

# NORTHSHORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

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## **NORTHSHORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK**

We are very excited to begin another year in a school where every child can learn and feel valued. We would like to welcome you to Northshore Elementary School. Our school is part of the Knox County School System, a system known across the state and nation for its academic standards and excellent curriculum. We currently have approximately 1,068 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth.

We are thankful for the support of our community and parents. Our administration, faculty and staff are committed to providing the best education for all of our children.

### **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Accident insurance will be made available to all students through Knox County Schools. Contact the office for more information.

### **ATTENDANCE**

In order to be counted present on any and all accounting attendance records, students in grades K-12 shall attend school for a time period of three (3) hours and thirty (30) minutes per school day. Students who attend less than three (3) hours and thirty (30) minutes per school day shall be recorded and reported as absent on any and all attendance records.

Knox County Schools will excuse absences for sickness, death in the immediate family, recognized religious holidays, and family emergencies. Family vacations are not considered excused absences. Excuses for student absences must be made in writing. All notes should be dated, signed and submitted to the classroom teacher within 5 days of the student's return to school. Up to 10 absences per school year may be excused with the parent/guardian note that falls in one of the excused absence categories. After 10, a doctor's excuse will be required for any additional absences. A phone call or email without a note will not be accepted as an excused absence.

Parents/guardians of a student with excessive (more than 5) absences may appeal the absences. Whenever possible, attendance issues should be resolved at the

school level. Parents/guardians who wish to appeal a student's excessive (more than 5) absences shall communicate their appeal to the school principal. At the appeal, the principal will provide the parent/guardian written notice of the unexcused absences and the parent/guardian will have the opportunity to be heard. The burden of proof rests on the student or the parent/guardian. (See Policy J-120 for additional information)

- **TRUANCY:** Excessive absenteeism is a violation of state law and calls for stern action by the school district. Parents are held responsible for keeping their children in school.
- **SICKNESS:** If students are absent due to illness, they will be given extra time to make up missed work when they return to school (one day for every day absent). Please coordinate completing absent work with your child's teacher.
- **FIELD TRIPS:** It is our school policy that any time a class takes a field trip and bus transportation is provided, all students should ride the bus.

## **BULLYING**

Knox County Schools prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and cyber-bullying. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate students in a safe and orderly environment. Please see Board Policy J-211 for additional information. Please notify your child's grade level administrator immediately if you have concerns regarding student bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

## **CELL PHONES - STUDENTS**

Students at the elementary level may possess PCDs while on school property. However, the PCD must be in the off mode and must be kept in a backpack, purse or similar personal carry-all and may not be used unless the principal or the principal's designee grants a student permission to do so. The principal or the principal's designee may specifically grant permission for a student to use a PCD during class time for specific academic purpose or at other times for other purposes that the principal deems appropriate.

## **CHANGE OF TRANSPORTATION**

If your child will go home a different way than normally planned and communicated, Parents or Guardians must write a note to the homeroom teacher the morning the change in transportation is to occur. Teachers will submit the note to the office for approval. If approved, the note will be marked as approved and returned to the student. The approved note will be presented to the bus driver (if the student is riding a different bus) or the car rider line adult (if the student is going home with an adult as a car rider different from their normal adult). Email and phone call/text requests for transportation change during the school cannot be accepted or accommodated. Please understand this practice is for the safety of your child.

## **CLINIC AND MEDICATION**

Northshore Elementary School is fortunate to have a school clinic that is available to all students daily. This service is provided through volunteer efforts and financial support of the Northshore P.T.O. The Red Cross trains volunteers. Please call the office or the P.T.O. if you would like to volunteer.

Medication required during school hours can be dispensed by the school nurse or designated staff. The following procedures must be followed for over-the-counter and prescription medication:

- The physician must fill out and the parent must sign a medical form for each medication. A new form must be completed when there is a change in time or dosage. (Forms available in the office or physician's office.
- Medication in the original prescription bottle or in the unopened over-the-counter container must be brought to the school by a parent or guardian and submitted to the office. Students must never transport medication.
- School staff and parents will verify the quantity in the bottle.
- Medication will be kept in a safe and locked area. The school will notify parents when medication is in need of refill.

