



NORTHWOOD

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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www.mercerislandschools.org

August 15, 2025

Dear Northwood Parents and Guardians,

It is hard to believe that the first day of school is right around the corner. I hope you have had a wonderful summer with friends and family, and that you and your children are eager and ready to begin the year. The Northwood staff is looking forward to welcoming students and families next week.

I would like to extend a big welcome to families new to our district and our school. We look forward to meeting and working with you.

Introduction:

My name is Julie Newcomer and this is my fourth year as principal of Northwood. I am thrilled to be leading a school with such amazing students, staff and families. I grew up on Mercer Island and graduated from Mercer Island High School. I am a Husky. I have three kids: one who attends MIHS and two in college. I have been an educator and a parent in this district for a long time and you are welcome to talk to me in either capacity.

I love talking with students and families about celebrations and wonderings. Please reach out to me as needed to support your child as they move through their elementary learning years. Northwood students are my first priority, so please be patient if I am unable to respond to you right away. Family communication is very important to me and I will do my best to be timely.

District Back-to-School Forms - Required RSVP Process

An important part of our summer process is figuring out how many wonderful students and families we will be serving in the new school year. It is critical this time of year that we have accurate enrollment numbers so that we may assess enrollment and staffing needs to ensure we have a fully staffed school for the 2025-26 school year.

If you are moving/have moved or suspect you may be leaving Northwood please email ellen.marks@mercerislandschools.org with your child's(ren's) first and last name letting us know they are not attending NW. We do not need a response if your plan is to stay at Northwood. Please complete the RSVP process (more information below) if you are staying at Northwood.

Our MISD forms are all online and student information is verified through a process called RSVP. A postcard and email were sent to families in early August to explain the process.

[CLICK HERE FOR QMLATIV \(SKYWARD\) FAMILY ACCESS](#)

Each school year, parents must complete the RSVP process to acknowledge important policies and complete required forms for schools. Parents will need to complete the RSVP process for each of their students by logging into Qmlativ's (Skyward) Family Access Portal. Parents can

complete the RSVP process starting as soon as possible. [These Qmlativ RSVP instructions will help parents complete the process.](#)

Important: You will not be able to access who your child's teacher will be until you have completed the RSVP process.*A note about Emergency Contacts: Parents/Guardians are always the first call in the event of an illness or emergency. Please do not list yourself as an Emergency Contact. Please check your information during RSVP to make sure there are two non-Parent/Guardian people listed as Emergency Contacts.

Notes from the Healthroom:

If your child(ren) has medication, **the Healthroom must receive the Medication Authorization form (MUST be signed by doctor) and your child's medication BEFORE the first day of school.** Please be sure to check the expiration date on the medication.

Families can start dropping off Medication Authorization Forms and medications during Office Hours starting Wednesday the August 20. (Office hours are Monday-Thursday 9AM-noon, the office is closed on Friday).

Back-to-School Welcome Events

We have several events to welcome all our families to the new school year.

- **Northwood Classroom Open House:** On **Tuesday, August 26 from 3:00pm-4:00pm**, all our teachers will open their classrooms to welcome families into the learning space. This is a chance for students to find their new classroom, visit some of the learning spaces throughout the building (i.e., gym, library, art room, library, resource room, etc.) and for parents and students to meet the teachers. This is also a great time to drop off your child's school supplies (for those families who purchased supplies in the Spring through SchoolKidz, your child's supplies will already be in the classroom.)
- Our Northwood PTA is hosting a **Welcome Coffee** for families on **Wednesday, August 27 at 9:20am**. Whether you're cheering that school is back in session or wiping away tears from seeing your kids off, you deserve a little treat. Northwood PTA will have coffee, donuts and a chance to reconnect with or meet other grown ups in our Northwood community.
- Northwood PTA **General Membership Meeting and Programs & Activities Fair** on **Friday, September 5, from 9:30am-11:00am**. You are invited to join the first PTA meeting of the year. You will learn about all this organization does to support the school and community and PTA members will have some items to vote on. Immediately following the meeting we'll be hosting a Programs & Activities Fair where you can learn about many of the local options for enrichment, athletics and general fun outside of the school day.
- **Northwood Curriculum and Connection Night** will occur on **Wednesday, September 17**. At this event, teachers will provide parents information about the curriculum, experiences, and expectations for their grade level and classroom. This event is designed as an information-sharing event for adults, and children may find it challenging to sit through. The curriculum night schedule is as follows:

