

# *Northern Rush County Schools Inc.*

## *Parent and Scholar Handbook*



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### **Mission Statement:**

NRCS teachers will instill in their scholars a passion and curiosity necessary for lifelong learning. Scholars at Northern Rush County Schools (NRCS) will develop the ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and excel academically. Through a place-based curriculum that utilizes an integrated academic and social approach, scholars are immersed in the world around them thus, forcing them to become stewards of their environment and making their community a better place.

# Topics A through Z

## **Alert System:**

SwiftReach SwiftK12 is the alert system NRCS uses to send out mass text messages, emails, or phone calls. Teachers and Administrators can use the system to send out delays, school closings, and much more. Individual teachers can use the system to send out spelling words, newsletters, reminders of school events or deadlines, and other information pertaining to classrooms. Please make sure that the school has all of your updated information so that you are not left out when important messages are sent home.

## **Allergens or Irritants:**

An allergy is identified as a specific food or allergen. All staff are expected to be cognizant of scholars with allergies and strive to keep them safe at all times. For example, items that contain a food allergy will not be on the snack list. Parent representatives will also be notified of a food allergy in the classroom, so that no item containing that allergen will be served. At no time will the person who has the allergen or irritant be identified to other scholars or parents.

NRCS is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all scholars. We understand the increasing prevalence of life-threatening allergies among school populations. Recognizing that the risk of accidental exposure to allergens can be reduced in the school setting, NRCS is committed to working in cooperation with parents, scholars, and physicians, to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for all scholars. The focus of allergy management shall be on prevention, education, awareness, communication and emergency response. A food allergy procedure is in place and will require the signature of the parent and the medical professional.

Once a food allergy has been identified and a doctor's note received, the scholar may NOT for any reason consume anything containing the allergen while on school grounds. The only way this can be reversed is to receive another note from the same physician.

## **Assessments:**

Assessments are age appropriate and include classroom assessments, IREAD, ILEARN, and NWEA. These assessments ensure teacher accountability for each scholar's academic growth and foster lessons and activities that meet scholar's individual needs. NWEA is given three times throughout the course of the school year, beginning of the year (BOY), middle of the year (MOY), and end of the year (EOY). Parents will be made aware of their scholar's achievement on these assessments.

## **Attendance:**

Attending school daily is not only the law, but an expectation that fosters success in scholars. It teaches scholars to be responsible for their behavior and accountable for their academic success.

NRCS is based on a place-based, hands-on curriculum, which often cannot be made up. Instruction from guest speakers and field experiences are impossible to duplicate. A requirement for the school to achieve a passing grade on annual yearly progress is a yearly total attendance of 95%. It is imperative that scholars attend school every day. According to state law IC 20-33-2-28, IC 35-46-1-4(a)(4), IC 31-37-2-3A and scholar Protective Services.

#### Absences:

When a scholar is going to be absent, the parents or guardian must notify the school and provide an explanation. Scholars will be considered truant and the absence will be unexcused.

Excused absences include the following:

- Illness of scholar, doctors note must be given within 6 days of their return
- Death in the immediate family
- Quarantine
- Page in the General Assembly - 1 day
- Medical, dental, and/or clinic appointments doctors note must be given within 6 days of their return
- Hospital confinement (non-emergency) doctors note must be given within 6 days of their return
- Religious holiday
- State Fair participant

Unexcused absences is an absence from school that is not listed above. A scholar that has been absent for an excused or unexcused absence on five (5) occasions will receive a formal letter of documentation.

- A scholar is considered habitually truant by the State of Indiana when he/she is chronically absent, or has unexcused absences for more than ten (10) days in one (1) school year

Parents and the school are legally bound to follow the Indiana Compulsory Attendance Laws IC 20-33-2-28, IC 35-46-1-4(a)(4), IC 31-37-2-3A

- A letter will be mailed home to the parent when the scholar has missed five (5) days of school
- Scholars who have problems with regular attendance will be reported to the Rush County Juvenile Probation Officer and Child Protective Services

#### **Awards Day:**

Awards Days will occur four times throughout the school year.

Awards will be given for the following areas at the end of each 9-week period. Teachers may elect to give other awards within their classroom.

- Principal's Honor Roll: Straight A's (100-90) in all academic areas

- Honor Roll: A's and B's (100-80) in all academic areas
- On A Roll: Scholars who work hard, but are unable to make higher than a C
- Perfect Attendance: Scholars who have not missed or been tardy at all during the school year (will be awarded after COVID)
- Attendance Honors: Scholars who have less than 5 absences and tardies during the school year (will be awarded after COVID)
- Triple-A: Attendance, Academics, & Attitude
- Most Improved ELA: Two scholars per class who have most improved their ELA scores (NWEA)
- Most Improved Math: Two scholars per class who have most improved their math scores (NWEA)
- Citizenship Award: Scholars who always do the right thing, even when no one is watching
- Specials Honors Award: Scholars who have earned A and B (100-80) in all classes (academics, homeroom, and specials classes)
- Art: Picasso Award: Awarded to two scholars in each class
- Martial Arts: Olympic Award: Awarded to two scholars in each class
- Technology: Top Techie: Awarded to two scholars in each class (if we have it as a class)
- Music: Master Musician: Awarded to two scholars in each class (if we have it as a class)
- Spanish: Bilingual Award: Awarded to two scholars in each class (if we have it as a class)

#### Junior High Only

- World Explorer- Social Studies
- Mad Scientist- Science
- Mathematician- Math
- Remarkable Reader- ELA
- Writing Wizard- Writing

#### **Behavior Expectations and Discipline Frameworks:**

The safety of our scholars, volunteers, and staff is of prime importance at NRCS. We strive to maintain a safe and respectful environment through adherence to proper behavioral expectations. We will hold scholars accountable for their actions, and we ask parents to support the staff regarding behavioral issues.

Before, during, after school, at any school function, and during all field experiences, each scholar will be expected to:

- Abide by federal, state, and local laws as well as the rules of the school
- Respect the rights of others
- Act courteously toward adults and fellow scholars
- Be on time to school and attentive in class
- Work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal
- Complete assigned tasks on time and as directed

- Help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive
- Protect others from physical or emotional harm at all times

Depending on the intent, severity, and the repercussions of an incident, various techniques and consequences will be used. Such as scholar and parent conferences, counseling, in-school detention, loss of part or all recess/social time, positive reinforcement, inability to participate in certain school events, suspension, and expulsion.