## **CONFERENCES / OBSERVATIONS**

Northshore Elementary teachers consider parent conferences a key element in communicating with parents. If you wish to arrange a conference with your child's teacher, please call the school office or email the teacher directly. The teacher will contact you to establish a mutually convenient date and time for the conference.

All visitors and volunteers must report first to the school office, and visits shall not be used for unscheduled parent-teacher conferences. No infant or preschool age children may accompany parent/adult when attending parties or volunteering. If younger children attend a class presentation and become disruptive to the learning environment, you may be asked to leave.

Parents are welcome to volunteer in the classroom and in our school. There are a wide variety of opportunities through our P.T.O., library, and individual classroom/teacher preferences. Parents are also able to request and schedule a classroom observation. In order to maintain the safety and security of our students in the building and limit any distractions to classroom instruction, we ask that volunteers and classroom observations meet the following guidelines:

1. Any visitor in our building must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's badge before entering the building.
2. Volunteers and observations must be scheduled in advance.
3. Volunteers working in the classroom with teacher supervision must have signed the confidentiality agreement.
4. Volunteers working in the building or chaperoning field trips cannot be accompanied by an infant/preschool age child.
5. Volunteers working with groups of students outside the direct supervision of the teacher (field trips with small groups, working in the hallway with students, etc.) must have completed an approved background check to have clearance to work with students.
6. Classroom observations (since they are conducted under the supervision of the teacher) require the confidentiality agreement signed.
7. Classroom observations may be conducted after submitting a request to the teacher and/or principal and are limited to once a semester.

8. Classroom observations should be no longer than 30 minutes in order to limit classroom distractions.
9. For the protection of other students' privacy and confidentiality in the classroom, recordings are not permitted.
10. If you take pictures during any event in the classroom or at school of students other than your own child, please do not post them to any social media site. Please be mindful of names on papers, bulletin boards, and students in the background of your pictures as well. We want our parents to be able to share the fun and exciting things that are going on at Northshore Elementary School, but we also want to be respectful of the privacy and confidentiality of other students in our building.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Most discipline matters will be addressed by teachers, students, and parents. However, when a student's behavior affects other students and disrupts learning in the classroom or prevents the teacher from teaching, the teacher and/or the principal will take appropriate action.

## **DISMISSAL**

The regular dismissal time is 2:45 p.m. Half days all students will be dismissed at 11:15 a.m. Parents should discuss their child's regular dismissal schedule with teachers at the beginning of each school year. If a student is to deviate from the understood schedule, parents or guardians must send in a note to the teacher, preferably on the NES change of transportation form, with all necessary information. Alternatively, parents or guardians may come to the school office to request a change of transportation for a given day in person. An email or text to a teacher is not an allowable means of communication to make a transportation change. The school office will approve the requested change, and the note will be used to allow students to go home the alternate way. All students must be signed out in the office before leaving. If your child has not been picked up by 3:05 p.m., you will need to come into the office to sign him/her out. There are no early dismissals between 2:15 p.m. and 2:45 p.m.

Parents must have the official current-year Northshore dismissal sign placed in their car window to pick up students in the car line. Persons without the sign must proceed to cone zero in the dismissal line and present a picture I.D. Students will only be released to those on the student's pick-up list in our student database.

If you would like your child to walk home without your presence, you will need to provide written documentation to the school annually.

### **DRESS CODE**

The standards for elementary school dress reflect a concern for each child's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. To help create the best learning environment for elementary students, the following standards for student dress must be observed in all Knox County elementary schools:

1. Pants must not sag below the waist and must be at a safe length.
2. Head apparel, except apparel related to religious traditions or medical situations, must not be worn inside the school building.
3. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor or outdoor physical activity.
4. Clothing or accessories may not create disruption or display vulgar language or images and must not advertise products which students may not legally purchase.
5. For students in Grades 3-5, short shorts, mini-skirts, and skin-tight outer materials without proper coverage are inappropriate attire.
6. For students in Grades 3-5, shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and shoulders, and shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff visible. Skin-tight outer materials are prohibited without appropriate coverage.

The school administration reserves the right to determine whether the student's attire and appearance are within the acceptable limits. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the principal/designee shall prevail. The principal may allow exceptions for school-wide programs or special classroom activities. The teachers and the principal will administer appropriate consequences for policy infractions.

