



Parent and Student Handbook

2025-26

North Park Elementary School
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PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The procedures and policies detailed in this Parent and Student Handbook are grounded in the mission and values of North Park Elementary School. They have been established formally as norms for our school so that employees, students, and parents--note that throughout this Handbook the term *parents* refers not to biological parents alone, but to all legal guardians--can work together to maintain a safe, healthy, respectful, inclusive, and vibrant learning community in which all members may present their authentic selves and thrive. Healthy boundaries and clear expectations for all members of a community, adults and children, are critical to children developing the foundational sense of safety and stability needed to grow intellectually, emotionally, and socially to their fullest potential. In the broadest sense, this is the purpose of the North Park Handbook, along with providing families with a resource for common questions that arise throughout a school year and an understanding of the school's mission, values, structure, and operations. As new policies are adopted, they are added, with or without notice. Some policies and procedures might be effective immediately due to unforeseen circumstances. This Handbook is updated annually by the administrative team.

MISSION

North Park Elementary School is a small school with a big impact. We educate students in our inclusive and engaging school culture; affirming, challenging, and supporting each child as they achieve their full potential as reflective learners and involved, empathetic members of their communities.

Our students grow in the context of a positive, authentic, and committed independent school community of educators who know and appreciate them, peers who care for and support them, and parents and caregivers who engage meaningfully in our community.

CORE EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS

We believe that:

1. Students flourish when they are engaged and energized by their school and teachers
2. All children deserve to feel safe bringing their authentic selves to their teachers and peers, knowing they belong
3. Students learn in impactful and enduring ways when their academic studies are inquiry-based, collaborative, innovative, challenging, and fun
4. Human beings develop a richer understanding across fields of study when they seek out and learn from multiple and diverse perspectives
5. Students achieve success in high school and beyond when they develop flexible and creative problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills
6. Children develop cognitive, social-emotional, and life-skills--with an appreciation for the power of the human imagination--through the study of the arts, world languages and cultures, innovation, and physical education

7. Students are positioned to fulfill their potential when educators and parents work together to prioritize the social-emotional strength of the child, including a positive self-concept, processing and expressing their feelings in healthy ways, flexible thinking, resilience for struggle, self-care, and social conflict resolution skills.
8. All learners benefit from neurodiverse classrooms, since considering unique points of view and interacting with a variety of thinking styles are expansive for everyone
9. Students grow curiosity, cultural literacy, empathy, and agency in new ways through purposeful off-campus educational experiences that engender new perspectives
10. Children thrive in their quest to develop their best selves when they seek to help their communities become more inclusive and just

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

I am a lifelong learner.

I think critically, ask compelling questions, and innovate to solve problems. I listen to and learn from others. I am engaged and resourceful. I find value in both collaboration and independence. I seek new challenges and see them as exciting opportunities to grow. I advocate for myself as a learner. I speak with intention and confidence. I enjoy sharing my ideas with others.

I am a curious individual.

I continue to discover who I am and who I want to be. I am shaped by my experiences and welcome new ones. I have passions and interests and I pursue them with energy. I am creative, optimistic, and open-minded. I appreciate others for who they are, and I treat them and myself with respect. I am grateful for the opportunities I have to grow, and recognize that not everyone has them.

I am part of a whole.

I am an engaged member of many communities, within and beyond my school. I demonstrate compassion and empathy. I seek to understand those who are different from me. In my relationships I feel seen and valued. I make responsible decisions with the greater good in mind. I contribute to positive change.

I am ready.

I am a curious and confident learner. I know how to build relationships with my teachers and peers. I am motivated and resilient. I am mindful, can be fully present, and set priorities. I have the social-emotional skills to seek a healthy balance in my life. I look for solutions, and I advocate for myself and for others. I am ready to meet the challenges of high school, and I feel prepared to excel and lead.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

Board of Trustees' DEIB Statement

The NPES mission and educational program embraces the diversity of our community. We take intentional actions to create an equitable and affirming environment for our students, their caregivers, and our faculty and staff, and we aspire to create a sense of belonging for each of our learners. Our inquiry-based curriculum places high value on multiculturalism and the role of diverse perspectives. We seek to help students develop a robust understanding of themselves and the world around them and inculcate an appreciation for how differences strengthen and enrich our community.

Seven Areas of Purposeful Action

NPES is committed to sustaining a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community for all, with every student, employee, and family being treated with dignity, respect, and compassion as they develop a genuine and meaningful sense of belonging in our school. We want every child to feel that when they are absent our community is not whole, and that their school loves them and will care for them.

There are seven areas of purposeful action NPES engages in to achieve our DEIB goals:

1. Fostering diverse perspectives in the classroom
2. Participating in SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity)
3. Building culturally-responsive pedagogy
4. Developing student voice, affirming and celebrating the authentic self
5. Teaching gender identity development and healthy boundaries
6. Creating purposeful spaces beyond the classroom
7. Seeking to create and sustain a diverse school community united by the NPES educational philosophy and mission

More information about our DEIB work in each of these areas can be found online [here](#).

Gender Support Plan

In keeping with our school's values, the guidance of the Illinois State Board of Education, the best practices of independent schools committed to sustaining diverse, affirming, and inclusive communities, and grounded in the definitive research on how vulnerable non-binary, trans, and gender-fluid children and early adolescents are, NPES maintains this [Gender Support Plan](#) based on ISBE's model and informed by child development experts at Lurie Children's Hospital. The purpose of our plan is to ensure a consistent, intentional, and equitable process for supporting a student with thoughtfulness and care if they share with an employee that they are non-binary, trans, or gender fluid. Through completion of the plan we can create a clear understanding about the ways in which the student's authentic gender will be accounted for and supported at NPES. This plan essentially documents in one place NPES's standing practices related to gender support, and is reviewed annually for updates as educational best practices evolve.

Expressing a DEIB or Social Justice Related Concern as a Parent/Caregiver

Parents who have a concern or wish to discuss and process an experience they've had at NPES related to diversity, equity, inclusion, or social justice are urged to share the concern so the school can continually consider and strengthen its equity practice. Such conversations can be had transparently and respectfully with any trusted faculty or staff member, or they can be shared privately with a member of the school's administrative team, including the Head of School. The concern can also be shared with an employee designated for this purpose who will keep the name of the sender anonymous (note that anonymous concerns can be challenging to address fully). Art Teacher Anna Nardulli currently receives DEIB-related messages for the school and shares them with the Assistant Head of School while maintaining the privacy of the individual who sent the message (provided maintaining that confidence places no one in danger or results in the school violating policies stated in this Handbook, the Employee Handbook, or local, state, or federal law). Ms. Nardulli receives these communications that are kept anonymous at equity@npeschool.org.

ACCREDITATION AND GOVERNANCE

NPES is a preschool through 8th grade non-sectarian independent day school accredited by the highly-regarded [Independent School Association of Central States](#) (ISACS). In the summer of 2021, North Park was again granted full accreditation by ISACS for the next seven-year cycle following a comprehensive self-study and engagement with an ISACS visiting team composed of educators from other ISACS schools. The school also enjoys active membership in the [National Association of Independent Schools](#) and the local [Lake Michigan Association of Independent Schools](#) (our Head of School sits on the LMAIS Board). At the time of publication, NPES enrolls 246 students across preschool through eighth grade, and employs 55 faculty and staff members, 48 of whom are full-time.

North Park is governed by an independent self-sustaining Board of Trustees which collaborates with the Head of School to establish overall school policies, ensure financial stability, and develop long-range strategic goals for the school's continued success. The Board is not responsible for personnel decisions, apart from hiring and evaluating the Head of School, the Board's sole employee. Nor does the Board manage day-to-day administration of the school's operations. Board members are essential as fiduciary stewards of the school's well-being, values, mission, effectiveness, and longevity.

Board of Trustees

- | | |
|-------------------|------------|
| ● Ravi Kalhan | Chair |
| ● Lauren Rocklin | Vice-Chair |
| ● Darren Lubotsky | Treasurer |
| ● Michelle Weber | Secretary |
| ● Hilary Goldfine | Trustee |
| ● Harisha Haigh | Trustee |
| ● Andrew Herman | Trustee |
| ● Anita Pancholi | Trustee |
| ● Davin Peelle | Trustee |
| ● Joshua Samis | Trustee |

- Goran Simic Trustee
- Grey Tanzi Trustee
- Dana Weed Trustee
- Wei Lin Wong Trustee
- John Novick, Jr. Head of School, ex-officio
- Emily Friend Assistant Head of School, ex-officio
- Marshall Warren Director of Business & Operations, ex-officio

FACULTY AND STAFF

Administrative Team

Head of School	John Novick, Jr.
Assistant Head of School	Emily Friend
Director of Business & Operations	Marshall Warren
Director of Admissions & Communications	Anne Zagotta
Director of Development & Marketing	Erin Leyden
Director of Instructional & Operational Technology	Brad Riggs
Director of Learning Services & H.S. Placement	Kim Smith

Administrative Staff

Office Manager	Kerry Maman
Auxiliary Programs Manager (Lunch, Aftercare, Days-Off, Summer's Cool, Sleepunder Saturdays)	Jami Allen
Building & Grounds Specialist	Alejandro Duran

Early Childhood

Preschool Teacher	Deena McCauley
Preschool Associate Teacher	Meagan Lundberg
Junior KG Teacher and Early Childhood Leader	Lauren Russell
Junior KG Associate Teacher	Cindy Do
Early Childhood Aide*	Elvetica Echeverria

Primary School (K-2)

Kindergarten Teacher	Zoe Ardito
Kindergarten Associate Teacher	Shelby Klingberg
First Grade Teacher and Primary Leader	Nikki Lawrence
First Grade Associate Teacher	Kristen Howe
Second Grade Teacher	Sarah Woltmann
Second Grade Associate Teacher	Kat Behling

Intermediate School (3-5)

Third Grade Teacher and Intermediate Team Leader	Talia Blivaiss
Third Grade Associate Teacher	David Hemak
Fourth & Fifth Grade Humanities Teacher	Connor Dillon
Fourth & Fifth Grade STEM Teacher	Alex Hinde
Fourth & Fifth Grade Associate Teacher	Morgan Tate

Middle School (6-8)

Science Teacher
Mathematics Teacher
Language Arts Teacher
Mathematics Teacher*
Social Studies Teacher and Middle Leader

[Nicole Allen](#)
[Rhodi Hotaling](#)
[Melissa Payne](#)
[Molly Schubert](#)
[Mary Wells](#)

Co-Curricular Department

Spanish Teacher Preschool-Third Grade*
Spanish Teacher Fourth-Eighth Grade
Art Teacher Preschool-Second Grade
Art Teacher Third-Eighth Grade (+Design Thinking)
Drama Teacher and Roving Instructor
Music Teacher/Band Director
Choral Director*
Physical Education Teacher
Librarian, Co-Curricular Leader (+Design-Thinking)

[Aimee Schnabel](#)
[Franko Mansilla](#)
[Anna Nardulli](#)
[Luo Wang](#)
[Wendy Andrews](#)
[Justin Past](#)
[Sarah Yates](#)
[Rob Hirsch](#)
[Laura McCammack](#)

Learning Services Department

Director of Learning Services (Chair)
School Counselor
Primary Learning Services Teacher (K-2)*
Intermediate Learning Services Teacher (3-5)*
Middle School Learning Services Teacher (6-8)*

[Kim Smith](#)
[Reyna Smith](#)
[Tessa Forte](#)
[Barbara McKenzie](#)
[Kat Gates](#)

*Part-time faculty members

After Care Associates and Substitute Teachers are included on this [NPES organizational chart](#).