- 5:00pm-5:45pm: 3rd-5th grade presentations; Early Childhood Special Education Presentations
- 5:45-6:15pm: ParentSquare Training for families in the NW Commons
- 6:15pm-7:00pm: K-2nd grade presentations; Northwood PTA will also host a **Back to School Family Social on Wednesday, September 25, from 5:00pm-7:00pm.** The whole family is invited to for fun and games with the Northwood community!
- New Families are also invited to attend our **all-district New Families Event on Thursday, October 16 at Islander Middle School from 6:00pm-7:30pm.** The event will be held in the commons of Islander Middle School, 7447 84th Ave SE.

School Supplies

You have a few choices to help you get school supplies:

- We offered a pre-purchase option in the spring through our PTA. If you signed up for it, your child's supplies will be delivered to their classroom. No further action is needed; you are ready!
- If you didn't sign up for the pre-purchase option or are a new family, use the grade-level supply list on our [WEBSITE HERE](#) and purchase from your favorite store. *We are asking that these supplies be brought to school for the open house on Tuesday, August 26th or on the first day of school.*

How to Get Involved

We have a wonderfully involved community in Mercer Island School District, and we invite everyone to be a part of our school community. We welcome and encourage parent volunteers and hope that you will take advantage of the many opportunities available to you. These opportunities include supporting in the classroom or common learning spaces, attending/volunteering at PTA events, chaperoning field trips, attending Parent Playground (more information coming), and more. Our partner organization, the Northwood PTA, led in the coming year by Co-Presidents Debbie Nelson and Kate Gilham, offers multiple and varied opportunities for families to be involved in the community. You can also find information on upcoming events, informative newsletters, and volunteer opportunities on the [Northwood PTA website](#). All volunteers are required to complete an annual training and volunteer paperwork, found on the [Volunteers page](#) of our MISD website. ***All volunteer paperwork is due no later than October 1.*** *If/when you plan to volunteer before October, please ensure you have completed and submitted your required paperwork at least 48 hours in advance of your volunteer time. Even if you have completed this paperwork in years past, it needs to be completed again for the new school year. **Safety is our highest priority** and you will be asked to complete your paperwork before you can volunteer. We only accept volunteers who have completed all necessary paperwork/online forms.*

Northwood Parent Advisory Council

The Northwood Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is seeking members for the 2024-25 school year. The purpose of the PAC is to inform, encourage, and provide opportunities for parents and community members to be involved in the school's instructional program and improvement processes. By definition, the PAC is an informational and advisory body.

There will be four meetings this year on: 10/30, 1/22, 3/26 and 5/28. All meetings are from 10:00 am - 11:00 am. If you are interested in being a part of the Northwood Parent Advisory Committee, please fill out the Google Form [LINKED HERE](#).

Student Placement

A great deal of effort went into the process of student placement for the 2025-26 school year and the entire staff at Northwood is looking forward to getting to know your children.

You will have access to your student's placement via Qmlativ on August 22. *Please note that you must complete the District RSVP process to gain access to your child's placement in Qmlativ.* Since we understand how unsettling it can be waiting to find out who your child's teacher will be next year, it is important that you understand the process that we have gone through to place your child in his or her class. This process started at the end of the 2025-26 school year, and we can honestly say that each child, each class, each mixture of children, all special programs, etc. were carefully scrutinized for a proper balance and good mix.

As this is a lengthy process that we take very seriously, please understand that class placement changes will not be made during this first grading period; any change creates a ripple effect through the whole grade level. It is important that placement be given a chance. Typically, it takes a few weeks for a child to acclimate to a new school, grade, peer group, and teacher -- this is a normal transition period and an important part of elementary school learning. Thank you for understanding the placement process and speaking positively with your child regarding their placement to help them understand that our staff has worked hard to ensure a positive school experience for everyone. All our teachers are looking forward to meeting their new students and creating nurturing, accepting, positive classroom environments.

Our teachers have written welcome letters to their future students, which can be accessed on our Northwood Website after class assignments are available on August 22.