## **ELECTRONICS**

All phones and other electronic equipment brought to school by students must be turned off and out of sight during school hours. The school will not be responsible for electronic items that are broken, damaged, destroyed, lost, or stolen. This includes, but is not limited to, iPads, tablets, phones, smart watches, etc.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

The emergency card kept on file in the clinic and in our Student Information Systems database is our link to you in case of an emergency. The cards and a computer generated profile sheet are issued to students the first school day and should be returned the next day. It is vital that we always have correct phone numbers for parents, both at home and work. Please help us by providing several emergency contact numbers and by keeping them up to date. We regard all phone numbers and addresses as private. Anyone not listed on the emergency cards will not be permitted to pick up students.

- **SCHOOL CLOSING:** Decisions to close school due to inclement weather or disaster are made by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Please do not call the school office to find out if school is closed or is to be dismissed early. Local television, radio stations, the Knox County website, and social media will broadcast school closings or early dismissal.
- **EMERGENCY SCHOOL DISMISSAL:** When school is dismissed early, school buses will operate their regular runs, although routes on secondary roads may be affected by hazardous road conditions. In order to avoid last-minute confusion, the school requests that all parents complete an “Emergency School Dismissal” form indicating how you wish your child to be dismissed in such a situation. The school will provide forms.

## **ENTRANCE TO SCHOOL**

Requirements for school entrance are as follows:

1.Children must be five years of age by August 15th in order to be eligible for Kindergarten.

2. Children must be six years of age by August 15th in order to be eligible for First Grade and must have completed an accredited Kindergarten.
3. The Tennessee Certification of Immunization (including dates for all shots) must be provided before the first day of school. A physical exam must also be completed within the past year (12 month period) prior to entering school.
4. A document verifying date of birth must be shown at the time of registration (official birth certificate or passport).
5. Proof of residency in the school zone.

For more information regarding Kindergarten entry, please visit the Northshore Elementary or Knox County Schools' website.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Each grade level can take two field trips per school year, one in the fall semester and one in the spring semester. Parents may volunteer to chaperone field trips. All chaperone decisions will be made by the classroom teacher, and field trip chaperones that will attend to a small group must complete the appropriate volunteer clearance procedures with our front office.

Any parent who chaperones a field trip must remain with the field trip, either riding the school bus or following the bus(es) in their personal vehicle, for the entirety of the trip.

If parents who are not chaperoning a field trip need to check out their child from a field trip, they must follow proper protocols which include making a request to the school office at least 48 hours in advance. These occurrences should be rare and are discouraged.

### **HOURS OF SCHOOL**

The school day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. for all grades. School doors remain locked until 7:05 a.m. No students will be admitted prior to that time.

Any child that arrives at school after 7:45 a.m. should report to the office with a parent for a tardy slip. Your child must have a tardy slip in order to enter the

classroom. Please do not drop your child off in our parking lot or on Thunderhead Road. Drop-offs are only to occur in the designated areas (the car line around the back of the school building or in the front of the school once school bus arrival is completed). All children enter through the gym doors prior to 7:45 a.m.

### **ITEM DROPOFF**

Parents are not allowed to drop off items once the school day has started. The intention of this practice is to increase student responsibility and minimize disruption to classroom instruction. The exceptions to this practice will be medication, lunches, glasses, and coats.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

We maintain a lost and found at school. We will be donating these items to charity on a regular basis. Please come by when an item is lost and be sure to label all items (lunch boxes, jackets etc.) with your child's name and teacher's name

### **LUNCH PROGRAM**

Well-balanced lunches, including milk, are offered at Northshore Elementary School. Extra milk, food, and other items as determined by the Food Services department may be purchased for an additional charge.

Free and reduced-priced lunches are available to students who qualify for them. You may obtain this information by completing the online form located at [knoxschools.org](http://knoxschools.org) under Parent Services or by requesting the form from the office or your child's teacher.

In accordance with Knox County policy, the school cafeteria is not allowed to charge lunches. Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:10 a.m. - 7:35 a.m.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Staff members are not able to write letters of recommendation or complete information for private schools or legal/custody issues.

## **NOTES REQUIRED FROM PARENTS**

The school requires notes from parents for the following:

- absences/illness
- walker-request for early dismissal
- permission for field trips
- prolonged absence from school
- any changes to dismissal
- allergic reactions (milk, food, insect)
- specific medical treatment or special health needs
- change of emergency information.