SOFTWARE USED

Software	URL	Contact
NPES Website	https://www.npeschool.org	Erin Leyden and Anne Zagotta
Health Records	https://magnushealth.com	Kerry Maman
3-8 Assignments	https://classroom.google.com	Your Classroom Teacher
PK-2 Daily Activities/ Learning Journal	app.seesaw.me	Your Classroom Teacher
Donations	https://npeschool.ravenna-student.com/portal/ >> Donations	Erin Leyden
Admissions: Contracts &	https://npeschool.ravenna-student.com/portal/	Anne Zagotta

Re-enrollment	ent.com/portal/ >>Admissions	
Student Directory	https://npeschool.ravenna-student.com/portal/ >>Parents	Kerry Maman
Tuition Management	https://npeschool.ravenna-student.com/portal/ >> Student Billing	Marshall Warren
Address Changes	https://npeschool.ravenna-student.com/portal/ >>Profile	Self-Service update contact info as needed
Report Cards	https://npeschool.ravenna-student.com/portal/	Brad Riggs or Kerry Maman
After Care	https://www.procaresoftware.com/	Rebecca Butler

SCHOOL-DAY OPERATIONS

Arrival and Dismissal Times

Drop off and pick up times are staggered across the school to alleviate traffic congestion and to ensure a safe arrival and dismissal for all children. If you are collecting a middle school student at 3:30 p.m. please do not arrive early and park in the pickup lane on Montrose. In regard to families dropping off children in multiple grades (and Before Care), all children dropped off between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. enter the Before Care program for a fee. Children in grades Preschool-8 who are dropped off at 8:00 a.m. or after (on the playground, supervised by school personnel) await their designated entry time into the building, and there is no cost for supervision beginning at 8:00 a.m. (in inclement weather, the supervision beginning at 8:00 a.m. takes place indoors).

Grade	Arrival	Tardy	Dismissal
6-8	8:20 AM	After 8:30 AM	3:30 PM
3-5	8:25 AM	After 8:30 AM	3:15 PM
K-2	8:25 AM	After 8:30 AM	3:10 PM
Preschool	8:25 AM (playlot)	NA	3:00 PM (12:00 half-day)
Every student Prek-8th arriving 8am or after should be dropped to the playlot (weather permitting)	Before Care billing begins @ 7:30 AM		After Care billing begins @ 3:40 PM

- Students not collected by 3:30 p.m. will be assigned to After Care and charged accordingly beginning at 3:40 p.m. Students in 3rd-5th grades who are waiting for

after school clubs, middle school siblings to dismiss, or for open Innovation Lab time will go to the atrium until 3:25 PM (when they will either be walked down to the play lot or remain in the atrium). They can be picked up from after care by their older sibling. Charges for after care do not begin until 3:40 PM.

- Students are to remain in supervised areas before and after school.
- Students will not be allowed to visit their lockers or classrooms before or after school without supervision or prior approval from a faculty.

Arrival and Dismissal Safety Reminders

- To maintain safety for students while also being good neighbors, cars may not stop in the middle of the street on Montrose, nor double park to drop off students. We appreciate your patience in the line.
- There is no parking in the drop-off zone, and parents cannot leave their vehicles while in the drop-off zone.
- If your vehicle is parked nearby, please do not leave your car idling.
- The school schedules a team of Safety Patrol Students supervised by a faculty member who assists students exiting cars during drop off.
- When they are dropped off at school, children should come into the building or go to the playlot.
- Students remain in the building until 8:00 a.m. At 8:00 a.m., all students, including preschoolers, are taken to the playlot and will remain there until dismissed to their classrooms. Middle School students are permitted to enter school at 8:20 a.m.
- Any students who are dropped off after 8:00 a.m. will not be signed into Before Care. Preschool students who arrive at school starting at 8:00 AM report directly to the playground (assuming good weather).
- Students are to remain in supervised areas before and after school. Students will not be allowed to visit their lockers or classrooms before or after school without supervision or prior approval from a faculty member.

Extended Day Care (Before and After Care)

In regard to families dropping off children in multiple grades (and before school care), all children dropped off at North Park between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. enter the before school program for a fee. Children in Grades Preschool-8 who are dropped off at 8:00 a.m. or after (on the playground, supervised by school personnel) await their designated entry time into the building, and there is no cost for supervision beginning at 8:00 a.m. (in inclement weather, the supervision beginning at 8:00 a.m. takes place indoors).

Before care is available from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. After Care is available from 3:10 to 6:00 p.m. for Kindergarten through 8th grade and from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. for preschool. Childcare is generally offered when the school has half days or early dismissal. The cost for care is \$11.00 per hour per child. Any student not picked up by 3:40 p.m. will be signed in to After Care and charged accordingly. Students attending after school activities must be picked up at the conclusion of their program (generally 4:30 p.m.). If these students are not picked up by 4:30 p.m., they will be signed in to After Care and charged accordingly.

Late fees are assessed if a child is picked up late: the first 15 minutes (6:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.) is \$15; then \$1.00 per minute is charged thereafter. Please call the school if a late arrival is anticipated (773) 327- 3144.

Usage and resulting billing will be administered through Procure. All charges must be paid in full each month.

Sometimes students forget books or materials in their classrooms. If students come early to get their work or materials, they need to sign in Before Care and then go to the office to have one of our personnel open the classroom or check with the classroom teacher. After school, students may not go into the classrooms after 3:30 p.m. because many teachers are meeting or conferencing there.

Homework Help is provided Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 3:30-4:00 p.m. for students who are signed in to After Care. Homework Help provides a quiet time for students to complete assignments or read silently. An Associate Teacher supervises and is available to assist students during this time. Students who do not exhibit appropriate behavior may be asked to return to general After Care. School iPads may be used for homework but will need to be put away once the student returns to the general After Care setting.

There is no use of personal electronic devices or school iPads for entertainment purposes in Before or After Care. Devices will be confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian in the office. Any contact via cell phone by students with their parents should occur with staff supervision.

Lunch

Families may choose to order lunch from the lunch program vendor ([Yay Lunch!](#)) at additional expense or send children with their own lunch from home. Lunch and recess are tech-free times for all students except for Middle School indoor recess, with school iPads allowed at the discretion of faculty supervising that space. Students are expected to clean up after themselves. No lunches or snacks should contain items that include nuts or nut derivatives in order to keep all children safe from severe allergic reactions.

Attendance Policies and Procedures

If your child will be absent for the day, please email your child's teacher and the school's office manager (maman@npeschool.org) by 8:25 a.m. to report an absence. Each teacher records class attendance in the morning. If a child is not in class and the parent has not called in, the school will contact the parents to determine the whereabouts of that child.

NPES requires students who are enrolled to attend school daily during the school year. Exceptions to this policy include cases of illness, death in the family, observance of a religious holiday, or an emergency. Excessive absences not related to these exceptions may result in administrative follow-up. NPES discourages parents from taking children out of school for vacations during the school year. If a student is absent from school, they cannot attend or participate in after school activities.

Early Dismissal Requests for Students

A written note/email or phone call from a parent requesting an early dismissal must be provided to the teacher and the office manager the morning of the requested dismissal. Parents should email the teacher and the Office Manager (maman@npeschool.org). A child will not be released to anyone other than those listed on their pick-up permission form without the proper authorization.

Schoolwork After Absences

Work for students who are ill may be picked up upon their return to school. Teachers are not expected to prepare work in advance for students who will be going on vacation during school days. Makeup work will be provided upon the student's return. It is the responsibility of the child to complete missed work according to classroom policies. Students and parents of students in grades three through eight are encouraged to utilize Schoology access for information regarding missed assignments.

Celebrating Birthdays and Holidays

Due to food allergies and food safety concerns, NPES does not allow edible treats for birthday celebrations. Teachers share their grade level plan for non-food celebrations at each grade level at the start of the school year.

At NPES, we strive to make holiday celebrations inclusive and respectful. These celebrations are an excellent opportunity to provide a window into a culture or understand more about a group of people, as well as reinforce the diversity of all community members' experiences. Parents who are involved in organizing holiday parties are asked to consider carefully that the celebration is representative of many experiences. Depicting a diversity of beliefs and customs is important when celebrating with students, as is being culturally respectful and sensitive to the risks of engaging in or encouraging cultural appropriation.

THE PARENT ROLE AT NORTH PARK

Parents at North Park Elementary School play a vital role in the educational experience of students, and always have. All parents are members of the *NPES Parents' Association* and share the following responsibilities as members of the school community:

1. Treat one another and all students and employees with respect and dignity. This means not participating in gossip about students, their families, or employees; not exerting undue pressure on employees to make a decision (or organizing others to do so); respecting the healthy professional boundaries established by all NPES personnel; and respecting the expertise and good will of NPES' faculty and staff.
2. At least one parent/caregiver from each household is expected to attend the three regularly-scheduled Parents' Association meetings (fall, winter, and spring) featuring NPES program news and highlights and topics of interest to parents (communicated through the PA Steering Committee who organize and host the meetings). The spring meeting includes a vote on the slate of Trustees by the Board.

3. Contribute to the success of the school in whatever way possible, including charitable giving; volunteering; gifts in-kind; admissions referrals; the donation of services; and adherence to all policies in this Handbook
4. Participate in annual fundraising events such as Gala, Fall Cook Off and Fin Run
5. Volunteer as room parents, recess supervisors, PA Steering Committee members, speakers, Gala chairs, coaches, parent club leaders and participants, and Trustees
6. Assist teachers and staff as requested
7. Commit to growing personal cultural literacy just as our employees and students do so that all members of our community feel included in the life of our school

Parent Engagement in Committees

Committees rely on the volunteerism and expertise of NPES parents who are encouraged to join a group based on their areas of professional knowledge or interest. For more information about the menu of volunteer opportunities through committees offered at NPES, please contact the Head of School. Board committees require appointment by the Board of Trustees following a process, while Association committees simply require interest and a commitment to participate. Among the Board committees are Development, Finance, Facilities, Nominating/Governance, and Educational Excellence. Current Parents' Association groups include Cultural Celebrations, Service Learning, Neurodiversity, and Moms' and Dads' Clubs (both open to NPES community members of all genders). In addition, numerous parent social groups organized around common interests (i.e. yoga, music, basketball, etc.) are formed annually.

School-Related Social Media Posting by Parents/Caregivers

Posting on social media about joyful and meaningful moments you and your child experience at NPES is understandable, and even appreciated. However, social media posts by parents/caregivers related to school events, programs, and communications should not include photographs of other students or employees without their (or their guardian's) permission. The school's official social media channels managed by employees on behalf of the school have permission to share photographs of members of our school community engaged in school activities without names (unless that permission is withheld in writing, or unless permission is secured to use a name for a limited, specific purpose, such as celebrating an achievement or milestone), but we always do so with intention and care. All members of our community who have a concern to address with the school, including parents/caregivers, are expected to follow the steps detailed below to discuss their concern, not seek to address concerns via social media.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS AS A PARENT

All parents at NPES agree to these norms for behavior in addressing any concerns that arise, as they have proven useful in addressing concerns effectively, promoting a respectful and healthy community for all, and modeling for children how to communicate and collaborate with an open mind to resolve misunderstandings or disagreements. Ours is a culture of good will and these norms for parent conduct help sustain that culture.

1. First, communicate with the classroom teacher, since you can resolve most questions or concerns that affect your child with the educator who knows them

- best, and who spends the most time with them. The teacher nearly always has a fuller, richer perspective to offer, and most concerns are resolved here.
2. When collaborating with school employees, listen for understanding (rather than debate), and they will strive to do the same for you.
 3. NPES teachers and administrators are to be regarded as the authority in making educational decisions at the school, including curriculum, pedagogy, assessment/grading, daily operational policies, and decisions related to student conduct/behavior. This does not mean that honest disagreement cannot be given voice, but the expectation is that all will demonstrate respect for our employees' training/expertise, experience, professional judgment, and good will. We will always listen to and think about the perspectives shared by parents, and integrate them into our thinking, even if a decision is not reversed.
 4. Accept that some challenging situations in human development are more process-oriented, and take time; there isn't always an easy answer, or a quick fix. And there is much to be gained in terms of growth and development through patience, flexible thinking, and time to reflect and process before acting. See the big picture.
 5. Raise issues respectfully and thoughtfully. If an issue involves your child/children, bring concerns to the classroom teacher first, and do so as someone seeking information and understanding. If you've been triggered by your child's emotions, that is understandable. But perhaps that is not the best time to send a long email or drop by the room for a moment...when the conversation may deserve much more thought and time.
 6. Recognize that it is not always possible for a faculty or staff member to return a call or email quickly, and in some instances, may take a day to do so. If it is time sensitive or urgent on a school day, please call. While it is fine to email after hours or over the weekend when necessary, please recognize that you will likely not hear back until school resumes unless it is a safety issue.
 7. If the issue is not resolved, or if perceived to be widespread beyond the classroom, bring your concerns to the Head of School to discuss further.

