

# NORTHSTAR MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK



## 2026 – 2027 MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM & POLICY

# Staff

## Principal

### Associate Principal

Co-Head Teacher English and P.E. Teacher  
Co-Head Teacher Math and Art Teacher  
Math, Science, and Health Teacher  
Social Studies Teacher  
Math Teacher 7+  
Special Education Teacher  
Office Manager  
Health Room Office Professional  
Instructional Assistant

## Nell Ballard- Jones

### Sarah Wiegand

Vincent Noto  
Janet Bradley  
Lua Carlson  
Scott Mercer  
Shelby Steuber  
Jaclyn Lowdermilk  
Harriet Peterson  
Rachel Pai  
Rachel Pai

## School Mascot

Penguin

## School Colors

Blue and silver

Address: 10903 N.E. 53rd Street, Kirkland 98033

Phone: (425) 936-2390

Email address [hpeterston@lwsd.org](mailto:hpeterston@lwsd.org)

Web page: <https://nsms.lwsd.org/>

Lake Washington School District complies with all state and federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender or disability. This holds true for all district employment and opportunities

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## **Program Features**

Northstar is a choice middle school program for families in the Lake Washington School District. The school opened in 1981, thanks to a group of energetic and dedicated parents who believed that schools should accommodate and support their children's individuality and emphasize a sense of community. Toward this goal, the school promotes an environment of support, mutual trust, and academic excellence for students who are interested in learning. At Northstar, students develop a strong sense of self by recognizing their commitments to learning, to themselves, and to others.

## **Community Success Agreement**

To make sure everyone feels safe and respected at Northstar, I agree to:

1. Show tolerance- respecting those who have different interests, styles, and ways of behaving.
2. Build others up- refraining from insults, mean-spirited comments, and behavior.
3. Use appropriate humor- refraining from humor at others' expense (e.g., jokes that make fun of another person's appearance, behavior, or performance).
4. Be a constructive communicator- making or posting only relevant, class appropriate comments.
5. Practice digital citizenship- demonstrating conscientious use of email, respecting everyone's online work and privacy, and being thoughtful about the digital footprint you are building within school communication systems and beyond.
6. Show integrity- completing your own work and appropriately using and citing all sources.
7. Demonstrate moral leadership- speaking up and intervening when someone is being victimized- even if it is someone you do not like.
8. Expect respect- clearly telling others to stop behaviors that are bothering you; and if they refuse to stop, to bring that matter to the attention of the staff.

## **Support Group**

Central to Northstar's approach is the support group, consisting of a mixed age group of students and a teacher. When students first enter the school, they are assigned to a particular teacher's support group. Support Group meets four days a week for one class periods but may, on occasion, take precedence over regular classes when additional time is needed to deal with serious issues. The objectives of support group are to teach, learn and practice a sense of individual responsiveness and responsibility for one's community. Guided by the teacher, the support group will focus on activities which develop communications skills, teach conflict resolution, problem solving, self-discipline and social skills. The support group also provides an opportunity for the staff and students to have fun together. This helps develop the close rapport shared between our staff and students.

## **Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences**

Northstar provides the opportunity for parent/student/teacher conferences at designated times of the year and as needed. They provide an excellent opportunity to involve everyone in the development of a suitable educational program.

## **Visitors During the School Day**

The staff at Northstar is responsible for the safety and welfare of students when they are at school. Persons who are not Northstar students, designated volunteers or district staff are not allowed on campus during school hours.

## Daily Schedules

| Mon, Tue, Thur, Friday |             | Wednesday |             |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Period 1               | 7:50-8:40   | Period 1  | 7:50-8:33   |
| Period 2               | 8:45-9:35   | Period 2  | 8:35-9:15   |
| Advisory               | 9:40-10:10  | Advisory  | 9:20-9:50   |
| Period 3               | 10:15-11:05 | Period 3  | 9:55-10:35  |
| Period 4               | 11:10-12:00 | Period 4  | 10:40-11:20 |
| Lunch                  | 12:00-12:30 | Period 5  | 11:25-12:10 |
| Period 5               | 12:35-1:25  | Lunch     | 12:10-12:40 |
| Period 6               | 1:30-2:20   |           |             |
| Pride time             | 2:20- 2:25  |           |             |

## Attendance

### Responsibility for Attendance

Students and parents are responsible for school attendance. Within 48 hours of the absence, the parent or legal guardian of any student who is absent from school is required to:

- Leave a phone message on the Northstar Attendance Line 425-936-2390 or
- Send an email to the Office Manager at [hpeterson@lwsd.org](mailto:hpeterson@lwsd.org) or
- Send a message via Parent Square
- If necessary, supply a Pre-arranged absence form for absences over 2 days.

The parent must report the absence for students living at home. Using the chart below and professional judgment, the school will determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused. The parent will be responsible for explaining the circumstances for the absence NOT determining whether the absence was excused or unexcused.