School Hours

Our school hours are as follows this year. **Please make note of the times.** The first bell rings at **9:10am**. **Students should not arrive on campus prior to 9:00am.** The tardy bell rings at **9:15am**

- School hours for Kindergarten - 5th grade are **9:15am – 3:45pm**
- Early Release Every Wednesday hours are **9:15am – 2:05pm**
- Early Childhood Special Education Program hours are: **9:30am-1:00pm**

Important Dates for Fall 2023-24

Please mark your calendars for the following events:

- **August 26:** 3:00-4:00pm - Northwood Open House – Families are invited to come by Northwood during this time to see their classrooms and meet their teachers.
- **August 27:** First Day of School for Kindergarten - 5th grade students. **NOTE: This is an early release day like all Wednesdays throughout the year. Students will be**

dismissed at 2:05pm.

- **August 27:** 9:20-10:00am - PTA Welcome Coffee in NW Commons. All Families are welcome; we encourage you to come make new parent connections and learn about PTA volunteer opportunities.
- **September 2:** First Day of School for ALL Early Childhood Special Education Program
- **September 2-4:** Kindergarten WA-Kids Conferences by appointment. **No school for the kindergarten students.** *Kindergarten families will receive an email on August 29th to make their appointment.*
- **September 5:** Kindergarteners start with their classroom teachers; **NOTE: This is a full day of school for all students, K-5.**
- **September 5:** 9:30-10:00am - PTA General Membership Meeting in NW Commons.
- **September 17:** K-5 Curriculum Night & Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Program Night
 - 5:00-5:45pm - 3rd-5th grade
 - 5:00-5:45pm - ECSE Program Sessions
 - 5:45-6:15pm - PARENTsquare Training for NW Families
 - 6:15-7:00pm - K-2nd Grade
- **September 25:** 5:00-7:00pm NW PTA Back to School Family Social
- **October 16:** Mercer Island School District New Families Event, 6:00-7:30pm at Islander Middle School

Getting to School

One of the advantages of a neighborhood school is the possibility of walking to school. If you haven't already done so, please review the information about getting to school on our Northwood website, found on the [Safe Walking Information](#) page. We have posted information about designated safe walking routes, recommendations for teaching your children safe walking skills, and recommended driving routes if you choose to drive to drop-off & pick-up your child by car. Please also see the [Northwood Parent Student Handbook](#) for information about our car loop pick up and drop off procedures. *Please use only the curb-side lane for student drop-off and pick-up.*

If your family lives in a neighborhood served by our school buses, please contact the [Transportation Department](#) with any questions about bus routes, times, or other topics. The transportation department will be offering new access to all parents through an online portal and if your student qualifies for transportation they will send you an email to electronically sign up for transportation. Thank you for your patience.

Where Does My Child Line Up at the Start of the Day?

We have designated locations under the covered area of the playground for each classroom to line up outside the school building each morning. The start of each line is marked by a painted classroom number on the concrete. When the bell rings at 9:15am, teachers will meet their students at these locations and walk them into their classrooms. On the first day of school, signs with teacher names will help children find their classroom line. **Parents and caregivers should say goodbye at the top of the stairs.** Only students should proceed down the stairs to line up.

Please note that there is no outside playground supervision before 9:00am and, for safety

reasons, children are asked to line up with their classmates and not to engage in recess activities prior to the start of school.

Lunch

Lunch is available for purchase if one isn't brought from home. There are daily choices and the cost is forthcoming. Milk may be purchased separately. Money may be added to a student's account either online with a credit card (through Skyward) or bring a check or cash to the front office. More information regarding school lunch, free and reduced lunch and other information can be found on our website [HERE](#)

Air Quality

Student and staff safety are our top priority as we remain diligent in ensuring safe environments for all of our staff and students. With the recent air quality issues the past few years due to wildfire smoke, the District wanted to provide background and resources to clarify how decisions are made related to outdoor activities for our staff and students. Please see the linked file for more information. [LINKED HERE](#)

I am so excited for the start of the new school year, and I look forward to welcoming all of your children into their school. Thank you to all of the PTA members and Northwood families who continue to support our wonderful learning community.

Respectfully,

Julie Newcomer
Northwood Elementary Principal