### 1. School-Wide Structure:

- a. Dens: The school is divided evenly into eight dens. Each scholar and staff member belongs to a den. The scholars and staff are divided so that every classroom contains a member from each den. Dens work like a family and members work together to develop individual and group character traits (respect, responsibility, independence, honesty/integrity, connection, decision making/problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, self-confidence, patience).
- b. PBIS: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices affecting scholar outcomes every day. It is a way to support everyone to create the kinds of schools where all scholars are successful. PBIS isn't a curriculum you purchase or something you learn during a one-day professional development training. It is a commitment to addressing scholar behavior through systems change. When it's implemented well, scholars achieve improved social and academic outcomes, schools experience reduced exclusionary discipline practices, and school personnel feel more effective.

### **Bullying:**

Bullying is defined as obvious, unwanted, *repeated* acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner including electronically or digitally, physical acts committed, aggression, or any other similar behaviors that are committed by a scholar or group of scholars against another scholar with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted scholar and create for the targeted scholar an objectively hostile school environment that:

- Places the targeted scholar in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted scholar's person or property
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted scholar's physical or mental health
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted scholar's academic performance
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school
  - Bullying committed by scholars towards other scholars is strictly prohibited.
  - Engaging in bullying activities by use of computer, computer software, or social

media platform that is accessed through any computer, any computer system, and/or any computer network is also prohibited.

- This rule may be applied regardless of the physical location in which the bullying behavior occurred if the alleged bully and the targeted scholar attend NRCS and disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of other scholars to a safe and peaceful learning environment.
- Parents or scholars who suspect that repeated acts of bullying are taking place should report the matter to the school immediately. This report may be made anonymously and law enforcement may be contacted. School personnel will immediately investigate all reports of bullying.
- The Administration will be responsible for working with the school and other community resources to provide information and/or follow-up services to support the targeted scholar and to educate the scholar engaging in bullying behavior on the effects of bullying and the prevention of bullying. In addition, the Administration and staff will be responsible for determining if the bullying behavior is a violation of law required to be reported to law enforcement under Indiana law based upon their reasonable belief.
- The parents of the alleged bully and the targeted scholar(s) shall be notified immediately.
- False reporting of bullying conduct as defined in this rule by a scholar shall be considered a violation of this rule and will result in appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions if the investigation of the report finds it to be false.
- Corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the bullying.
- Everyone is encouraged to engage scholars, staff and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. Parent involvement is encouraged.

### **Bus Policy:**

Riding a Northern Rush County School bus is a privilege, not a right. Following school bus rules is mandatory for the safety of our scholars.

The safety of your scholar's is of the utmost importance to us at NRCS. This includes their safety on NRCS and NRCS contracted buses on school routes and field experiences.

Your scholar's behavior on the bus (at rest or in transit) and while entering/exiting the bus is critical to the safe operation of the bus and to the safety of everyone not only on the bus, but in the vicinity of the bus when it is in motion.

Disruptive behavior on the bus will not be tolerated. Forcing a bus driver to stop and turn off the bus and deal with disruptive behaviors is dangerous to all and prevents the driver from meeting the assigned schedule.

- Food is not allowed on buses unless approved and under supervision on a field experience
- Throwing of objects and physical activity between scholars is strictly prohibited
- Medicines may not be transported on a bus, unless on a field experience and supervised by a staff member or the Director of Transportation
- Instructions by bus drivers are to be followed immediately
- Cursing and use of inappropriate language is not permitted
- Violation of these policies can and may result in removal of scholar from bus routes for the remainder of the school year
- Our bus drivers need to be focused on safely transporting your scholars and not being distracted by manageable behaviors on the bus

**Cafeteria:**

We are very proud to be able to offer scholars opportunities for a school breakfast, lunch and snack. Our kitchen allows us to create healthy, hearty, and tasty meals that scholars enjoy.

All scholars receive FREE breakfast, lunch and snack as part of the USDA Food Program.

Lunch times for the school year are as follows:

PreK	11:00am - 11:30am
K & 1st Grades	11:30am - 12:00pm
2nd, 3rd, & 4th Grades	12:00pm - 12:30pm
5th, 6th, 7th, & 8th Grades	12:30pm – 1:00pm

Lunch menus are sent home monthly and can also be found on NRCS’s website. Parents are always welcome to have lunch with their scholar once restrictions allow. We ask that guests call the office prior to lunch so that lunch can be ordered for you.

ALL extra food items are \$.50. This includes milk, seconds, and additional treats.

Adults that choose to eat lunch at school or on field experience must pay the Administrative Coordinator prior to going to the cafeteria. Adult lunches cost \$4.60. Adult breakfast cost \$2.50.

**Cell Phones:**

This policy is a result of scholars not being responsible and accountable with their cell phones and personal electronic devices. Cell phones are causing disruptions in both class and on the bus. In some cases, cell phones are being used in an inappropriate manner and repeated

warnings and actions taken by staff are being ignored by scholars. This will no longer be tolerated. If your scholar needs to contact you, they will be allowed to use the NRCS office phone. If you need to speak with your scholar you must call the NRCS office.

Additionally, iPods/MP3 Players, iPads/Tablets, Apple Watches/Fitbits and electronic gaming or entertainment devices are not allowed to be brought to school or to be used in the classroom or bus at any time.

If your scholar is found to have a cell phone or electronic device at school or on the bus, the cell phone or device will be confiscated and the parent/guardian will be called and will be required to come to the school office themselves to retrieve the cell phone or device. Confiscated cell phones and electronic devices will not be returned to the scholars. Multiple infractions of this policy will result in suspension from school.

### **Clinic:**

A clinic is available to scholars who are not feeling well. This is not a doctor's office. Please do not send your scholar to school if they are not feeling well and advise them to see the nurse. Please keep your scholar home and call the office to report the absence. However, should your scholar become ill at school, they will be sent to the clinic and adequate care will be provided. Parents will be notified via the telephone and/or in writing, of their scholar's visit to the clinic. If it is deemed that a scholar must be sent home, a phone call will be made to the parent. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency contact numbers will be tried before a text message is sent. Any scholar that is injured while at school will also receive a call home that follows these same guidelines. All visits to the clinic are documented electronically via the clinic log. Scholars will also participate in a hearing and vision screening throughout the school year.

