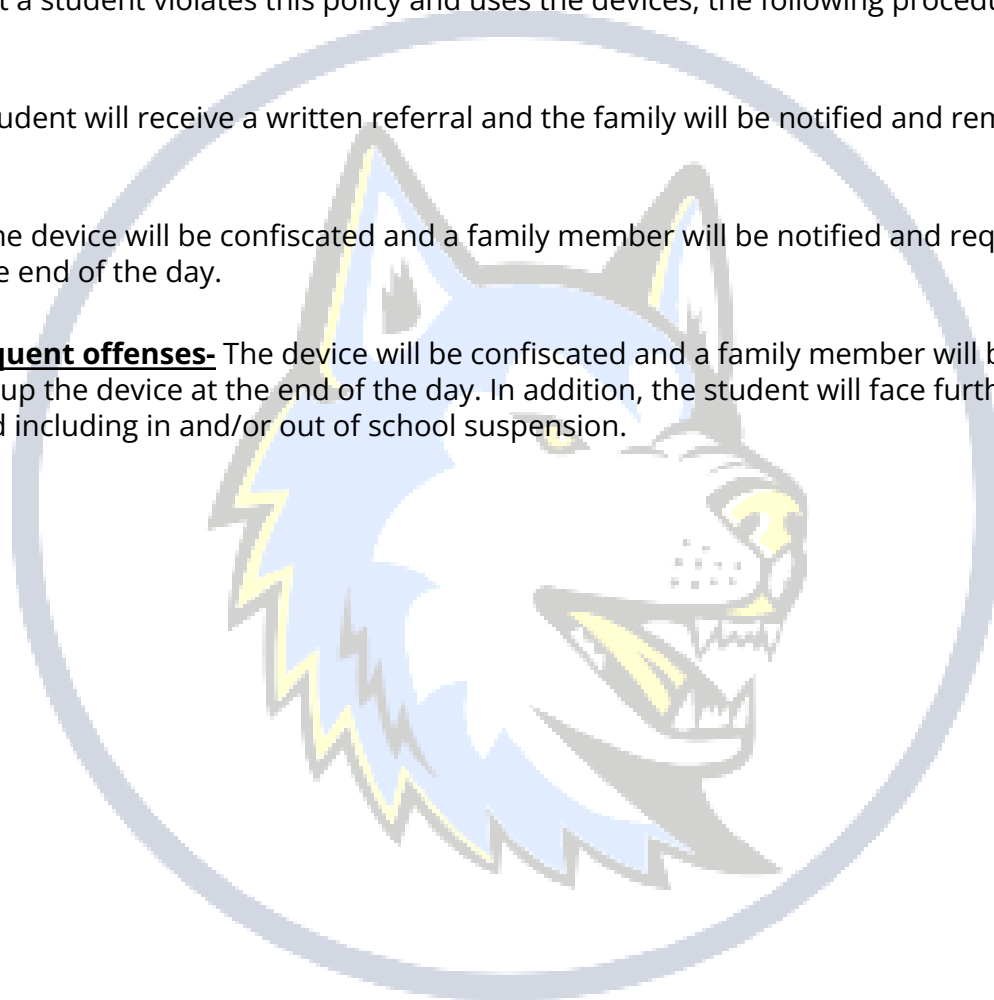
Students are not permitted to use privately owned technological devices during the instructional day unless permitted by staff. Cell phones, smart watches, personal gaming devices, tablets, bluetooth devices must be turned off and kept in a backpack during school hours.

In the event that a student violates this policy and uses the devices, the following procedures will take place.

1st offense- Student will receive a written referral and the family will be notified and reminded of the policy.

2nd offense- The device will be confiscated and a family member will be notified and required to pickup the device at the end of the day.

3rd and subsequent offenses- The device will be confiscated and a family member will be notified and required to pickup the device at the end of the day. In addition, the student will face further disciplinary action up to and including in and/or out of school suspension.



Breakfast, Lunch, Snack & Allergens

Norwich Public Schools will continue to provide breakfast and lunch options for students. Students who prefer to bring their own lunch can continue to do so as they normally would. It is encouraged to limit any items containing nuts due to allergies. We also ask that no glass bottles be sent to school as well.