In regard to the Board of Trustees, while the Board encourages parent communication and interaction on appropriate topics, the Board is not responsible for the administration of day-to-day operations of the school. If the issue does not present a school-wide concern or challenge existing school policy, the Board will defer to the teacher/Head of School for resolution. Issues concerning student or teacher conduct, academic achievement, or discipline typically do not constitute a school-wide concern or challenge to warrant Board involvement. Confidentiality policies may prevent Board members from having all the pertinent information about a given situation and thus cannot responsibly respond to parents on some matters.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Student Directory

Each year a Student Directory is made available to NPES families. This is for family use only and not intended to be used or shared with others for non-school related commercial or charitable solicitations. Please log in to <https://npeschool.ravenna-student.com/portal/> to

access the directory.

Changes to Contact Information

Please notify Office Manager [Kerry Maman](mailto:maman@npeschool.org) (maman@npeschool.org) of any changes to your contact information. Your family is responsible for updating any changes to your home address, work address, phone numbers, or email addresses in Schoology, Magnus, Seesaw, Procure, and Ravenna. If you're having difficulty making changes, please contact Ms. Maman.

Contacting Faculty and Staff

Parents, administration, and faculty work together to support all NPES students. NPES staff will make every effort to respond to emails and other phone messages within 24 hours. We pride ourselves on our responsiveness and care for our students, and we also want our school employees to lead balanced and healthy lives away from school with their own families. We don't see this as an *either-or* proposition, but instead as an intentional balance we seek to maintain for the well-being of our community, and to model for our students. The goal of all communication with parents is to build a strong and positive partnership to help students achieve their greatest personal success. Respectful and appropriate communication between home and school is expected from all stakeholders.

Teacher Office Hours

K-8 teachers at NPES will hold office hours for a total of one hour (before and/or after school) each week. Teachers will post their schedule for office hours in Schoology or Seesaw, however, the schedule is subject to change based on student needs. Any changes to the schedule will be communicated.

Office hours are scheduled to allow students to receive small group academic support outside of class time. Student needs take priority during a teacher's office hours; however, parents may also use this time to conference with a teacher by appointment. If a student will be utilizing office hours, the teacher must be notified by the parent (and the student when appropriate) by email in advance of the scheduled office hours.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are a vital component of the relationship between home and school. Conferences are held schoolwide in October and March (see the [school calendar](#) for dates). Fall conferences, just over a month into the school year, tend to be intake meetings during which parents/caregivers share important background information about their student while teachers offer early impressions and any available insights on progress and goals. Students in 3rd through 8th grade may be asked to attend spring conferences with their parents as they practice the skills of reflection and self-advocacy, and participate in developing their own goals for growth. Parents are expected to sign up in a timely manner for conferences when notified via *Shark Bites* (our weekly electronic newsletter).

At any time throughout the year teachers or parents may request a meeting. Appointments are required and should be made at least 24 hours in advance of a school

visit or virtual conference.

Shark Bites Weekly Newsletter

The school's weekly electronic newsletter, *Shark Bites*, is distributed community-wide via email most Thursdays throughout the school year and periodically through the summer.

Currents E-Zine

The school's educational magazine, [Currents](#), is distributed at least twice a year via email, with print copies available at the school. *Currents* is designed to inspire, inform, and spark conversation on issues in education and child development, and features articles written by NPES stakeholders. *Currents* is a celebration of the creative, meaningful, and diverse currents that flow through the NPES community.

MEDICAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Sick Policy

The school's operational policies related to illness and student attendance (including but not limited to COVID-19) can be found [here](#).

Health Records

The State of Illinois and the City of Chicago require schools to maintain current health records for all children. North Park Elementary School uses Magnus Health to collect, evaluate, and store student health records. Parents will be given login instructions prior to the start of the school year. Requirements by grade level and forms requested by NPES include:

ALL Preschool 3-year-old Students and NEW Preschool 4-year-old Students:

- Child Health Examination
- Complete Immunization Record signed and stamped by a doctor*

Kindergarten Students (K):

- Child Health Examination
- Complete Immunization Record signed or stamped by a doctor*
- Dental Exam on Illinois form
- Eye Exam on Illinois form dated within one year of the first day of school

Second Grade Students (2nd):

- Dental Exam on Illinois form

Sixth Grade Students (6th):

- Child Health Examination
- Complete Immunization Record signed and stamped by a doctor*
- Dental Exam on Illinois form

New Students K-8

- Child Health Exam on Illinois form
- Complete/Current Immunization Record stamped and signed by health care provider

- Dental Exam on Illinois form
- Eye Exam on Illinois form dated within the last 12 months

[Illinois Physical Health & Immunization Exam Form](#)

[Illinois Dental Exam Form](#)

[Illinois Eye Exam Form](#)

[*Minimum Immunization Requirements Entering a Child Care Facility or School in Illinois](#)

Immunizations not given due to medical reasons (i.e., allergy, adverse reaction, immunodeficiency) or not at scheduled times must be documented by a healthcare provider. The parent must document immunizations not given based on religious grounds. Documentation can be included directly on the medical form or in a separate letter accompanying the form.

Medicine Dispensing Authorization

If your child needs to take medication during school a new medication authorization form is needed each year. Complete the Permission for Prescription Medications form in your Magnus account. No medications are given to students without authorization from a parent or health care provider. If your child uses an inhaler for asthma or requires an emergency EpiPen for allergic reactions, contact the Office Manager. An allergy and/or asthma action plan form should be completed in your Magnus account. School personnel incur no liability for injuries occurring when administering asthma medication, an epinephrine auto-injector, or an opioid antagonist.

NPES allows the self-administration and/or self-carry of asthma, diabetes, seizure medication and epinephrine injectors upon receipt of necessary documents in Magnus.

Allergic Reaction Protocol

Parents who have children with allergies are encouraged to meet with the child's teacher early in the school year. Together, teachers and parents working cooperatively may prevent severe reactions and the school will be better prepared, in case of a severe reaction. Please note that any allergy will require an action plan signed by a physician.

Nut Allergy Awareness and Safety Policy

NPES makes every effort to maintain awareness of students' allergies to nuts, and the effect that proximity to nuts and nut-based products can have on those students (physically, emotionally, and in terms of inclusion/exclusion). Each enclosed space in the school is designated as a "nut-aware" zone. The school aims to be nut and peanut free at all times, including lunches and snacks. No student should come to school with food items that contain nuts or nut derivatives.

Food brought to school for class parties or activities must be nut free, store bought, and not manufactured on equipment or in a facility containing nuts. It is also most inclusive for students when a gluten-free option is provided at such gatherings, so that no child is left

out of the celebration. The ingredient list of any food item sent to school to share among students should be examined carefully for nuts and/or ingredients manufactured in facilities that also process nuts and nut products. Sharing of foods by students themselves is prohibited so that all remain safe.

Health Services

The NPES office has first aid kits available. NPES contracts with professional personnel to do speech/language and occupational therapy screenings during the school year. Other testing that is indicated by student performance can be referred to the appropriate specialist in cooperation with the parents. The parents are responsible for covering the costs of any such additional testing.

Health Policy

The regulation of the State of Illinois Department of Health shall be observed regarding the exclusion from school of children when there is a contagious disease diagnosis. Students are sent home if their temperature is 100.4 degrees or above. Students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Parents are to notify the office when a child has contracted a contagious disease. Students must be vomit- and diarrhea-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Student Accident Insurance

NPES provides student accident insurance which is supplemental to parent's primary health insurance. The insurance will not duplicate benefits paid by any other plan. Accidents must be reported to the school within 20 days of the incident. Questions regarding claim procedures should be directed to First Agency, Inc at 269-381-6630. Claim forms are available in the school office.

Excuses from Physical Education

If a student is to be excused from gym class, a written note is necessary. If the child needs to miss more than one week, a doctor's note is expected.

Concussions and Head Injuries

Students and student athletes must comply with the Illinois' Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act when participating in any athletic activity, including practice or competition. Staff members will notify the parent/guardian of a student who exhibits symptoms consistent with that of a concussion. In the event of a concussion or head injury, a student must be removed from participation or competition at that time and that such student will not be allowed to return to play unless cleared to do so by an Illinois licensed physician. Parents who have children who participate as student athletes are required to review and consent to the school policy on concussions and head injuries in the Magnus Health system as directed by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Care of Students with Diabetes

If your child has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan must be submitted to the school through your Magnus Health Account. Parents/guardians are responsible for and must:

1. Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school for their child.
2. Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
3. Sign the Diabetes Care Plan.
4. Grant consent for and authorize designated school representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan. For further information, please contact the Office Manager.

Medical Cannabis Administered at School

The following procedure must be followed for the administration of medical marijuana to students at NPES, in accordance with Public Act 100-0660, "Ashley's Law," and Public Act 101-0370.

1. North Park Elementary School authorizes a parent or guardian or any other individual registered with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) as a designated caregiver of a student who is a registered qualifying patient to administer a medical cannabis infused product to the student on the premises of the school if both the student (as a registered qualifying patient) and the parent or guardian or other individual (as a registered designated caregiver) have been issued registry identification cards. A copy of the registration cards will be given to the school. The Office Manager will verify through IDPH that the cards are valid.
2. The student's authorized medical provider (physician or certified nurse practitioner) shall complete and sign the ACS Medication Permission form and attach a copy of the current written certification for the use of medical marijuana.
3. Arrangements will be made between the school administration and the primary caregiver to schedule the administration of medical marijuana in a manner that will minimize disruption to school operations and the student's educational program, and to minimize the risk of exposure to another student.
4. Medical marijuana must be brought to school by the registered caregiver, and may not be held, possessed or administered by anyone other than the primary caregiver. The student may only possess the medical marijuana during the actual taking of the dose. Medical marijuana administered in school must be in non-smokable/non-vaping form. If the administering of medical marijuana is to be done in a school building, during school hours, or before/after school on school property, the administering registered caregiver must check-in at the school office upon arrival and check-out at the office following the administration of medical marijuana. Upon checking-out the caregiver shall transport any remaining medical marijuana off school premises.
5. Medical marijuana may only be administered in locations approved by school administration.

STUDENT RECORDS

In addition to birth certificates and documentation of health examinations, NPES is required to maintain records regarding the academic growth of each student. These records are available to parents to review in the company of the Head of School and/or Director of Learning Services, by appointment. Should parents enroll their student in another school, they can request that NPES send academic records to the student's new school. Unofficial records will be sent by NPES to the new school within ten (10) days of the parent's request provided the family account balance is zero. For faculty or staff at NPES to communicate with any outside providers who may be working with a student, NPES must have a current Consent to Release Information on file with the Director of Learning Services. This document must be updated each academic year to include contact information of any provider that the parents wish to include on their child's academic team.

Upon notification by the Illinois State Police of a student's disappearance, NPES shall flag the record of that student in such a manner that whenever a copy of or information regarding the record is requested, NPES will be alerted to the fact that the record is that of a missing person. NPES shall immediately report to the Illinois State Police any request concerning flagged records or knowledge as to the whereabouts of any missing person. Upon notification by the Illinois State Police that the missing person has been recovered, the school or other entity shall remove the flag from the student's record.

ROOM PARENTS

One way for parents to participate at NPES is to become a Room Parent. Tasks include helping the teacher with class-related duties, including contacting other parents for help on projects or field trips, arranging for parent involvement in class parties, organizing teacher appreciation week activities, and hosting the year-end luncheon. Optimally, each class will have two to three room parents (parents interested in serving as a room parent should contact the Office Manager Kerry Maman). In addition, a smaller group of Room Parents volunteers to serve as a steering committee, working with the Head of School and Assistant Head of School in planning agendas for Association meetings that are relevant and responsive to NPES parents' needs and interests.