### Limitations on Physical Activity:

If a scholar is sick or injured, please send a doctor's note explaining why he or she cannot participate in recess or physical activity. Scholars are expected to participate in all recess and physical activities and should be dressed appropriately according to the weather. A physician note is mandatory for excusing a scholar from physical activity.

### Guidelines for Sending a Scholar Home:

1. If a scholar has a temperature of 100.4 or more, the parent will be asked to take the scholar home.
2. The scholar may return to school when they are fever free for 24 hours (without medication) or a doctor's note. If a scholar has one or more of the following, the parent will be asked to take the scholar home and the following guidelines in the section of returning a scholar to school,
  - a. Chicken Pox: Watery blisters appearing on scalp, face or body

- b. Diarrhea: One loose, watery bowel movement with one or more additional symptoms (fever 100.4 or higher, abdominal pains, lethargy, vomiting, unable to be consoled). Or two loose, watery bowel movements with no additional symptoms. Upon return to school, if within a 24-hour time period, the diarrhea returns, the scholar will be sent home again. The scholar may return to school when they are 24 hours symptom-free (without medication) or with a doctor's note
- c. Eye Infections: Red eyes, discharge from tear ducts, swollen eyelids and /or bumps on eyelids, crusted or matted eyes; pink eye
- d. Streptococcal Infections: Fever 100.4 or higher and sore throat
- e. Rashes: Unexplained rash on all or part of the body
- f. Ringworm: Itchy, scaly patches on scalp or body, usually ring-shaped. Margins may be red and slightly raised
- g.. Impetigo: Any infected wound or small blister that becomes crusted or contains pus
- h.. Lice: Itching or scratching of scalp, white pinpoint eggs (nits) that will not flick off and /or positive for live lice
- i. Ear Infection: Pain in ear, fever 100.4, fussiness, pulling on ear
- j. Vomiting: One vomiting episode, with one or more additional symptoms (fever 100.4 or higher, abdominal pains, lethargy, unable to be consoled). Two vomiting episodes, with no additional symptoms within 24 hours
- k. Flu: If a scholar has temp of 100.4 or higher, body aches, vomiting and/or diarrhea and has been exposed to flu, the scholar will be sent home
- l. Cough: If a scholar has persistent cough with sputum
- m. Nasal Discharge: Any nasal discharge that is not clear, fever 100.4, irritable or lethargic, headache not able to participate in class
- n. Diabetic: If diabetic scholar does not maintain blood glucose after insulin intake and/or blood sugar too high
- o. Asthma: After administration of inhaler scholar is having complications and breathing not returning to normal
- p. Allergies: If anaphylaxis, an EpiPen is administered
- q. Injury: Any injury that would not allow the scholar to be able to perform normally
- r. Crutches: Any scholar on crutches at school will need a doctor's note for permission

3. Parents must pick up their scholar or arrange to have an alternative person pick up the scholar. Once it is discovered that a scholar is ill or infested, we will attempt to isolate or remove the scholar from the classroom to help minimize the exposure to other scholars. We will call parents or guardians and if no answer, continue down the contact list. We will leave voice mail messages to have the parent call back, if no message can be left, then will move on to the next person on the list.

4. Please understand that when a call is made to inform you that your scholar is ill and must be picked up, we are doing this for the protection of all the scholars. We understand that you have to work and that it is very frustrating when your scholar becomes ill, but we are here to care for and protect all scholars.

5. Obviously, it is VITAL that we have current contact information for you or alternates that are easily reached. We would like at least three (3) additional phone numbers of contact for each scholar and for in case of emergency

#### Guidelines for Returning a Scholar to School:

1. Scholars sent home because of fever may return 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal without medication (Tylenol or Ibuprofen)

2. Scholars sent home because of any one of the following might return when:

a. Chicken Pox: Sores are dried up or crusted, and no new blisters are appearing (approximately six or seven days)

b. Diarrhea: Symptoms are gone for 24 hours and scholar has a normal bowel movement without medication such as Kaopectate

c. Eye Infection:

1. When parents see the first symptoms of discharge, they are advised to keep the tear ducts clean and open; warm compresses often work

2. With any eye infection the scholar may return to school after 24 hours on medication, discharge has cleared up and redness is gone

3. If the eye is red and swollen with no discharge and the cause is allergy, a written diagnosis from the doctor should be given to the school

d. Streptococcal Infection: 24 hours after antibiotics has been administered, no fever present, and the scholar is able to participate fully in activities

e. Rashes: The scholar is free of symptoms or there is a written statement from the doctor stating the scholar is not contagious

f. Ringworm: After medication is administered and sores are covered

g. Impetigo: After treatment begins and sores are covered unless they are dry

h. Ear Infections: After fever is gone and the scholar is comfortable and on medication

i. Nasal Discharge: Mucus is clear

j. Lice: After treatment, ALL lice are removed

k. Vomiting: 24 hours after last vomiting episode and no other symptoms exist

Scholars may return earlier ONLY if a doctor's note verifying that the scholar is not contagious or does not pose a health risk to other scholars is received. If your scholar has been sent home the

day before, do not bring them back to school before the 24 hour is up and they are symptom free without medication.

It is vital the school be notified when your scholar has developed a contagious illness or disease so we may notify other parents and watch the rest of the scholars for symptoms. If your scholar is ill during hours not in attendance please let us know so we can be aware of the types of illnesses being spread within a group. If your scholar has been exposed to the illness of a family member or friend, again, notify us so we may watch for symptoms.

### **Closing/Inclement Weather:**

Scholar and staff safety are the primary concern of NRCS. NRCS will open on all regularly scheduled days unless inclement weather or an emergency occurs. NRCS is an independent school corporation and is not included in the closings of other local school corporations. Should a two-hour delay occur, breakfast will not be served. Closings or early dismissals will be announced via various electronic means. SwiftK12 will send out a message for all closings or delays.