## **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (P.T.O.)**

The Northshore P.T.O. provides invaluable support to the school and community. Our P.T.O. gives to our school through administration of our school clinic and countless other activities. We encourage you to join and to play an active role in our P.T.O.

## **PARTIES AND OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

Each class may have two parties each year. If your family practices specific eating preferences, or has a medical or religious dietary need, please communicate this with your child's teacher at the beginning of the year. Also, know that your child's teacher is human, and it would be helpful if you remind the teacher politely if they send out a request for food items. They are always happy to accommodate or add friendly food options your child can partake in. If you wish to send in a special nonedible treat for your child or their class to celebrate his or her birthday, please check with the classroom teacher several days prior to your child's birthday. Please do not send treats to be eaten in the classroom or cafeteria.

A great option to celebrate birthdays is to call the cafeteria or notify your child's teacher and arrange to pay for ice cream for the class. Birthday cakes, cupcakes, and donuts cannot be allowed for these events.

Please do not send invitations for private celebrations to school for your child's teacher to distribute unless there is an invitation for every student in the class.

Please do not bring or send balloons to school unless your child will be a car rider on that day. Balloons are not allowed on the school bus.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued every nine weeks. Interim progress reports will be sent to parents mid-way through each nine-week period.

### **TEXTBOOKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

All students are responsible for the care of any textbooks that are issued to them. Loss or destruction of these books will require reimbursement to the school system. In some subject areas, textbooks may not be issued to each student because the school may use several different titles rather than the same textbook for all students in the same grade. Some textbooks can be accessed online at [www.eduplace.com](http://www.eduplace.com) and [www.pearsonsuccessnet.com](http://www.pearsonsuccessnet.com).

A fee for art supplies and other student consumable goods will be requested at the beginning of the school year. A letter will be sent home the first day of school concerning this fee and requested school supplies for each grade level.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is provided for children who live one mile or more from the school. This is the policy of the Knox County Board of Education. The Coordinator of Transportation arranges routes and stops. The coordinator can be contacted at 594-1550.

Buses will begin to run at approximately 6:45 a.m. Please check the newspapers or Knox County Schools website the week before school begins to find out the bus schedules.

Any time a student changes his/her regular way of going home, a note concerning the change must be sent to the teacher.

Any student who wishes to ride home on a different bus must also have a note from the parents and be approved by the front office.

## **VISITORS**

Parents volunteers are always welcome in our school. All visitors must report to the school office before making a visit. Visitors must sign in, present identification, and state the reason for the visit. All visitors should obtain and wear a visitors badge from the office, making students and staff aware that procedure has been followed. If you are visiting to volunteer or attend parties, adults should not be accompanied by infants/preschool age children. We aren't able to accommodate parents bringing forgotten items to students once the school day has begun other than student lunches. Due to the capacity of our cafeteria, we also aren't able to accommodate visitors coming to school to have lunch with students. Staff members and P.T.O. will provide a schedule of volunteers to the office each day.

**Photographs:** For the safety of all students, please do not upload student photos from school events to the internet. This includes social networks. This, of course, does not apply to photos of your own children.

All volunteers and visitors must follow the Knox County Volunteers Policy IFCD (revised 8/12) and Knox County Procedure IFCD (revised 10/13). In accordance with this procedure, in order to volunteer in the Knox County Schools, an individual must:

- Sign a confidentiality agreement to protect the rights of students and parents (located in office or online)
- Sign in and out each time they visit a school

- Be punctual and prepared, and notify the appropriate school contact in the event of an absence or delay
- Appear clean, neat and appropriately attired
- Wear an identification tag at all times while on school grounds
- Work with students in area designated by school staff

Only provide food or drink to a student if authorized by the student's teacher or principal. In order to volunteer at a Level 1 or 2 clearance level, you must sign the confidentiality agreement, and the task must take place under the supervision of a Knox County Schools employee and involve little or no student contact for Level 1 or the task takes place under the supervision of a certified employee in a classroom or other group setting for Level 2. In order to volunteer at a Level 3 or 4, a background check must be submitted (can be sent to the office or the child's teacher and it is processed by Knox County). Level 3 involves a task that has direct contact with students under limited supervision by school staff unsupervised without driving students such as a field trip or working in small groups not under the supervision of an employee (in hallway area). Level 4 involves unsupervised contact with students on or off campus that is supervised with driving students. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or the office.