FIELD STUDIES

Each classroom teacher plans field studies during the year. A field study fee is included in school fees, so NPES will not collect money for most local educational trips. However, parents might incur an additional fee for optional special excursions. Upon signing of the contract, permission is granted for student participation in field studies. Seesaw, Schoology, and the school calendar will be updated to inform parents of field trips. Parents can be invited to help supervise students on a field trip. Parents are not to bring other children along.

OVERNIGHT TRAVEL PROGRAM

NPES organizes several multi-day overnight educational trips for 5th-8th grade students during the school year. For a comprehensive outline of NPES' student travel program please visit [here](#). There is a fee for participation and families may opt out of these trips. For domestic and international guidelines and expectations, please visit [here](#). By signing off on this handbook students and parents agree to these guidelines.

SERVICE LEARNING

Through service learning, students acquire and use academic skills to become leaders, perform needed service and increase civic participation, reflect on and learn from their experiences as they define who they are, and provide tangible benefits that serve the community. Service learning brings together the five competencies of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

At NPES we feel strongly about connecting with our community, from relationships within the school to the broader neighborhood and city. Our students are learning on campus, in the surrounding and nearby neighborhood and across the city. Students gain a deep knowledge of a topic; the learning piece is what sets service-learning apart from volunteering and what makes for meaningful work. We make intentional curricular connections in our work and have content resources in place at each grade level so that teachers are implementing specific lessons around their topic. There are clear service or action components at least twice a year, and our students are frequently out in the community working with partners.

All NPES students are expected to behave in a way that represents the school in a positive light when out in the community. Students should be respectful and engaged during service learning experiences. Service Learning topics may include:

- gardening
- generational support
- food insecurity
- immigration
- local heroes
- environmental impacts
- social justice
- student choice

SUSTAINABILITY

NPES promotes environmental sustainability within our school with the support of all members of our community. NPES partners with WasteNot to compost our organic waste. Students should place food scraps in green bins in classrooms or the large compost bin in the atrium during snack and lunch. Recycling bins are also available in each classroom and should be utilized throughout the school day.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

School and Classroom Security

Parents and guests are required to sign-in upon entering the school, doing so at the check-in window in the front vestibule on Montrose Avenue. Parents and students may not open the door for visitors without permission from the main office. All persons shall abide by the regulatory signs posted on school property.

Any persons violating the provisions of the school's policy with respect to visitor registration will be asked to leave the school premises. The school utilizes security cameras to monitor the public areas of the campus.

NPES Employees are Mandated Reporters

All employees of the school are mandated by law to report, or cause a report to be made, to the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services whenever they have reasonable cause to believe a child, known to the employee in their official or professional capacity, may be abused or neglected. The Illinois DCFS also requires NPES employees to acknowledge that privileged communication between NPES professional and client is not grounds for failure to report. Reporting is done by calling the DCFS Hotline at 1-800-252-2873 or 1-800-25ABUSE.

Mandated Reporting of Firearm Incidents and Drug Offenses to Law Enforcement

All weapons are prohibited at NPES. Illinois State law requires the Head of School to report to Chicago Police Department and the Illinois State Police, the following events:

- Firearm incidents in, on, or around school property.
- Instances of drug violations in, on, or around school property.

If you or your child become aware or suspicious of any of the above events, you are urged to immediately contact the Head of School and your child's homeroom teacher.

Compliance with Faith's Law

The school will provide notice to the parents/guardians of the student if there is an investigation of an allegation of sexual misconduct by an employee, as well as if formal action takes place against the employee as a result of that investigation. In addition, [here](#) is the sexual abuse response and prevention resource guide for parents published by the Illinois State Board of Education. Also in compliance with Faith's Law, NPES verifies with previous employers who serve children that the finalist candidate has no evidence of sexual misconduct in their past. All newly hired employees are required to participate in a background criminal history screening performed by the State of Illinois Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Background Checks and Fingerprinting of Employees

All employees of NPES are required to undergo fingerprinting and a background check at time of hire. Volunteers who will have occasion to work with students without NPES staff present must first pass a fingerprint background check. Fingerprinting forms can be picked up from the Office Manager.

Permission for Pick Up

At the time of registration/re-enrollment, parents identify those who have permission to pick up a child other than a custodial parent or guardian. It is important to notify the child's teacher and the office should pick up procedures or the party responsible for pick up change. Any person outside of the custodial parent or guardian picking up a child should be prepared to provide photo identification to match the notification by the custodial parent or guardian.

School Functions Off Campus

The Winter Showcase, Graduation Ceremony, and theater performances are held at a venue other than the school. For children's safety, the school's legal responsibility, and for insurance reasons, these guidelines must be followed:

- Parents/guardians must attend the school functions with their children.
- All students, unless otherwise notified, are to sit with parents/guardians.
- Children must stay in the designated area unless accompanied by a parent/guardian.

ELEVATOR

Students may not use the elevator unless accompanied by an adult or with adult permission. Students with injuries will need a doctor's note stating the length of time accommodations may be needed.

BICYCLES

There are bike racks on the sidewalk adjacent to the main entrance of NPES. Students are responsible for ensuring their bicycles are securely locked to the rack. NPES is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of bikes stored at the racks.

CELL PHONES/SMART WATCHES AT SCHOOL

Preschool-2nd Grade

Cell phones and smart watches can be brought to school at the student's own risk and are to be turned off and kept in backpacks or lockers for students in grades PK-2nd unless the student has asked a teacher for permission. If permission is granted by a teacher, the student should use the device responsibly and for what the teacher granted the use for. Due to the possible disruption to class, devices must remain off until a student exits the building unless given permission.

Third-Eighth Grade

For students in 3rd-8th grade smartphones and smart watches must be placed in each class' designated personal device cabinet upon entering their first class each morning, a cabinet that will be locked throughout the school day to be opened at dismissal in the last classroom of the day.

In addition, digital citizenship lessons are embedded across grades 3-8 to assist students in learning how to use their devices in safe, healthy, and kind ways, or as one expert put it, "How to be a smart kid with a phone, rather than a kid with smartphone."

Any student who needs to contact a parent/caregiver by phone should ask for teacher permission to visit the school office to do so, and any parent who needs to communicate a message to a student should contact the teacher and the school office to do so. In an emergency situation, school personnel have school phones, the intercom system, and their own personal devices to use as needed.

Any student in grades 3-8 who fails to turn in their personal device in the morning will have their device taken to be stored in the Head of School's office until a parent/caregiver comes to collect it (even if that's overnight). A second offense will result in the student not being allowed to bring their personal device to school for one month.

Cell Phones/Smart Watches on Field Trips and Overnight Travel

The policies described above for all grade levels apply to field trips that take place on school days, with all students leaving their smart devices at school as detailed in these policies. Rest assured that multiple faculty chaperones, bus drivers, and parent volunteers have their devices at-the-ready in the event of an emergency.

As for school-sponsored overnight travel, smart devices, as has always been the case, are not allowed on the 5th/6th Grade Outdoor Education trips due to the nature of the curriculum and experiences curated for students by faculty and camp staff. Smart devices *may* be allowed on middle school overnight trips (such as the Washington, D.C. trip, the Civil Rights Tour, and trips abroad to Spanish-speaking countries) with clear boundaries, guidelines, and purposes communicated to students by faculty and admin chaperones. However, NPES does reserve the right to conduct these and any middle school trip without smart devices being allowed, at its sole discretion.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency Communications

North Park utilizes the SchoolMessenger system to deliver text messages straight to your mobile phone with important information about events, school closings, safety alerts, and more. You can participate in this free service by sending a text message of "Y" or "yes" to our school short code number, 67587. A test communication is sent to all families by October 31 to ensure proper contact information.

Campus Evacuation Plan

In the event of an emergency that causes the need to evacuate the NPES campus, we will go to the Ravenswood United Church of Christ gym (2050 W Pensacola Ave), Welles Park (2333 W Sunnyside Ave), and/or Sulzer Library (4455 N Lincoln Ave).

Emergency Drills

Fire, severe weather, and school lockdown drills are held annually (fire drills are performed regularly under the guidance of the Chicago Fire Department, and lockdown drills take place under the supervision of an expert in law enforcement/school safety). In emergency circumstances, students will not be dismissed from school until circumstances allow for a

safe dismissal, and unless parents are able to collect them personally.

Emergency Operations Plan

NPES maintains a detailed *Emergency Operations Plan* that all employees have ready access to that provides guidance for all personnel under a variety of crisis situations, including: fire emergencies and drills; severe weather emergencies and drills; intruders on campus; three levels of lockdown procedures (clear hallways due to a medical emergency that is not a threat to anyone else; shelter due to an off-campus threat in proximity to the school; and cope with an imminent threat to safety inside the building or anywhere on-campus); hostage events; bomb threats; campus evacuations (leaving campus to remain safe); reverse campus evacuations (returning to campus to remain safe); medical emergencies; and severe allergic reactions. These procedures are available for viewing by parents/caregivers upon request *except for those that detail NPES' responses to threats of intentional harm by others*; these procedures are not shared beyond school employees and security advisors because broader circulation could compromise the effectiveness of our procedures in a crisis. Our *Emergency Operations Plan* is updated annually.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The curriculum at NPES is rooted in our mission of “instilling a sense of curiosity, a passion for learning, and a commitment to having an impact on the broader community.” Core elements of our guiding principles keep us focused on the overarching mission and inform our curricular and pedagogical choices.

Emotional and Physical Health Curriculum

NPES provides health education on the following topics based on the guidelines from the Illinois State Board of Education and our school's values and mission: human ecology and health; human growth and development; prevention and control of disease; age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education; public and environmental health; consumer health; safety education and disaster survival; mental health and illness; medical and legal ramifications of alcohol, drug and tobacco use; cancer prevention and detection education; and cultural competency, including gender identity and gender expression (in partnership with Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago), and other aspects of human identity, like race, ethnicity, faith, body shape, physical differences, neurodiversity, and more. Some of this curriculum is taught by our School Counselor in social-emotional skills lessons across all grade levels, some by classroom teachers or middle school advisors, and some by the team of educators from Lurie. One of NPES' health and well-being curriculum partners is Erika's Lighthouse, an organization providing teachers with curriculum and resources for students on mental health.

Curriculum

While NPES integrates critical thinking, collaboration, social-emotional well-being, self-confidence and self-reliance, empathy, resilience, study skills/habits, technology skills, design thinking, creative problem-solving, cultural competency, digital citizenship, and self-expression into instruction across many areas, our core academic subject matters taught include Literacy (reading and writing), Mathematics, Science (Laboratory and

STEM), Social Studies, Spanish Language and Cultures, Creative Drama, Visual Art, Music, Library and Information Literacy, and Physical Education.

In addition to the core curriculum, students in grades 6th through 8th have a weekly elective each quarter which is interest-based. The middle school and co-curricular teams facilitate the electives, providing students with course descriptions and allowing students to choose their elective.

Student Confidentiality Policy

NPES provides each student and their family rights to privacy that will be protected to the fullest extent possible. The school acknowledges that both state and Federal law protect such rights to privacy with respect to student records and other sensitive information. All employees of NPES are expected to respect these rights, as well as comply with all applicable rules, regulations and laws, completely. Willful violation of the applicable rules, regulations and laws will result in disciplinary action being taken by the school.

Learning Services Program

North Park believes that all students are capable and can be successful if supported in ways that meet their needs. NPES students are admitted to and retained if their diverse learning needs can be supported within our program. NPES' Learning Services Department—composed of the Director, three part-time Learning Services Teachers, one full-time School Counselor, and the private independent providers who work with select students through the CPS-administration of federal funding for that purpose—partner with classroom teachers and families to understand, identify, and support diverse learning needs and the feelings they may generate in school-aged children.