### **Contact Us:**

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General Email inquiries: [info@mays.k12.in.us](mailto:info@mays.k12.in.us)

### **Curriculum:** *See Place Based*

NRCS teaches the state standards through a place-based, hands-on curriculum using Reading Wonders and StudySync for ELA and Envision 2.0 or McGraw-Hill for Math. NRCS also provides McGraw-Hill science and social studies junior high curriculum, Learning Without Tears, Learning A-Z, Shurley Grammar, Aleks, IXL, BrainPop, Phonic Dance, Heggerdy, Studies Weekly, and Scholastic News. As a district, we provide teachers with the tools and best practices they need to ensure their scholars have a solid academic foundation.

### **Dens:**

### Den School-Wide Structure:

The school is divided evenly into eight dens. Each scholar and staff member belongs to a den. The scholars and staff are divided so that every classroom contains a member from each house. Houses work like a family and members work together to develop individual and group character traits (respect, responsibility, independence, honesty/integrity, connection, decision making/problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, self-confidence, patience).

The goal of dens is to create an honor system among staff and scholars that builds character traits, teaches responsibility, establishes respect and improves the academic process.

All den names are the word “tiger” in various languages.

### Dens and Den Colors:

Kaplony (purple)  
Harimou (red)  
Tora (pink)  
Sud (lime green)  
Nimer (royal blue)  
Tigerin (dark green)  
Babur (orange)  
Kambuku (teal)

### Character Skills:

Each month dens will focus on a distinctive character trait.

August:	Respect
September:	Responsibility
October:	Independence
November:	Honesty/Integrity
December:	Connection
January:	Decision Making/Problem-Solving
February:	Effective Communication
March:	Collaboration
April:	Self-Confidence
May:	Patience

### **Dress Code:**

Scholars that attend NRCS are expected to keep themselves well-groomed and neatly dressed. Dress code pertains to all scholars enrolled at NRCS. Scholars who do not abide by the dress code may be asked to turn shirts inside out, change into extra, clean clothing kept at the school clinic, or call parents or guardians to bring a change of clothes.

Any form of dress or hairstyle, which distracts from the learning environment, will not be permitted. This includes, but not limited to the following:

- No article of clothing may be worn that promotes the sale or use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or violence
- Hats or sunglasses are not to be worn in the school building unless for a special occasion, such as hat day or sports team day
- T-shirts with low cut armholes shall not be worn
- The torso of all scholars must be covered
- Skirts and shorts must be at least mid-thigh length
- No holes in jeans or shorts above the knee in which skin can be seen
- All tank tops must be three fingers wide; NO spaghetti straps
- Flip-flops are not allowed
- Pants are not allowed to sag and should be worn at the waist
- Shoes must be tied and have a back

### **Drinks:**

Scholars may drink plain (not colored or flavored) water in the classroom in an appropriate, enclosed container. No carbonated beverages are allowed.

### **Drugs and Alcohol:**

NRCS is a drug, alcohol, vape, and smoke free campus. NRCS will not tolerate the use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs on school property. According to state law, a scholar in possession of, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol can expect to have law enforcement intervene and can be subject to expulsion.

### **Electronics/Cell Phones:**

This policy is a result of scholars not being responsible and accountable with their cell phones and personal electronic devices. Cell phones are causing disruptions in both class and on the bus. In some cases, cell phones are being used in an inappropriate manner and repeated warnings and actions taken by staff are being ignored by scholars. This will no longer be tolerated. If your scholar needs to contact you, they will be allowed to use the NRCS office phone. If you need to speak with your scholar you must call the NRCS office.

Additionally, iPods/MP3 Players, iPads/Tablets, Apple Watches/Fitbits and electronic gaming or entertainment devices are not allowed to be brought to school or to be used in the classroom or bus at any time.

If your scholar is found to have a cell phone or electronic device at school or on the bus, the cell phone or device will be confiscated and the parent/guardian will be called and will be required to

come to the school office themselves to retrieve the cell phone or device. Confiscated cell phones and electronic devices will not be returned to the scholars under any circumstances.

### **Email:**

Communication between parents and teachers is essential and required for the success of all scholars. If a parent has an email address, please call the office or send a note with your scholar sharing it with the school. Staff will then be able to contact parents if a concern arises. Parents can contact staff members via email, letter to school, text message, or phone. Alert Solutions will also send messages via method of choice.

### **Field Experiences:**

#### Expected Field Experience Behavior:

Field experiences are an extension of the classroom and scholars are expected to behave in the same manner as they would within the classroom. Due to the nature of field experiences and the interaction that will occur with community members, scholars are expected to be role models and on their best behavior. If a scholar is disrespectful or misbehaves, then a conference will occur before the scholar can attend another field experience. If the behavior continues at school, then field experience privileges will be revoked or the parent will be required to attend future field experiences with the scholar. If a scholar loses the opportunity to participate in a field experience, the scholar will be required to attend school on the day of the field experience. Due to the nature of the NRCS curriculum, exclusion from field experiences will seriously impact a scholar's learning experience. If scholars misbehave in the classroom, then the Administration along with the teacher can make the decision for the scholar not to attend the field experience or require a parent to attend.

NRCS Field Experiences are part of the learning structure of our school. Scholars are expected to be respectful, well behaved and follow the directions of adults on the field experience. A scholar who does not demonstrate these expectations or demonstrates a safety/security risk to him/her self or others will not be allowed to participate in off campus field experiences. Any scholar who does not participate in field experiences will be required to complete an alternate in school assignment to receive credit.

All scholars are required to turn in a field experience permission slip to take part in approved field experiences. Each experience will require a new permission slip. If a scholar does not turn in a permission slip, then the scholar is required to remain at the school on the day of the trip. The scholar will complete work assigned by their teacher. This is graded work that will take the place of the grade scholars receive for the field experience.

Field experiences do receive grades in PowerSchool, either through participation or other hands-on activities that are completed while on the experience. Although enjoyable, field experiences provide an experience that is not available within the classroom walls. If a question should arise please contact your scholar's teacher for more details.

Only scholars in the classroom attending the field experience are eligible for the trip. In the event parent chaperones are needed, no other scholars, including siblings, can attend the experience. Chaperones will need to concentrate on the behavior and welfare of the scholars in their care. All chaperones will abide by the *Chaperone Guidelines* described below. A background check, through the school, is required prior to chaperoning the trip. Background checks are good for three years.