## Definition of Absence Chart

| EXAMPLES OF EXCUSED ABSENCES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | EXAMPLES OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Illness or medical emergency (in certain instances, a doctor's note may be required to verify the absence)<br>Religious observance<br>Family emergencies<br>Pre-arranged medical and dental appointments<br>Counseling appointments<br>School-related field trips (special school programs, pre-arranged community service activities or school activities)<br>College visits<br>Required court proceedings (court document required)<br>Family vacations (only if vacation policy is followed, which includes filling out a pre-arranged absence form) | Oversleeping, alarm clock not working<br>Traffic problems<br>Missing the bus<br>Staying home to do homework<br>Job training or work-related absences<br>Student providing childcare for younger siblings<br>Taking driver's test<br>Shopping for prom dress<br>Taking pet to veterinarian |

## **Transportation**

Public transit is free for riders 18 and younger thanks to Move Ahead Washington, a statewide transportation funding package. You can get your Youth Orca Card here <https://info.myorca.com/youth-ride-free/>

## **Homework Policy after an absence**

If your child is absent, they should check OneNote in Teams to see what homework has been assigned, and check-in with teachers upon returning to school. Upon their return from an excused absence, students will have the number of days absent plus 1 to turn in make-up work.

## **Field Trips**

Northstar is committed to extending the learning of our students by periodically going on educational/cultural/community-building field trips.

Attendance for all field trips is highly recommended.

Full and partial scholarships are available due to family hardship.

## **NAC**

The Northstar Advisory Committee (NAC) is comprised of the parents of students attending Northstar Middle School and has representatives from the school's staff, administration, and sometimes students. The purpose of the NAC is to provide a forum and a mechanism for parents to support the school.

Although the staff and administration are the sole controllers of curriculum content, the NAC plays a valuable role in providing support and feedback for the school program as a whole.

The NAC is involved in after school activities, fundraising, conference weeks, parties, dances, and end of the school year events, and coordinates the resources and funding to make these things happen.

## **School Directory**

Because the Northstar community may come from any area of our district, we provide a school directory so that families are able to communicate better with one another. The directory will be available at the beginning of the school year to families that fill out Northstar's release form.

**Dances/Activities** are dependent on parent involvement.

Students are encouraged to help plan and attend these social functions. In addition to our regular guidelines, the following will apply.

Students may not leave the event without pre-arranged permission or go outside to smoke, drink, or use drugs.

The organizing committee will set the time for each event.

Approval to bring a guest from another middle school to a dance/event will be determined by the parent planning committee.

**Cell Phones:**

Cell phones are to remain turned off during the school day, except during lunch or when otherwise directed by a teacher. Students are to place cell phones in the pouch at the front of the room upon entering the class and will retrieve it before exiting. Failure to comply will result in consequences as outlined below:

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFENSE: Warning + parent contact.

2<sup>ND</sup> OFFENSE: Phone will be confiscated & held until the end of the school day + parent contact.

3<sup>RD</sup> OFFENSE: #2 plus a meeting with the principal or associate principal + parent contact.

4<sup>TH</sup> OFFENSE: Student may not have cell phone use on campus. Cell phones will be dropped off at the office upon arrival at school and will be picked up at the end of the day + parent contact.

5<sup>TH</sup> OFFENSE: #4 + parent contact + possible in-school or out-of-school suspension + a behavior contract.

**Minimum Requirements**

This chart shows how many semesters a student needs to successfully complete at Northstar. Successful completion at Northstar means that the student has completed all requirements. Students attending Northstar who do not complete all requirements will still be able to move on to high school.

Requirements for completion at Northstar:

|                                          | Entering as a<br>6th Grader                          | Entering as a<br>7th Grader                          | Entering as an<br>8th Grader                         |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>English</b>                           | 6 semesters                                          | 4 semesters                                          | 2 semesters                                          |
| <b>Social Studies *</b>                  | 6 semesters<br>Incl. 2 semesters in<br>US/WA History | 4 semesters<br>Incl. 2 semesters in<br>US/WA History | 2 semesters<br>Incl. 2 semesters in<br>US/WA History |
| <b>Math</b>                              | 6 semesters                                          | 4 semesters                                          | 2 semesters                                          |
| <b>Science **</b>                        | 6 semesters                                          | 4 semesters                                          | 2 semesters                                          |
| <b>Art</b>                               | 4 semesters                                          | 2 semesters                                          | 1 semester                                           |
| <b>P.E.</b>                              | 2 semesters                                          | 1 semester                                           | 1 semester                                           |
| <b>Support Group &amp;<br/>Electives</b> | 6 semesters                                          | 4 semesters                                          | 2 semesters                                          |



\*1 year successful completion of US History / WA State History is **REQUIRED** for High School graduation