Our teachers and curriculum are responsive and adaptive based on student levels and needs as determined by ongoing assessments and observations. While we provide accommodations and differentiate instruction in the classroom, we do not modify the grade-level expectations for individual students. Should more specialized needs be identified through an evaluation, the Learning Services Department works with parents, classroom teachers, and outside providers (paid for by the parents or by CPS-administered federal funding) to develop and institute individualized appropriate supports, which may include determining accommodations for success and monitoring progress. A Learning Service Plan including a student's strengths, challenges, interests, diagnoses, and recommended accommodations will be written and updated annually. Learning Service Plans are limited to a three year period but will be renewed provided documentation of a continued need/diagnosis is provided. Accommodations are provided to all students as they are needed, but the Learning Service Plan ensures accommodations specific to the student's learning profile are considered. In the rare case that a student requires more intensive or individualized support than we can provide in our program, we work with families to find a more appropriate school placement.

The Student Advocacy Team (SAT)

All students are encouraged to utilize the small-group assistance that is available during office hours or study hall (for middle school) as an initial step when academic challenges

arise. NPES faculty are also encouraged to refer students who appear to need additional support to the Student Advocacy Team (SAT). SAT is composed of the Director of Learning Services and two Learning Services Teachers as primary members. The School Counselor (SC) also serves as a primary member of SAT when a central concern for the student is social emotional and/or when a student familiar to the SC is being discussed. Faculty members with related knowledge of the student or expertise in the area of need may also be involved in SAT. The student's primary classroom teachers are always involved when a student is discussed.

The purpose of SAT is to create a collaborative space in which to problem solve for students in need. SAT is responsible for creating and integrating systems of support for use in differentiating and accommodating for the diverse learning profiles in the classroom. SAT members will participate in informal meetings (SAT chat) with faculty throughout the school year to formulate a plan for more individualized support of individual students. Should implementation of more specialized intervention be deemed necessary, a student may be referred for a SAT staffing. In this case, the student's family will be notified of the referral. The team (SAT, referring faculty member, and any additional related faculty members) will then meet to establish goals and a plan for action to address the student's challenges and advance the student's academic achievement. When goals have been established, a member of the Learning Services Department will work with the family, the student, when age-appropriate, and the faculty to monitor the student's progress.

Following a SAT referral and its subsequent recommendations, the Director of Learning Services may refer a student for a comprehensive evaluation (neuropsychological, speech, occupational therapy) or interventive support by an outside provider (tutoring) based on the specific learning needs, strengths, and challenges observed. NPES is committed to working with all families in an honest, transparent, respectful, and constructive manner, reflecting our school's culture of good will.

Coordination with Outside Providers

As part of the Learning Services Department, NPES has added two part-time faculty members (Learning Services Teachers) to help identify students in the primary grades who may benefit from additional support early in their schooling and to help support students in middle school who have been identified as neurodiverse. We also understand that a student's academic, physical, or social-emotional needs may require specialized support paid for by the parents and provided by professionals outside the school, so we have designated spaces on campus for providers to work with a child during school hours, when appropriate. When outside providers are hired by families (at NPES' recommendation) to support a student's classroom experience, parents are required to make NPES aware of any evaluations or diagnoses and provide consent annually for relevant faculty, administration, and outside providers to communicate regarding the student's needs, plan, and progress. Any such communication and documentation will be kept confidential in accordance with the Student Confidentiality Policy.

Coordination with Chicago Public Schools (CPS)

When appropriate and/or at the request of the family, the Director of Learning Services will seek documentation through Chicago Public Schools for the student. Following assignment of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan by CPS, the Director of Learning Services coordinates services funded by the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) and the necessary documentation to maintain compliance for IEP or 504 Plans. The law requires that IEP and 504 Plans be reviewed annually and re-evaluated triennially for eligibility. The Director of Learning Services coordinates these reviews with assistance from the faculty, family, and any additional members of the student's support team. This process is especially important for neurodiverse learners at NPES who are likely to qualify for services and who plan to attend a CPS high school after NPES, or who are considering a transfer to CPS before high school.

School Materials/Supplies

Textbooks and non-consumable educational materials are considered the property of the school. If a student misplaces or damages these materials, the family will be responsible for any replacement fees.

The school purchases school supplies for students every fall, distributed by teachers early in the school year. In the rare case in which a student needs something for a class or project not distributed by the school, teachers will inform students and parents.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to reinforce instruction and provide students with opportunities to explore outside of class. Following are the general expectations for homework in the different grades. As individual students work at different speeds, the estimated times are offered as guidelines rather than specific requirements.

Daily reading is invaluable for students in all grades, and we encourage parents to establish reading as a habit. Parents should encourage children to read independently and/or read aloud to them every day. On occasions when other homework is lighter, students are expected to spend homework time reading books or magazines of their choice.

If parents have concerns regarding their children's work, work habits, and/or homework assignments, they should contact their child's teacher directly.

- Kindergarten: Kindergarten students do not typically have homework, except for a book buddy bag (with a reader) that goes home daily starting in October, with just a few minutes of reading to do (more about building the habit).
- Grades 1-2 In general, students should work on homework (including reading) for about 15-30 minutes daily, with specific assignments two to three days each week.
- Grades 3-5: Students may have from 1/2 hour to 1 hour of homework each night (total) in one or more subjects. Homework expectations and requirements are listed in Schoology on a regular basis.
- Grades 6-8: Students will be given homework regularly and can expect up to 1.5

hours of daily homework. Students are encouraged to contact their teachers if work takes longer than 30 minutes per class. Homework expectations and requirements are updated in Schoology on a regular basis.

Standardized Testing: Strengths, Areas for Growth, and External Benchmarks

AIMSWeb Plus is used as a universal Reading and Mathematics screening tool for all students in Kindergarten through fifth grade, and some students in grades six through eight. Based on the results of this screening, students may be identified for additional support and monitored for progress towards goals based on supports that are provided. AIMSWeb Plus tests

NPES also administers a nationally-normed standardized test to students in grades six and seven each year to provide additional data about academic strengths and areas for growth, as well as to provide an external benchmark of achievement levels leading up the high school placement process. Currently this test is the [ERB](#). These results are shared with families and students.

Students in sixth and eighth grade Spanish take the Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages (Spanish) test in the spring. This is used to identify growth and inform instruction.

Students in Kindergarten through third grade participate in Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessments in the fall and spring each year. Fourth and fifth grade students participate in Fountas and Pinnell assessments as needed based on teacher discretion. NPES utilizes these results to guide students as they choose “just right” texts for reading independently and to ensure students are receiving instruction at a level that is appropriate for their skills.

Eighth graders take various high school-placement tests in the fall of their eighth grade year based on the high school programs they apply to in consultation with their parents and the school’s Director of High School Placement.

Report Cards and Grades

Preschool: Teachers write a comprehensive narrative report twice a year for every student that focuses on social-emotional, fine and gross motor skills, number sense, and literacy skills, as well as on each child’s growth as a member of the classroom community.

Kindergarten through Second Grade: Teachers write report cards following each trimester (December, March, and June) with a narrative focusing on areas of strength and areas for growth in each subject, as well as on each child’s role as a member of the classroom community. Kindergarten teachers also provide reading benchmark levels and a summary of achievement level for basic academic skills that include sight words, letter names, letter sounds, CVC decoding, and ability to count to 100. First and second grade student report cards identify whether the student is exceeding, meeting, approaching, or needs improvement in the reading benchmark, and students are evaluated in writing, word study, math, science, and social studies.

Third through Fifth Grade: Teachers write report cards following each trimester

(December, March, and June) consisting of a narrative that highlights areas of academic and social-emotional strength, key areas for academic and community-member growth, and an academic grade for each content area, per the grading scale below.

Sixth through Eighth Grade: Teachers write report cards at the end of each semester (January and June) consisting of a narrative that highlights areas of academic and social-emotional strength, key areas for academic and community-member growth, and an academic grade for each content area, per the grading scale below. They also inform parents in writing at the mid-semester if any student's grade has changed dramatically or if the teacher is concerned about a student's performance.

K-5 Co-Curricular Trimester Reporting

Each teacher features an image/video and a brief caption/comment for all students in two grades each trimester. All (most) projects/units/assignments are being posted on either Schoology or Seesaw (for each individual student or for the class, depending on the project) in a weekly blog, so parents are kept up to date in between grading periods.

Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3
Music K,3	Music 2,4	Music 1,5
Drama 2,5	Drama 1,3	Drama K,4
PE 2,3	PE 1,4	P.E. K,5
Spanish 1,4	Spanish 2,5	Spanish K,3
Art 1,4	Art K,5	Art 2,3

Middle School Co-Curricular Reporting Schedule

Teachers will write a detailed narrative about students for the following grade levels.

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Music	6th, 7th	8th
PE	6th	7th, 8th
Spanish	7th, 8th	6th
Art	7th	6th, 8th
Library	8th	6th, 7th

Grading Scale

NPES' grading scale—with plus (+) or minus (-) indicating the top or bottom of the range for that particular grade—is as follows:

<p>Grades 3-8</p> <p>A = 90 - 100 Excellent Work</p> <p>B = 80 - 89 Very Good Work</p> <p>C = 70 - 79 Satisfactory Work</p> <p>D = 60 - 69 Needs Improvement</p> <p>F = 0 - 68 Unsatisfactory Work</p>	<p>Co-Curriculars (6th-8th)</p> <p>S = Superior</p> <p>M = Meeting</p> <p>A = Approaching</p> <p>NI = Needs Improvement</p>
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Midterm Reports for All Grade Levels

At all grade levels midterms are *exception* reporting, meaning that teachers take the time to reflect on all students at the midterm date and contact parents *if a concern exists or they'd like to share notable progress*. As always, parents are welcome to reach out to teachers to discuss their student at any point during the year. Middle school parent/teacher conferences fall at the midterm point so progress and areas for growth are communicated in person during conference meetings, too.

Where to Find Report Cards and Other Information About Student Progress

The preschool utilizes Seesaw software for the posting of photos, blogs about child development, and weekly information and messages. Parents in grades K through 2nd have access to their child's learning journal via Seesaw. Seesaw is used to inform parents of areas for student growth and academic progress through the posting of midterm comments and report cards. Questions about your child's progress should be directed to the teacher.

Via Schoology, parents in grades 3rd through 8th have access to grades and cumulative scores in an ongoing way. Grades are updated within one week of assignment submission. Questions about your child's progress should be directed to the teacher.

Final report cards at the end of a marking period (trimesters for PK-5 and semesters for 6-8) will be located for parents in the parent portal.

Promotion and Retention

A student who finishes the school year and has shown satisfactory progress for the year will be promoted to the following grade. The Head of School handles student promotion and retention on an individual basis, informed by all who work with a student.

Student Leadership Roles

Student Council is the student governing body of NPES. Representatives from each grade 3rd through 8th meet with faculty advisors. They plan philanthropic fundraising events as well as various activities throughout the year, including Spirit Week, school dances, a movie night, and talent show. The Student Council clears all fundraising ideas through the faculty advisors and the Director of Development. NPES does not encourage selling items door-to-door.

Students in grades 6th through 8th may also choose to volunteer to be on the Safety Patrol. Safety Patrol responsibilities include helping other students out of their vehicles during dropoff and helping the students and faculty during emergency drills.

Eighth grade students have the opportunity to work as admissions ambassadors for our Director of Admissions, as well as other leadership roles that develop.

Interested Middle School students are also invited to volunteer for our three-week Junior Summer's Cool program, serving as Junior Camp Counselors for preschool students. Summer's Cool begins, typically, the Monday after school dismisses for the summer holiday.

Social Emotional Learning and Advanced Academics

Many unfamiliar with educational research view academics and social-emotional learning as an *either-or* proposition, as if these two areas of skill development compete for time at school. The research, however, is clear: a strong commitment to social-emotional learning at school supports advanced academic growth and achievement for all students, regardless of ability levels, serving as the essential foundation for children to gain the confidence and self-esteem necessary to challenge themselves and struggle, purposefully, with more complex and multifaceted skills and concepts as they mature.

NPES' work on social emotional learning (SEL) is rooted in the belief that when children feel safe, recognized, and understood in the classroom, they can present their authentic selves and excel academically and socially. Social and emotional learning is the process of acquiring the skills to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations effectively. Our curriculum is deeply embedded in research and an understanding of the developmental needs of our students at various age levels. The framework and general structure for social-emotional learning at NPES is based on the research at the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). The five competencies on which we base our work with students are self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and relationship skills.