ALL scholars MUST RIDE THE BUS to and from the field experience. The number of chaperones needed for a field experience is dependent on the classroom teacher and the expectations required for the success of the trip. If there is room on the bus, then adult chaperones may be invited to ride the bus. If a bus is full, chaperones may be asked to drive separately.

Chaperone Guidelines:

NRCS truly appreciates volunteers that are willing to chaperone. Parental involvement is critical in supporting the school’s mission. For our scholars to get the most from their field experiences we ask the following from our chaperones:

- A full criminal history check must be obtained before chaperoning a field experience; these are good for three years
- Notify the teacher as soon as possible if circumstances will prevent you from chaperoning
- Carry a cell phone if you have one and make sure to exchange numbers with the teacher; this allows teachers and chaperones to stay in contact with one another
- Keep the scholars that you are responsible for in close proximity
- Scholars must be accompanied by an adult at all times
- DO NOT USE YOUR OWN MONEY TO PURCHASE ITEMS FOR scholars
- Parents must adhere to and follow school policy and procedures; you are a direct representation of NRCS
- The NRCS staff, including bus drivers, are in charge and are required to enforce school rules regarding scholar behavior at all school-related functions and field experiences, even if the parent is in attendance

**Grading & Report Cards:** *See Parent-Teacher Conferences*

Scholars will receive progress reports four weeks after the start of each nine weeks and a report card at the end of each nine weeks. All core subjects will be given a letter grade. Scholars will also be given a grade in citizenship and conduct (homeroom). If parents have any questions or concerns, they can contact their scholar’s teacher at any time.

(Grades 3-6)		Grading Scale		(Grades K-2 & Specials)
A+	100	C+	79-77	Mastery: 100-90
A	99-93	C	76-73	Partial Mastery: 89-70
A-	92-90	C-	72-70	Non-Mastery: 69 & below

B+	89-87	D+	69-67
B	86-83	D	66-63
B-	82-80	D-	62-60
		F	59 and below

Scholars in grades k, first, and first semester of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will receive M for mastery, P for partial mastery, and N for non-mastery. scholars in second semester 2<sup>nd</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will receive letter grades that follow the above criteria.

**Holidays:**

Although all holidays are important and deserve respect, NRCS celebrates the following holidays with our scholars

- Halloween
- Thanksgiving
- Winter Holiday Season
- Valentine's Day
- St Patrick's Day
- Veteran's Day

**Homework:**

Please check your scholar's homework daily! Special assignments, practice, and studying for tests require time at home for building skills. It is important for scholars to create good study habits and learn to plan, organize, and carry out academic requirements. Homework provides a valuable opportunity for parents to review assignments with scholars and check to ensure that scholars are completing lessons correctly. It also shows scholars the value placed on work done well. To keep organized and to learn successful study habits, daily planners are required in grades kindergarten through eighth. It is the teacher's responsibility to check the planners to be sure the information is entered correctly and the scholar's behavior is correctly identified. It is the parent's responsibility to initial the agenda indicating they are aware of the scholar's homework and behavior. When a scholar has an excused absence, they receive one day make-up for each day missed to complete assignments. When a scholar has an unexcused absence, they receive one day for each day missed to complete assignments.

**Illness:** *See Clinic*

The health and safety of NRCS scholars and staff is of primary importance. scholars who are sick should not be sent to school. Please keep scholars at home if they have any of the following conditions: temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, sore throat, earache, cough or cold, stomachache, or skin rash. When scholars develop these conditions at school, the office will contact the scholar's guardian according to the information on file. Please keep contact information current by notifying the office of any changes in work situation, name, address,

telephone, or email. **Scholars must return a scholar information sheet filled out and signed by the parent at the start of the school year.** This is a communication tool to allow us to know if your scholar has an allergy or takes prescription medications. All proper immunizations and forms must be on file in the office. Information and treatment regarding allergies and prescriptions medications will be provided to the scholar's teacher as well as the clinic and office.

### **Immunizations:**

A complete immunization record or exemption must be on file by the first day of school.

### **Injury:**

If a scholar is injured, the scholar is sent to the clinic and the parent will be called. Depending upon the nature of the injury, an accident report may need to be completed by the Director of Health Services.

### **Lice:**

Head lice spreads very easily and can cause a lot of trouble and upset for scholars and families. If you discover lice or nits on your scholar, please contact NRCS so that other scholars can be checked. If nits or lice are found on a scholar, a phone call will be placed to the parent of the scholar(s) asking them to pick them up. If parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called. scholars will remain in the clinic and away from other scholars. The following directions will be given:

- To visit the school clinic the next day for confirmation of treatment and to have their scholar(ren)'s head checked for possible nits or nymphs (louse)
- Nits closer than ¼" from the scalp means the scholar cannot stay at school that day; nits more than ¼" from the scalp means the scholar may stay at school because it indicates an old infestation
- Any adult lice or nits means the scholar cannot stay at school
- Scholar's heads will be inspected each day until the nits and/or adults are gone

### **Lockers:**

Scholars in grades third through eighth will receive a locker based on availability. Those scholars that receive a locker are to use the locker to store school supplies and personal belongings such as coats and bookbags. Scholars are not to place a lock on the locker. Keeping the locker clean and organized is the responsibility of the student. Students whose belongings are falling out of the locker will lose the privilege of having one.

### **Medication:**

Scholars must return a scholar medication sheet filled out and signed by the parent and doctor at the start of the school year if they take prescription medication. This is a communication tool, which allows NRCS to know if a scholar has an allergy or takes prescription medications. A

parent/guardian must complete a medication form regarding the administration of prescription and non-prescription medication at school. Prescription medications must be delivered in the original container by the parent/guardian along with the appropriate paperwork. A note allowing the school to administer the medication must also accompany non-prescription medication. Both medications must be locked in the clinic.

### **Notes to School:**

#### Limitations on Physical Activity:

If a scholar is sick or injured, a doctor's note explaining why he or she cannot participate in recess or physical education is required. Otherwise, we will expect full participation. The state of Indiana requires daily physical exercise for all scholars. Thus, scholars are expected to participate in all recess and physical education activities and should be dressed appropriately as many activities are held outside.