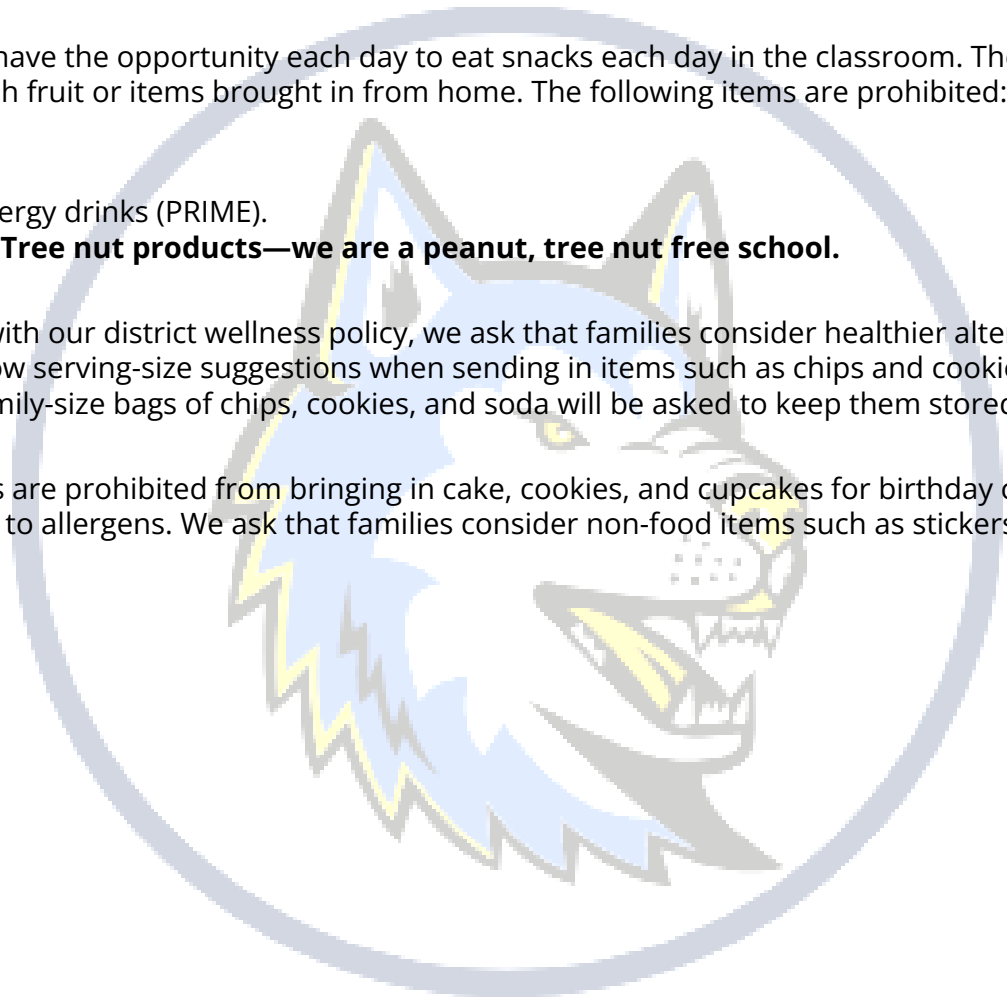
If your child has a food allergy, please ensure that medical documentation is provided to the school nurse so that our cafeteria staff have this information on file.

Students will have the opportunity each day to eat snacks each day in the classroom. These may include a piece of fresh fruit or items brought in from home. The following items are prohibited:

- Candy
- Soda, energy drinks (PRIME).
- **Peanut, Tree nut products—we are a peanut, tree nut free school.**

In accordance with our district wellness policy, we ask that families consider healthier alternatives for snacks and follow serving-size suggestions when sending in items such as chips and cookies. Students who bring in family-size bags of chips, cookies, and soda will be asked to keep them stored away.

Finally, students are prohibited from bringing in cake, cookies, and cupcakes for birthday celebrations in classrooms due to allergens. We ask that families consider non-food items such as stickers, pencils, erasers, etc.



Other Policies & Key Information

Communication

Huntington Elementary School and other Norwich Public Schools will use the ParentSquare platform for all communications. Families have access to ParentSquare for free and we encourage you to download the app for your mobile device for access to all features of this platform. Please ensure that you keep the school updated with your most recent and in-use contact information (email, cell phone number, address, etc.) Our platforms update daily and your information is required for access to the platform.

Communication is key to your child's success. You can also always reach school staff by contacting us via ParentSquare, email, and by calling 860-823-4204. We ask that families be mindful that it can take staff up to 24 hours of your initial contact excluding weekends and holidays for a response. Our staff is dedicated to the teaching and learning process with students and access to communication platforms may be limited depending on the time of day.

Finally, our weekly newsletter, the "Husky Headlines" will be sent out to families digitally and accessible in a variety of languages each Sunday at 10:00 AM. Please review this weekly to stay up to date on the happenings and events at the school.

Homework

Homework with a specific purpose that is understood by both the student and teacher is beneficial to support student learning at home. At Huntington our homework guidelines are below.

Reading- We encourage families to ensure that **all** children are engaged in reading for up to 20 minutes each evening. For families of Kindergarten students, we recommend that adults read to their children and engage in phonological awareness activities (rhyming, etc.) daily for up to 15 minutes each night. We do not require reading logs to track your progress. Please reach out to your child's teacher for support in selecting appropriate reading materials (decodable passages, leveled texts) based on your child's needs.

Math, Special Projects, & Other Content Areas:

Kindergarten- Assignments may be given at the discretion of the teacher and should take no more than 15 minutes of time. These assignments will be skills students have had experience with and require practice.

Grades 1 & 2- Assignments may be given at the discretion of the teacher and should take no more than 30 minutes of time. These assignments will be skills students have had experience with and require practice.

Grades 3-5- Assignments may be given at the discretion of the teacher and should take no more than 45 minutes of time. These assignments will be skills students have had experience with and require practice. In addition, students in these grades may be assigned projects to help support study skills, budgeting time, etc.

School Supplies

Huntington Elementary School will provide most materials that your student will need for daily use. Classroom teachers will communicate specific items that you may want to consider purchasing. We recommend that all students please bring the following to school each day:

- A reusable water bottle
- Headphones
- A change of clothes (**Pre-K & Kindergarten students only**)

Getting Involved

Active family participation is critical to the success of your student. Our Family Teacher Activities Council (FTAC) meets monthly to provide families with updates on happenings at the school, host family workshops, and plan initiatives and events around the school.

If you are interested in participating in our FTAC, please be on the lookout for communications on our meeting times. Meetings are held in-person on the first Tuesday of each month.

Families are encouraged to participate as volunteers. For more information, please contact us at 860-823-4204.