BEHAVIORAL NORMS AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Expectations for Student Behavior

NPES students are expected to practice self-regulation skills and grow in their ability to do so as we strive to create peaceful and harmonious relationships in the community. Students participate in daily class meetings, demonstrate self-awareness, as well as awareness of others' feelings and physical space. Students show responsible decision-making skills and make contributions to the NPES community through their daily practice as citizens and engagement in service opportunities.

When students make mistakes or harm the community in some way, they are expected to:

- tell the truth to the best of their ability
- own the impact of their behaviors (not only their intentions)
- reflect and problem solve, with faculty support

- listen to those who were harmed, seeking to understand and empathize
- take actions to repair, and demonstrate a genuine interest in restoration
- not repeat the harm

NPES requires that its students, faculty and administrators follow the rules and regulations of the school. The school also expects parents to recognize and follow these rules and regulations. Courtesy and civility are part of this, especially when it relates to dealings between parents and the administration or representatives of the school, including teaching staff. Parents not only have a contractual relationship with the school, but most importantly, they can set an example of respectful communication for students. Therefore, NPES places great emphasis on conduct of all members of the school community, including families and employees.

Positive Discipline

NPES uses Positive Discipline, which is based on the premise that human beings in community seek belonging and significance, and that “misbehavior” (the violation of school boundaries and norms) becomes the student’s solution to the problem of not belonging. Effective discipline seeks to connect and uncover the source of the disconnection, rather than only attempting to change behavior.

In NPES classrooms you will see students socializing and collaborating around academic choice, class meetings that encourage connections and problem-solving, a “think spot” area where students can gather their minds and bodies, teachers speaking in a positive and respectful way, the use of respectful and logical consequences, rules that were developed as a community around student hopes and dreams, students reflecting on their learning and thinking about their thinking, and teachers who are modeling expectations and setting clear paths to success.

As students enter middle school (and puberty) and their needs change, they transition into the advisory setting where our curriculum is authentic and responsive to the nuances of each advisor and advisory group (on average about nine students from 6th-8th grade) but framed by Positive Discipline. Advisory groups meet periodically throughout the week to build community, encourage one another, and solve problems within a democratic framework. Students discuss relevant hot topics, work on executive functioning issues, experience team and trust building activities, meet independently with the advisor and set individual goals, work with Lil’ Buddies from PK-5, and participate in a project fair experience that brings together service-learning and a passion project.

NPES’s advisory model builds the skills of community-based problem solving by asking students to explicitly learn and practice tools of self-regulation, communication, mutual respect, and focus on solutions instead of blame. Students learn about adolescent brain development to gain a deeper understanding of their development and to purposefully seek to develop their own growth mindset, embracing mistakes and imperfection as the richest opportunities to learn and grow.

While specific goals and learning objectives are set in advisory, there is more autonomy and freedom to respond to the needs of adolescents, and the specific advisory group. The

academic curriculum is still based on the domains of engaging academics, effective management, and positive community. As students move from class to class for academic subjects, they find a consistent and common approach that fosters a strong connection between academic and social growth.

NPES employees do not engage in corporal punishment or physical restraint.

Positive Discipline Framework

The NPES Positive Discipline Framework provides our faculty, staff, and students with a reference point for seeking to understand and address student violations of our school's norms. The chart that appears below is literally a *framework*, not a script, as teachers and administrators have full discretion to adjust consequences and responses to inappropriate behaviors on a case-by-case basis.

This framework identifies some of the practices teachers may engage in as they build respectful and connected classroom communities. Additionally, it provides possible responses faculty/staff might employ when students exhibit level 1, 2 or 3 behaviors. Underlying all NPES discipline policies is a belief that behavior has underlying causes that should be unpacked through a thoughtful, intentional process, and that the building of social-emotional skills is the responsibility of the school, students, and parents in partnership. Students are treated with dignity, kindness, and respect, even as they are held accountable for their actions in the school's sole discretion. Our emphasis always includes a desire to teach and to create pathways for students to make amends and restore where harm has been done.

Some of the Practices Used by NPES Teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Build relationships of trust❖ Firm and kind❖ Student-generated guidelines with frequent check-ins❖ Regular class meetings❖ Ask vs tell❖ Specific instruction in social skills❖ Classroom greetings❖ Regular whole class self-regulation❖ Encouragement❖ Focus on and teach respect vs compliance❖ Clear routines, regularly practiced
Level 1: Behaviors that are unhelpful but developmentally appropriate that can be efficiently redirected by a staff member. Responses may include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Connect before correct❖ Visual or verbal redirection❖ Proximity❖ Use the “Cool Down Zone”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Complete reflection sheet ❖ Process managed by teachers
Level 2: Behaviors that persist despite repeated interventions or are significantly disruptive or are hurtful (but not a safety concern). Responses may include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Self-regulate for adult and student ❖ Parent/guardian contact with an explanation of response ❖ Teacher/student problem-solving plan ❖ Make an agreement with the student ❖ Ask for administrative support/help/observation ❖ Referral to the Student Advocacy Team (SAT) ❖ Conference with specialist ❖ Managed by teachers with administrative support from Head of School or designated administrator ❖ Minor referral to track, if desired
Level 3: Behaviors that endanger self, others, property or that persists after level 2 interventions. Responses may include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ensure safety ❖ Parent/guardian contact with an explanation of response ❖ Teacher/administrator & student problem-solving meeting to plan for repair ❖ Time out (sometimes from school) as appropriate ❖ Student removed from the situation (class or common area) ❖ Teacher/administrator calls the family to explain the incident, how repair made/will be made ❖ Major referral is submitted same day ❖ Managed by Head of School or designated administrator with support from teachers when deemed appropriate

Disciplinary Actions and the Head of School's Discretion

Following a student violation of the policies documented in this Handbook, the Head of School can exercise administrative discretion in requiring an in-school period of reflection (outside the classroom but on campus), a temporary suspension outside of school for a designated period of time (or until certain conditions for re-entry have been met), or expulsion from the school on a permanent basis. No school Handbook can explicitly state every school rule or regulation. The school reserves the right to interpret and develop policies and regulations as necessary based on core philosophy and educational objectives. The decisions detailed below rest solely with the school's administration.

In-School or Out-of-School Period of Reflection

Following a violation of school policies for appropriate conduct, the Head of School can determine that it is in the best interests of the classroom community and/or the student who violated school norms to remain in school but not to return to class for a period of

time (including for the remainder of the day), allowing time for the student to reflect on the behavior, process its impact, and confer with school personnel about how best to move forward positively.

The Head of School may also deem it appropriate for the student to complete the reflection at home before school is dismissed for the day, and to not attend any school-sponsored after-school activities. This is not a suspension, but a period of meaningful reflection, and students process thoughts and feelings in different ways and at a different pace (think of a purposeful, helpful, engaged timeout). When the Head of School determines that a period of reflection is appropriate and will be helpful, the Head will contact the parents to inform them of the inappropriate behavior and the period of reflection. While it is possible for an in-school period of reflection to go into a second day (particularly if the incident takes place late in the afternoon or after school), it is not common. In most cases the student will engage in the reflective work in the Head of School's office or another designated location that is supervised by adults but removed from other students, unless the student will meet with peers as part of the restoration process. Students are allowed to make-up any academic work (including assessments) missed due to a period of reflection.

Suspension from School

Following a violation of school policies for appropriate conduct, the Head of School can determine that it is in the best interests of the school for the student who behaved inappropriately to be suspended from school, to leave the school as soon as parents can arrive, not returning to campus for a designated period of time or until certain conditions, in the school discretion of the school, have been met. The Head of School will notify the student's parents about a suspension from school. In some instances, the suspension may be indefinite until a school investigation has been completed and more information about the inappropriate behavior has been obtained. Students who are suspended from school are allowed to complete their academic work at home, and to make-up any missed assessments upon their return. They are not allowed to participate in any school-sponsored events or activities, nor to visit the campus unless with a parent for a scheduled meeting with school personnel. Students suspended from school may be asked to complete additional writing during their suspension, reflecting on their conduct, processing its impact, and thinking about what they need and how they might make amends and restore upon their return. Depending on what an investigation into an incident reveals, a student who has been suspended from school may be expelled before returning from suspension.

Separation from School

Following a violation of school policies for appropriate conduct, the Head of School can determine that it is in the best interests of the school for the student who behaved inappropriately to be separated permanently from NPES. Any activity by an individual student or group of students that interferes with the functioning of the school or that may be harmful to any individual or group of individuals within the school community or its environs can be grounds for dismissal. A student is subject to separation for any serious

violation of school policies, including but not limited to chronic disciplinary problems (including disruptive behavior); blatant disrespect of others; stealing; possession, use, or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other illegal substances; possession of a weapon; and bullying, cyber-bullying, and all forms of harassment, including hate speech. The decision to separate a student rests solely with the school's administration.

Definition of Bullying in the State of Illinois and at NPES

North Park Elementary School finds that a safe, civil, and healthy school environment is necessary for all students to learn and achieve. Bullying causes physical, psychological, and emotional harm to students which interferes with this safe, civil, and healthy learning environment. Additionally, bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping, or dropping out of school, fighting, use of drugs/alcohol, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7).

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policies of North Park Elementary School. No student shall be subjected to bullying:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at school bus stops waiting for the bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This item (4) applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

Definitions

Bullying Includes “cyber-bullying” and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property.
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health.
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance.
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges, provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyber-bullying Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo electronic system, or photo optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications.

“Cyber-bullying” includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. “Cyber-bullying” also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Restorative Measures

A continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school, and (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

School Personnel

Persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in a school district, charter school, or non-public, non-sectarian elementary or secondary school, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers, and security guards.

Bullying Report Process

Students, parents, and school personnel are encouraged to immediately report bullying to any administrator within North Park Elementary School. Alternatively, reports may be made orally or in writing to the bullying report manager:

Name: John Novick, Jr.

Title: Head of School: Head of School

Phone Number: 773.327.3144

E-mail Address: novick@npeschool.org

Address: 2017 W Montrose Ave, Chicago, 60618

Anonymous reports are accepted by calling the contact listed above and specifically indicating that you would like to remain anonymous. Anonymous reports can also be placed in the suggestion box available on the counter in the main lobby. However, formal disciplinary action cannot be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Response to Bullying Reports

Upon receipt of a report of bullying, North Park Elementary School will investigate whether such reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of its jurisdiction. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the parents or guardians of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying will be notified of such, along with threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, within 24 hours after the school's administration is made aware of the student's involvement in the incident. As appropriate, the school's administration shall also discuss the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. The school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained by the school within the 24-hour period.

Further, the administrator or report manager will promptly investigate and address the report of bullying by doing the following:

1. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within ten school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received, taking into

consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.

2. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
3. Notifying the principal, school administrator, or his/her designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received (if the principal or administrator is not the person who received the report).
4. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing the parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the principal, school administrator, or his/her designee to discuss the investigation, its findings, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The principal, administrator, or his/her designee may implement interventions to address reports of bullying. This includes, but is not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services. Additionally, North Park Elementary School shall provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the district and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. Such reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences. No person will be subject to consequences for making a good-faith report of bullying. However, making a false accusation of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying is prohibited and will be treated as bullying for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences.

Bullying Policy Evaluation

This policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians. Furthermore, the policy is consistent with the other policies of North Park Elementary School.

This policy will be posted on North Park Elementary School's existing, publicly accessible Internet website. Additionally, it will be included in the student handbook, employee handbook, and where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted in the school. The policy will be provided periodically throughout the school year to students and faculty and will be distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

North Park Elementary School shall conduct a review and re-evaluation of this policy every two years to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of this policy and shall make any necessary and appropriate revisions. As part of this process, North Park Elementary School shall review various factors including, but not limited to:

1. The frequency of victimization.
2. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at school.
3. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
4. The types of bullying utilized.
5. Bystander intervention or participation.

North Park Elementary School may use relevant data and information it already collects for other purposes in the policy evaluation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation must be made available on the Internet website of North Park Elementary School. If an Internet website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, school board members, school personnel, parents, guardians, and students.