#### Medical Conditions:

If a scholar has a medical issue that requires any special considerations such as bathroom breaks or food allergies, a doctor's note is required. Parents should notify the Director of Health Services of any pre-existing medical conditions as diagnosed by a physician.

#### Transportation:

If your scholar does not normally ride the bus or is to be dropped off with someone else, a note or phone call from a parent is required. A note from a parent is required before a scholar is eligible to ride a bus home with another scholar. Please contact the bus driver prior to 6:30 AM for morning changes and contact the school office prior to 3:00 PM for afternoon route changes.

#### Pick Up:

To keep your scholar safe, a note is required from a parent if the scholar is to be picked up by someone on their pick up list; they will not be able to leave with someone not on their list. Without a note, we will require the scholar to go home as normal.

### **Parent Rights:**

Parents have the right to discuss concerns/questions with NRCS staff, Principal, or the Northern Rush County Schools Inc. Board of Directors.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences:**

We believe that parents and teachers should work together for the benefit of the scholar. At any time, parents are welcome to contact teachers (and vice-versa) to discuss a scholar or request a conference. NRCS staff believe it is important to set aside time after the first nine weeks and the

third nine weeks to schedule specific times for parents and teachers to meet and discuss a scholar's academic and behavioral achievement. Please do not hesitate to call or email.

### **Pictures/Videos:**

Parents complete an *Information Sheet* when they enroll their scholar. This *Information Sheet* asks if a parent objects to their scholar's picture or image being utilized for marketing purposes for NRCS. The scholars do many activities and hundreds of digital pictures are taken of classes and scholars. The school website, newspapers, radio, television and other advertising are ways we promote the school. You choose on your *Information Sheet* if this is something you would like your scholar to participate in.

### **Progress Reports:**

Progress reports or midterms are sent home after the first four weeks in the nine weeks. This form of documentation allows teachers to more formally communicate with parents/guardians. Progress reports allow parents to see exactly how their scholar is functioning in all subject areas. At any time, if a question arises about your scholar's grades, please contact the teacher.

### **Purpose of NRCS:**

The purpose of NRCS is to provide scholars with a top-quality educational program using a place-based, best-practices approach to academics. With careful attention to the social dynamics and cultural values of the rural setting, NRCS seeks to instill scholars with self-confidence, practical skills, pride of place, and excellent academic abilities through differentiated instruction, strong parental support, and continuous interaction with the local community. Scholars will be equipped to excel in their academic, personal, and social lives long after their attendance at NRCS. NRCS wants to engrave in every scholar a love of learning that entwines a passion for knowledge that teaches how to think and process.

### **Reading, Writing, & Arithmetic Buddies:**

The place-based curriculum lends itself well for younger scholars to work with older scholars. It allows for investigative thinking that creates stronger social, emotional, and academic connection among scholars of various ages.

### **Recess & Social Time:**

Please make sure scholars are dressed appropriately for outside recess. If there is any precipitation such as rain or snow, the scholars will not go outside regardless of the temperature. Recess/social time will be held outdoors if the weather is 20 degrees or higher, including wind chills, as determined by [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com). A doctor's note is required if you would like your

scholar to stay indoors during recess. This decision was based on Indiana Department of Education's recommendations for daily scholar activity.

### **Scholar Classification:**

#### Promotion, Placement, and Retention

The NRCS School Board recognizes that the personal, social, physical, and educational growth of scholars will vary and that they should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth. It shall be the policy of the NRCS Board that each scholar be moved forward in a continuous pattern of achievement and growth that is in harmony with his/her own development. Such a pattern should coincide with the system of grade levels/standards established by this Board and the Indiana Department of Education instructional objectives and requirements.

A scholar will be promoted when he/she has demonstrated sufficient proficiency to permit him/her to move ahead in the educational program of the next grade. No scholar who has successfully completed a grade shall be retained or allowed to repeat a grade in order to improve his/her ability or lengthen his/her eligibility to participate in extracurricular athletic programs.

Following sound principles of scholar guidance, the NRCS Board discourages the skipping of grades.

The NRCS Board will comply with the requirements of the Indiana Department of Education regarding the consequences for scholars in grade three who fail to pass the Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination Assessment (IREAD-3). Accordingly, a scholar who does not pass the IREAD-3 assessment either during the assessment period in the school year or during the summer assessment window, in the following school year, will continue to receive instruction at his/her individual reading level, will be officially reported as a third grader, and will fully participate in the grade three ILEARN assessment.

The NRCS Board shall develop administrative guidelines for promotion, placement, and retention of scholars which:

- A. Require the recommendation of the professional staff for any promotion, placement, or retention
- B. Require that parents are informed in advance of the possibility of retention of a scholar at a grade level
- C. Assure that reasonable efforts be made to remediate the scholar's difficulties before he/she is retained
- D. Assign to the Principal the final responsibility for determining the promotion, placement, or retention of each scholar

E. Allow for the parental appeal process to the NRCS Board if the parent feels the retention is not warranted

Promotion or retention of scholars stem from the total development of the individual scholar related to the educational program. General overall scholastic achievement should have prime influence in determining retention and/or promotion of the individual scholar. No scholar should be exposed to the threat of retention as a disciplinary measure. Parents of any scholar doing unacceptable work which may place the scholar's promotion in jeopardy are to be notified well in advance of any actual decision regarding promotion or retention of the scholar.

Parent-teacher conferences must be held whenever retention of a scholar is being considered. No retention should be consummated without a parent-teacher conference.

The Principal has the legal responsibility for scholar classification, and scholars may be reclassified when, in the best professional judgment of the Principal, it becomes necessary or advisable. The decision regarding matters of promotion and/or retention for any scholar rests upon the Principal, with appeal possible to the NRCS Board.

**Transportation/Bus Rules:** *See Bus Policy*

Riding a Northern Rush County School bus is a privilege not a right. Following school bus rules is mandatory for the safety of our scholars. The safety of your scholar is of the utmost importance to us at Northern Rush County Schools. This includes their safety on NRCS and NRCS-contracted buses on school routes and field experiences. Your scholar's behavior on the bus (at rest or in transit) and while entering/exiting the bus is critical to the safe operation of the bus and to the safety of everyone not only on the bus, but in the vicinity of the bus when it is in motion. Disruptive behavior on the bus will not be tolerated. Forcing a bus driver to stop the bus, turn off the bus, and deal with disruptive behaviors is dangerous to all and prevents the driver from meeting the assigned schedule.

- Food is not allowed on buses unless approved and under supervision on a field experience. Your scholar may bring their lunch to school, but the lunch box is not to be opened on the bus.
- Throwing of objects and physical activity between scholars is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED**
- Medicines may not be transported on a bus, unless on a field experience and supervised by a certified adult or Director of Transportation
- Instructions by bus drivers are to be followed **IMMEDIATELY**
- **VIOLATION OF THESE POLICIES CAN AND MAY RESULT IN REMOVAL OF SCHOLAR FROM BUS ROUTES FOR UP TO THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**
- Our bus drivers need to be focused on safely transporting your scholars and not being distracted by manageable behaviors on the bus
- Sit facing forward, stay in your seat

- Keep your hands to yourself
- If your scholar receives a reprimand, a bus slip will be filled out and the Principal will address this and contact you
  - Students will be given reprimands on a three strikes policy. They will receive one day off the bus on the first occurrence, two days for the second occurrence, and three days for the third occurrence. Depending on the severity of the disturbance, students may lose bus privileges without going through the above policy.
- Property not owned by your scholar is not to be touched or messed with at any time, such as backpacks and personal belongings.
- Have your scholar(s) ready and waiting at their designated pick-up time
- Parents or guardians are not allowed on the bus at any time
- Negative or derogatory language will not be tolerated
- Scholars may have a bottle of drinking water, and may consume that water on the bus.
- Follow directions the first time
- No food, candy or gum allowed on the bus
- Respect others and their belongings
- Do not damage or destroy bus property, or a fee will be assessed for damaged

### **Rules- Cafeteria:**

These rules are part of the review that needs to be discussed with your scholar:

- Display proper manners
- Use your quiet voice
- Walk always
- Remain seated at your table until an adult dismisses you
- Clean up your eating area and put things where they belong
- Be courteous and respectful
- Touch only the food on your tray
- Uneaten food is to remain on the tray
- Eat first, talk last
- Talk only to the people at your table
- When entering and exiting the cafeteria, remain quiet
- While in line, please remain silent

### **Rules – Classroom:**

Classroom rules are determined by the classroom teacher. Classroom rules include, but are not limited to, the school rules listed in the scholar handbook.

Throughout the building these rules are to be followed at all times:

- Remain quiet in the hallways, stairwells, and bathrooms
- Scholars are to be in line with their class, facing forward with arms at their sides
- Raise hands before speaking
- Demonstrate character traits, i.e treat others how you want to be treated

- NO BACK TALKING or ARGUING with adults in the building
- Vandalism will not be tolerated
- No touching

### **Rules – Playground:**

These rules are part of the review that needs to be discussed with your scholar:

#### Swings:

- Back and forth only
- No standing on the swing or laying your belly on the seat
- No twisting the swing or swinging left to right
- BE CAREFUL around swings, no playing directly by the swing

#### Teeter- totters:

- Only 2 on a teeter-totter at a time
- Riders must straddle the seat and hold on to the handle
- No bumping the other rider
- Do not drop the other rider without making sure he/she is paying attention

#### Slides:

- One at a time down the slide
- No walking up the slide
- No staying mid-way on the slide; if you go up you must go down
- Keep arms and legs on the slide when going down
- Go down the slide feet first only

#### Monkey Bars:

- NO ONE is allowed on the top of the monkey bars
- Scholars must have hands on the bars to hang; no hanging upside down

#### General Rules:

- No touch/tackle football or pass of any sort with contact
- If throwing Frisbees or balls, you must be in the grass NOT on the gravel or asphalt
- No running on the asphalt
- If someone breaks a rule or gets hurt, seek a teacher immediately. Don't wait until you get back to your classroom teacher.
- No trash talk; Not while playing games, not ever
- NO TAG EVER
- No pushing, hitting, wrestling, or play fighting-type activities are allowed at any time inside or outside. Scholars are expected to participate in approved game activities.

- Scholars will stay within the boundaries of the playground and in sight of the adult on duty. If a ball goes off the playground, it is to be reported to the adult in charge.
- Scholars will play with all playground equipment appropriately. Do not throw balls at the buildings, windows, roof, or other scholars in such a way as to cause injury or damage.
- Hard balls, tackle football, and rough housing are not allowed
- Do not bounce balls inside the building except for the gym

Any breaking of the rules can result in being banned from an activity or piece of equipment for a day, a week, or longer. The punishment of rule breaking rules is up to the discretion of the teacher/teachers on duty.

### **Rules – School:**

These rules are part of the review that needs to be discussed with your scholar:

- Keep your hands (feet, head, arms, etc.) to yourself and keep everything in your hands to yourself. No touching for any reason.
- During classroom situations, scholars should raise their hand to speak
- When the teacher is giving instructions, making a presentation, or the class is engaged in discussion, scholars should be in their designated area paying attention
- Scholars are not allowed to run in the hallways or on the stairways
- Scholars should keep their hands to themselves at all times unless directed otherwise by an adult. (i.e.: physical education activity, art project, drama, etc.)
- Scholar horseplay will not be tolerated in the building or on school grounds at any time. For example, no shoving, pushing, tripping, hitting, wrestling, throwing of objects, spitting, kicking, biting, etc. This will be seen as bullying.
- Scholars will not use profanity or inappropriate language
- Scholars must be obedient and respectful of all adults and staff
- Scholars should be kind, courteous, respectful, and friendly to other scholars
- Scholars are expected to complete schoolwork on time unless there is an excused absence. Staff will give extra time for completion of homework.
- Scholars are not allowed to damage (i.e.: writing, tearing, scratching) textbooks, desks, or any other school property
- Scholars are not allowed to chew gum in the building unless allowed by a teacher
- Scholars are not allowed to purchase from the vending machine during the school day
- Scholars are not allowed to leave the school grounds at any time
- Scholars may be suspended or expelled from school when state statutes have been violated. (i.e.: refer to weapons, drug, and bullying policies)
- At dismissal, each grade level is to report to their designated area and remain there until dismissed by the teacher

### Rules- Seclusion and Restraint Policy:

As part of the emergency procedures in place for our school, no scholar will be restrained and/or placed in seclusion by school staff unless the scholar's behavior poses an imminent risk to him/herself or others. However, significant violations of the law including assaults on scholars

and staff will be reported to the police. As soon as possible after such use of restraint and/or seclusion, the parents or guardian will be informed when any of these actions have occurred and will be provided with a detailed account of the incident and the circumstances that led to the use of restraint and or seclusion.