No later than September 30 of the subject year, the policy must be filed with the State Board of Education after being updated.

Date of Adoption: July 22, 2024

Date of Most Recent Review/Re-evaluation: July 22, 2024

References:

105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 – Bullying Prevention
23 Illinois Administrative Code § 1.295

Additional NPES Policies Related to Bullying

- The school views bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, and hate speech--any conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's individual work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment--as an extremely serious violation of school policy and state law.
- NPES employees will notify the Head of School and/or the Head's designee of a bullying report as soon as possible after the report is received.
- The Head of School, as appropriate, will involve school employees with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention--and/or with specific knowledge of a particular report of bullying--in the investigation process.
- As mandated by Illinois law, the Head of School and the Head's designees will discuss and determine--consulting with legal counsel as appropriate--whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of the school's jurisdiction.
- Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, parents or guardians of students targeted in an alleged incident of bullying will be informed by school personnel, and, as appropriate, school personnel will recommend or provide social work services, counseling, and/or other restorative measures, including informing the parents/guardians of any services available to the student from the school.

- Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, school personnel will provide parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the report of bullying.
- Interventions that may be taken at the discretion of the administration to address bullying may include but are not limited to: school social work services; restorative measures; social-emotional skill building; counseling; psychological services; community-based services; suspension from school; expulsion from school; and calling the police.

This policy prohibits any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, communicating unwelcome explicit words or images of a sexual nature or other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature.

This policy prohibits any form of hate speech. Hate speech is identity-targeted language including but not limited to racist slurs, gender-biased slurs, ethnic slurs, homophobic language and religious slurs.

Procedures Related to and Role of the School Counselor

The School Counselor's purpose is to utilize their expertise in social-emotional learning, mental health, wellness, psychology, identity and human development, relationships, boundaries, conflict mediation/resolution, self-care, and restoration to help all students thrive. To learn more please visit [here](#).

How Students Access the School Counselor

The School Counselor introduces themselves to all classes each fall, as they teach social-emotional skills to all grades on an annual basis. Students may check-in with the School Counselor privately or in small groups by asking their teacher to do so (grades preschool-3) or by asking the School Counselor for an appointment (4-8). These are typically short check-ins focused on a single temporary question or need. Students may also be referred for a conversation with the School Counselor by an NPES faculty member, but only after that faculty member has spoken with the School Counselor about the purpose in advance. A parent/caregiver can also request a check-in for their child with the School Counselor, as can the Head of School and any member of the admin team. The School Counselor can also be asked to assist the Head of School or their designee in addressing a student behavioral concern in partnership with the family.

Confidentiality

In keeping with widely-accepted principles of the [American School Counselor Association](#), NPES' School Counselor engaged in counseling a student has an ethical and legal obligation to keep information from those conversations within that relationship. Confidentiality of the sessions must be maintained unless keeping that information confidential can lead to "serious and foreseeable harm" to the child or to someone else.

Students are informed that the confidentiality of their conversations with the School Counselor has limits, and that counselors have a responsibility to disclose information obtained in counseling to others to protect students, themselves, or other individuals. The School Counselor, while recognizing their primary ethical obligation for confidentiality is to the students, balances that obligation with an understanding of parents'/guardians' legal and inherent rights to be the guiding voice in their children's lives. School counselors understand the need to balance students' ethical rights to make choices, their developmental capacity to give consent or assent, and parental or familial legal rights and responsibilities to make decisions on their child's behalf.

Parental Notification Policy

Students in preschool-3rd grade may meet with the School Counselor three times during a school year before parental notification is required (but the Teacher or School Counselor may determine that notification sooner is necessary). Students in grades 4-8 may meet with the School Counselor six times in a school year before parental notification is required (though the School Counselor may determine notification sooner is necessary). Parental notification and partnership are always required for a student to meet with the School Counselor on a regular basis beyond the number of sessions listed above, or when something a child says suggests they or someone else may be in danger of "serious and foreseeable harm."

Safe Return to School Policy

If a student expresses harm to self or others, the School Counselor will conduct a well-being check with the student and inform the Head of School and parents afterward. The school reserves the right to require that the child be seen by a mental health professional outside of school and that a letter from that clinician deeming the student safe to return to school is received by the School Counselor and Head of School prior to their return. School Counselors are trained in risk assessment but are not charged with determining when a child can safely return to school after an external referral has been made. Not all internal risk assessments result in an external referral requirement.

Limitations/Boundaries

The School Counselor's responsibilities do not include:

- providing long-term therapy for individual students, colleagues, parents, or families; those in need of continual therapeutic support should seek it outside of school (the School Counselor can provide information about providers to consider)
- addressing all disciplinary/behavioral issues; the Counselor is brought in by the school on more concerning incidents when believed the areas of expertise can be helpful
- providing personal counseling for NPES faculty/staff; consultations with other employees focus on how to best help students thrive and occasionally on building positive and constructive working relationships with colleagues or parents
- diagnosing anyone with mental illness or other sickness

- being available beyond the regular hours of 8:00 AM-4:00 PM (7:30-5:30 for email) on school days, the hours most NPES faculty/staff keep except in the case of a true emergency

School Attire

The NPES community respects personal style and individuality of expression and dress. We are also conscious that dress codes historically have been inequitable, singling out female members of a community for more stringent scrutiny and regulation. We reject that approach. Instead, we believe it is the duty of the school to provide an educational environment that is safe, authentic, inclusive, and equitable, and that lends itself to the academic focus and full engagement of all children, with as few barriers to that focus and engagement as possible.

Our guidelines on school attire were developed with children of all genders and faiths in mind. All students must wear clothing and maintain personal hygiene appropriate for a joyful and engaging but serious academic setting. It is expected that parents will monitor their child's choice of clothing. The school office will contact parents of children wearing inappropriate dress. Parents may be asked to bring other clothing to school for the student to wear.

To assist students and parents in determining clothing choice for school attire, the school has established the following guidelines for all students:

- Shirts must be of appropriate length (i.e. below the navel); low-cut, see-through or mesh shirts are not permitted.
- All clothing must cover undergarments.
- Clothing and footwear must not present a safety hazard (i.e. pants not longer than the heel of the shoes) or be disruptive or disturbing to others.
- Hats should not be worn inside the building except on hat days.
- Sleepwear as outerwear is not acceptable except during spirit days.
- Attire may not have writing or pictures that advertise or promote alcohol, drugs, tobacco, obscenity, bullying, harassment, hate, or violence.
- For gym class, all children must wear gym shoes, which are required in the gym. Other activity-specific requirements will be shared by the PE teacher.
- Faculty and staff, and ultimately the Head of School if disagreement exists, exercise final judgment on whether specific clothing is appropriate for school.

The school will make accommodations for students who cannot adhere to our school attire policy for medical or religious reasons, including in athletics. The school allows student athletes to modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of their religion, cultural values or modesty preferences.

Parents/guardians of these students should notify the school in writing of the need for an accommodation.

Lunchroom Rules

Students are expected to adhere to the following the lunchroom rules:

1. Each student is expected to remain seated during the lunch period.
2. Students are expected to maintain an appropriate tone of voice in the lunchroom (no yelling).
3. Each student should dispose of garbage by sorting appropriately into trash, compost, and recycling.
4. Students are expected to exit the lunchroom in an orderly manner.

TECHNOLOGY USE POLICIES

North Park Elementary School provides various technology resources, including computers and iPads, to authorized students to assist them in their classroom studies.

Each student has a responsibility to use the NPES computers/iPads and other technology resources in a manner that increases learning, enhances the school's public image, and is respectful of other students, teachers, and the school community.

Failure to follow the NPES policies regarding its computers/iPads and technology resources may lead to disciplinary measures, as well as suspension of access. All disciplinary measures taken as a result of violations of these policies are taken at the sole discretion of the school's administration.

Prohibited Use

Students will be issued an email account for use at NPES. Sending, receiving, or accessing electronic mail outside the organization without faculty/staff permission is not allowed. In addition, access to logon sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or other social media, blogs, instant messaging, or chat sites is prohibited on NPES devices. Internet access at school is supervised by a teacher or staff member to the best of our ability.

Students will not change iPad settings or attempt to bypass the NPES web filter or firewall on shared devices. Tampering with settings may compromise the auto-backup features, and can result in a student's iPad privileges being suspended.

iPads are provided for school work only. These devices should not be loaned or shared with any person other than the user it is assigned to. No iPad should be left unattended.

Internet games, messaging services, downloading/installing apps will not be permitted on the NPES iPads unless requested by and supervised by a teacher or staff member.

Students are to respect copyright laws and should observe proper citing of accessed information. Students may not use any NPES computers/iPads for any illegal purpose. This will include the downloading of pirated materials or information of an inappropriate nature.

The presence on devices of guns, other weapons, pornographic images and material, inappropriate language, alcohol, drugs, gang-related symbols or pictures, or hate speech will result in disciplinary action by the school.

Only registered passwords are to be used on NPES devices.

Care Of Device

Screens should be cleaned only with a soft dry cloth. No cleansers of any type are to be used. iPad batteries must be charged and ready for school each day. Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the iPad to prevent damage. Care and caution must be used when transporting the device. Avoid undue pressure or impact on the screen. No food or drink should be near the device. iPads must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not the property of NPES.

Software

The software/apps originally installed by NPES must remain on the iPad in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times.

From time to time the school may add software applications for use in a particular class. Upgrades and additional installations of application software will be conducted by NPES.

If technical difficulties occur or illegal software is discovered, the iPad will be restored from a backup. The school does not accept responsibility for the loss of any software or documents deleted due to a reformat or a re-image.

File Storage/Printing

Student files will require saving to a specified directory (Google Drive) that will be established by NPES. This access will allow students to save and retrieve their work from other devices and other locations, as needed.

Students are responsible for following proper procedures to ensure proper storage of work. Oversight, malfunctions, or accidental deletion are not acceptable excuses for not submitting required work.

Students will not have open access to printers at NPES. Printing of files at school will be supervised by the classroom teachers. This may include submission of work in .pdf format or collected by the teacher to be printed as required.

Damage

Each student agrees to take reasonable care of the NPES computers/iPads and agrees that if they willfully or negligently damage any of these computers/iPads they shall be responsible for the cost of replacement or repair resulting from such damage as indicated by the Director of Technology.

Students are not responsible for damage caused by circumstances outside their reasonable control. All iPads have a glass protective covering. If that protective covering cracks, it needs to be replaced by the parents. NPES will install the covering by request.

Students may be provided with a substitute device while repairs are being made to their original, damaged device so they may continue their classwork. Backup of the files on the device should be made, if possible, before the device is submitted for repair. Utilizing Google Drive, Notability, etc. will ensure that necessary files are not lost. Once finished with an assignment, document, or project, students should put files in Google Drive or submit to Schoology.

In addition, missing adapter plugs or adapter cables will be the responsibility of the student to replace. We follow Apple's policy for AppleCare products, which gives two instances of Accidental Damage.

First and second cracked screen: \$75 each

Three or more cracked screens: \$250

iPad/Technology Use at NPES

iPads are learning tools and students must use them for that purpose and not for distracting themselves or others. NPES wants the expectations to be clear and known to all students, so they act responsibly and have their learning enriched by the available technology.

Should a teacher deem a student has misused technology or taken negligent care of their NPES-issued device, the student will be subject to a consequence as listed below and determined by the teacher or administrator (along with any payments needed to replace the device). Parents of the students will be notified.

Things that may be constitute misuse:

1. Off task, watching videos, playing games, distracting other students
2. More than one cracked iPad screen in three years
3. Not charging the iPad overnight (so it is ready for school) multiple times
4. Forgetting iPad at home multiple times
5. Physically abusing the device

Possible consequences for technology-use infractions, at the discretion of the teacher or administrator, and depending on the misuse:

1. Loss of iPad for the day
2. Loss of iPad overnight
3. Limited access to Applications in Self-Service such as only Schoology and Notability
4. Create a public service announcement (PSA) to address an aspect of care of school property/use of technology to be shared with class, teacher, and tech committee.
5. Loss of study hall time to create PSA/write a letter to teacher about what happened
6. Loss of student elective/service choice time to create PSA
7. Loss of after school activity to create PSA

Public Service Announcement should be related to

1. The infraction such as negligent care, inappropriate content, or misuse of school resources such as using email not related to school
2. Relate to Six Pillars of Character as it relates to technology
 - Self-management
 - Harmony in relationships
 - Awareness of others
 - Responsible decision-making skills
 - Knowledge of self
 - Service in the community

Privacy

Students should understand that computers/iPads at NPES are community property and should at no time expect files to be considered private. NPES may, at its discretion, inspect all files or messages on its computers/iPads at any time for any reason. The school may also monitor its computers/iPads at any time to determine compliance with its policies, for purposes of legal proceedings, to investigate misconduct, to locate information or for any other business purposes.

Vandalism

Any form of vandalism will not be tolerated. This will include the intentional deleting of other user's files, altering content, posting inappropriate material, changing settings or configurations of computers/iPads or otherwise creating mischief that would impede the proper use of any of the NPES technology and interfere with the work of the school.

Sexting

Sexting is transmitting sexually explicit or suggestive images or messages via email, instant messaging, websites, blogs, or any other digital communication vehicle. Any NPES student caught in the posting or solicitation of such material involving themselves or any member of the NPES community, on or off campus, will be banned from access to computers/iPads at NPES. Parents will be contacted, the appropriate authorities will be notified, and the school reserves the right to take its own disciplinary action at its sole discretion. Sexting that also constitutes sexual harassment per the definition in this Handbook will include additional disciplinary action by the school.

Harassment/Cyber-Bullying

See bullying policies earlier in this Handbook.

Security

NPES has installed or may install a variety of programs and devices to ensure the safety and security of the school's information and technology resources. Any student found tampering with or disabling any of these security measures will be subject to discipline.

Acknowledgement

All parties (students, parents, NPES) acknowledge and agree to the terms detailed in the policy above prior to the issuing of any devices or access privileges.

Artificial Intelligence and Academics at NPES

At NPES, we recognize the growing importance of artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on education. While AI has the potential to revolutionize the way we teach and learn, it

must be used ethically as it raises concerns about academic honesty and integrity. NPES current policies related to AI are as follows:

1. Teachers act as the sole authority on when it is appropriate for a student to use AI for an assignment or any task in their class.
2. Students are expected to submit their own original work or ask their teacher if using AI for a specific task is okay. Any use of AI to generate or modify student work must be acknowledged and documented appropriately.
 - a. Citing AI - <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>
3. Teachers may approve student use of AI for an assignment or task in their class when using the technology enhances student understanding and does not circumvent the learning process. Students should only request permission to use AI under these same circumstances.
4. Students are prohibited from using AI to plagiarize or cheat by passing an AI's work as one's own. Any student found using AI to copy or submit the work of others will be subject to a failing grade. Subsequent occurrences will result in disciplinary action.
5. Teachers in grades 3-8 will go over this policy with students and take questions. As we learn, we will incorporate lessons on AI ethics and responsible use of technology in their curriculum to help students understand the importance of academic integrity.
6. NPES may implement measures to detect and prevent AI-assisted cheating, such as software tools that can analyze student work for plagiarism and/or AI-produced work.
7. Teachers and school administrators should be transparent about their use of AI in course materials, grading, and assessment and should provide clear guidelines on how AI will be used and how students can appeal decisions made by AI systems.
8. Since AI results may include "hallucinations" (errors), users are expected to verify content elsewhere so that false information is not spread.

Overall, this policy seeks to balance the benefits of AI with the need to maintain academic integrity and prevent cheating as we learn more about the myriad of uses AI can offer. This policy for AI and its use in the classroom will evolve as we develop a better understanding and real-life case studies about how it might enhance teaching and learning. By promoting the responsible use of AI in education, we intend to prepare our students for a future where technology plays an increasingly important role.

Future Considerations as the Use of AI Unfolds Rapidly

Recognizing the power of AI to answer rote and even complex questions, teachers at NPES may incorporate more project/problem-based learning to highlight the resources and qualities students possess that AI does not, including collaboration, empathy, unique life experiences and identities, personal interests, relationships, and more. The focus in education will likely shift even further to curating a rich, high-quality, and generative learning *process* rather than focus on a fixed, predetermined, standardized *product*. The idea of rigor will most likely move toward the impact, potential or real, of the project and the value in the iterative process of learning and creating.

ADMISSIONS POLICIES

NPES admits students of all races, sexes, gender identities, gender expressions, religions, national or ethnic origins, or physical disabilities to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the students at the school. On the same basis it does not discriminate in its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

NPES is committed to providing equal enrollment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities, which may include providing reasonable accommodations within our program where appropriate, provided the school can do so without fundamentally altering the nature of its programs or creating an undue burden. In general, the family is responsible for notifying the Head of School and the Director of Learning Services of the need for an accommodation, and submitting a signed NPES consent form so the school can partner with outside providers and the family to support a child's learning and growth. The Head of School or Director of Learning Services may ask parents for input on the type of accommodations that may be necessary, or the actual functional limitations caused by the disability. Generally speaking, requests for accommodations must be supported by diagnostic evaluations or written recommendations by qualified and certified specialists in the relevant field.

The school accepts students who are able to complete the curriculum with reasonable accommodations and support that are within the scope of the school's programmatic or financial resources. The school reserves the right to terminate enrollment if a student's needs exceed the capabilities of the school as determined by the Head of School. This is an ethical consideration for the school, as NPES takes its commitment to supporting the well-being, learning, and growth of every child seriously, and when a student's needs cannot be met by our program, we strive to be honest and clear with families in the best interests of the child.

Application Policies & Procedures

All prospective students must complete the online application, submit the required documentation, and pay the application fee in order to be considered for admission. NPES relies on the information obtained in the student application for admission and, therefore, any inaccuracies or omissions will be grounds for NPES to terminate any contract. By submitting an application, families authorize NPES to study and evaluate the applicant's academic records and to review and consider additional information NPES deems pertinent to the admissions process. Parents release NPES, its employees, agents, Board of Directors, as well as the sending institutions from all liability resulting from or pertaining to furnishing of records, documents, and other information provided to NPES for admission.

Parents are aware of and agree to abide by the fact that students are admitted to NPES based on its professional interpretation and evaluation of the information gathered during the application process for the general welfare of the school. All recommendations and

materials submitted and engendered by the application process are held in strict confidence. By signing the application, parents agree that they waive the right to review student recommendations and other materials submitted.

Student Acceptance

PK3 students must be three years old on or by September 1st and PK4 students must be four years old on or by September 1st. Kindergarten applicants must be five years old on or before September 1st. NPES requires a certified birth certificate to be presented for each student who applies for enrollment. NPES staff makes a photocopy of the birth certificate and returns the certified copy to the parent.

The acceptance of a child to NPES is dependent upon:

- A satisfactory review by the admissions committee of academic history (where applicable), including report cards, teacher narratives, test scores, teacher recommendation forms, and a family questionnaire
- A family interview (preschool applicants) or one-on-one informal screenings for incoming Kindergarten students, including academic considerations when age-appropriate and in-person classroom visits with current students for first through eighth grade applicants
- Meeting the school's expectations for toilet training explained [here](#).
- Admission is granted upon completion of a favorable review by the admissions committee and availability of space in the applicable grade

ENROLLMENT CONTRACT POLICIES

Payment Procedure for Tuition and Fees

The Director of Admissions and Communications issues re-enrollment contracts in Ravenna to current students in February, provided the student is in good standing and the family's accounts with the school are current.

Tuition and Fee billing for the 2024-25 school year begins July 1, 2024 and goes through June 1, 2025. Families may prepay their tuition and fees at any time but are expected to keep their accounts current on a month to month basis. Optional extracurricular activities are billed through Ravenna.

Families who utilize the optional drop-in Before and After Care Child supervision service are charged separately on a monthly basis through Procure.

One parent or guardian is designated as the person responsible for payment of tuition, fees, and extracurriculars. The designated family member is expected to keep their Ravenna and Procure accounts current.

The Ravenna student tuition billing system accepts credit card, debit, and checks as payment. Credit card payments are subject to convenience fees. Payments may also be made at the school in check or cash. The following schedule lists the annual tuition and fees for the academic year:

Tuition/Fees (K through 8)

Oldest/Only Child in K– Gr 8	\$17,490
Second Child in K– Gr 8 Discount Rate	\$16,615
Third + Child in K – Gr 8 Discount Rate	\$15,741
K – Gr 8 Book & Tech Fee	\$1,250

Tuition/Fees (Preschool)

Half Day	\$12,432
Full Day Option Add-On Monday thru Friday	\$14,455 to \$17,490*

*The range of tuition is based on 2, 3, or 5 full days per week

Preschool Book & Tech Fee	\$300
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Other Fees

Facilities Assessment (New Family)	\$2,500 per family
Facilities Assessment (Existing Family)	\$500 per family
Extended Day Care Supervision	\$10 per hour

When families are offered an enrollment contract, a non-refundable facility assessment of \$500 per student is due upon contract signing.

Refund/Withdrawal Policies

Withdrawal of students may be initiated by parents or by the school any time after acceptance. Once a contract is signed, there is no refund of the tuition paid and any subsequent tuition payments due for the school year must be paid. NPES families are obligated to pay tuition and all other charges for the entire school year and are not entitled to any reduction from these obligations if they leave the school. Enrollment contracts are binding, and the school's budget for the year is reliant on funding from the signed enrollment agreements. There are two additional reasons why the school will not make exceptions to this policy: making an exception for one but not others would be inequitable, as all have their reasons for the request, and second, it is essential for an independent school to maintain the validity and integrity of its contracts, or volatility in its funding results over time, undermining financial stability and ultimately disrupting the educational program for all children.

There is only one exception to this policy: if, after a contract has been signed for the upcoming school year, written notice of withdrawal has been delivered to the Director of Admissions and Communications (email or letter) before March 15th of the preceding school year, the remaining balance of tuition and fees for the year ahead will not be charged. However, after March 15, all signed contracts of the preceding school year are automatically binding.

Upon dismissal of a student by NPES, the family is responsible for paying all tuition for the

remainder of the school year, with no refunds possible. If tuition and fees remain unpaid, NPES will employ a collection firm to recoup the monies owed, and the parents will be responsible for all costs of collection, including attorney's fees.

Again, parents initiating a withdrawal after the contract binding date of March 15, 2023 are required to pay the full year's tuition and are not entitled to any reduction from any such obligations.

Late Fees and Insufficient Fund Charges

NPES utilizes the Ravenna tuition billing system for the administration of our student tuition billing. Payments are due paid in full each month on the 1st of the month. The system will charge late fees should payment in full not be received by the published deadline. Likewise, the system will assess an insufficient funds charge to the family account should a payment be declined due to insufficient funds. In both instances, the family is responsible for paying these fees.

Delinquent Accounts

Students cannot continue to attend NPES—if their parent/guardian's account is delinquent—*beyond the semester in which the account is delinquent*, nor will students be enrolled in a subsequent semester until the parent/guardian's delinquent account is paid in full. In addition, one half of the tuition/fees for the following semester must be paid at the beginning of the semester. If a family has a delinquent account and decides to transfer the student(s) to another school, records will not be released until the account is paid in full. The school's withholding of attendance shall not constitute dismissal and does not alter the designated family obligation under the contract to pay for the full school year's tuition and fees. All questions concerning student accounts should be directed to the Director of Business & Operations, Marshall Warren.

HANDBOOK ACCEPTANCE

By accepting this Handbook in Ravenna, all parties, students, parents, and NPES, acknowledge and agree to the terms of this service prior to the issuing of any devices or access privileges. A record of acceptance will be on file at NPES. It is the responsibility of every parent, guardian, and student to be familiar with the policies detailed in this Handbook, and to abide by them. Questions about policies should be directed to the appropriate member of the NPES administrative team and/or the Head of School. Failure to adhere to the policies and norms detailed in this handbook—for students or parents/caregivers—can result, at the sole discretion of the school, in the decision to terminate the current enrollment agreement, or not to issue an enrollment agreement for the following year.

Last Handbook Update: August 2025