### **School Day/Hours:**

The instructional day will begin at 8:15 a.m. A scholar will be considered tardy if he or she is not in the classroom by 8:15 a.m. Scholars will attend until 3:30 p.m. daily. If scholars leave early for an appointment, the scholar will not qualify for perfect attendance. NRCS instructional minutes exceed the state mandated number of minutes per day. Office hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **School-Parent Contract:**

We value your role in working to help your scholar achieve high academic standards. The purpose of the school-parent contract is to communicate a common understanding of home and school responsibilities to assure that every scholar attains high academic standards leading to a quality education. The following information will serve as an outline of various ways you and the school staff can build and maintain a partnership of shared responsibility for your scholar's learning.

#### School's Responsibility:

- Provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the scholars to meet Local, State, and National scholar academic standards.
- Provide you with assistance in understanding academic achievement standards and assessments and how to monitor your scholar's progress.
- Provide opportunities for ongoing communication between you and your scholar's teachers through:
  - o Annual parent/teacher conferences
  - o Frequent reports regarding your scholar's progress
  - o Opportunities to talk with members of the staff, administrators and the NRCS Board.
- Provide the staff with appropriate professional development activities.
- Maintain highly qualified teachers and instructional assistants.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment.

#### Parent's Responsibility:

- Ensure that my scholar attends school daily and arrives at school on time.
- Encourage my scholar to follow the rules and regulations of the school.
- Monitor my scholar's homework.
- Attend parent/teacher conferences and participate, when appropriate, in discussions relating to the education of my scholar.
- Volunteer in my scholar's school if time or schedule permits.

- Communicate positive information regarding teachers, administration, and other campus personnel when discussing school with my scholar.
- Seek information regarding my scholar's progress by conferencing with teachers, Administration, and other district personnel.

#### Scholar's Responsibility:

- Attend school regularly.
- Complete and turn in all classroom and homework assignments on time.
- Accept responsibility for my own actions.
- Show respect for myself, other people, and property.
- Make the effort to do my best to learn.
- Resolve conflicts peacefully and grow into a good human.

#### School, Parents, and Scholar Responsibilities:

- High scholar expectation.
- Improve scholar academic achievement.
- Build and develop a partnership to assist the scholars of the community achieve high academic standards.

#### **School Web-Site:**

The web address for the school's web site is: <http://www.mayscommunityacademy.org>  
 You will find information, pictures, policies, and a link to the scholar management software system called PowerSchool. We also maintain an active Facebook group that can be found by searching "NRCS."

#### **Snack Time:**

All scholars will have a snack provided by the school sometime throughout the day. Scholars who are not hungry learn better than hungry scholars. Snacks may not be brought in from home.

#### **Special Education and Useful Terminology:**

All scholars are unique and learn differently. At NRCS, scholars who do not learn/walk/talk the same as everyone else are called "exceptional learners," and some may benefit from special education services to help them become the best they can be. This includes scholars who are gifted and have areas in which they excel beyond the traditional curriculum provided by a grade level.

Terminology includes:

- Special Education – Specifically designed instruction that meets the needs of an exceptional learner
- Exceptional Learner – Those who require special education and related services if they are to realize their full potential

- Giftedness – Intellectual superiority, creativity, and motivation of sufficient magnitude to set the scholar apart from the clear majority of age-mates
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) – An educational setting or program that provides a scholar with disabilities the chance to work and learn to the best of their ability. The LRE provides the scholar with as much contact as possible with scholars without disabilities while meeting all the scholar's learning needs and physical requirements
- Inclusion – Inclusion is a term expressing commitment to educate each scholar to the maximum extent appropriate in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. It involves bringing the support services to the scholar (rather than moving the scholar to the services) and requires only that the scholar will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other scholars)
- Accommodation/Modification – Reasonable changes to accommodate needs of scholars with disabilities in general education classrooms
- Adaptation – A modification to the delivery of instruction or method of scholar performance that changes the content or conceptual difficulty of the curriculum
- IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Act (1997) - A law that guarantees a free and appropriate public education to individuals with disabilities ages 3 through 21 that need special education and/or related services
- Individual Education Program (IEP) – A written education plan for a scholar with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21. The IEP is developed by a team of professionals (teachers, therapists), the scholar's parents, and the scholar when appropriate. An IEP is based on a multidisciplinary evaluation of the scholar; it describes how the scholar is presently doing, what the annual goals for the scholar are, what the scholar's learning needs are, what services the scholar will need, and where the services will be offered. The IEP is reviewed and updated yearly. IEPs are required by IDEA

### **Specials:**

NRCS provides three special classes. These classes are art, music, and martial arts/physical education. Monday thru Friday, each classroom will have a 45-minute special rotating between music, art, and martial arts.

### **Scholar Drop-Off:**

Parents who drive scholars to school should drop scholars off on the west side of the building.

At dismissal, scholars will be escorted to the front of the building. The dismissal process will proceed in three stages. First, the classroom teachers will lead bus riders to the bus starting with kindergarten and moving through the sixth grade.

After the busses leave, the car-riders will be led to the end of the sidewalk and dismissed when the parent/driver pulls up in front of the building. Finally, scholars who walk to school will be dismissed. Please be patient through this process as safety is our primary concern.

### **Tardiness:**

When your scholar arrives late to class, important announcements, instructions and group activities are missed. Each scholar is an important member of the class. Timely and consistent participation makes a difference in what is learned. We encourage you to model the value of promptness as well as the importance of beginning and ending the school day with their classmates. The habits your scholar develops during these formative years will serve them throughout their lives.

- Scholars not present in the classroom by 8:15 a.m. are considered tardy
- Scholars who are tardy, must be escorted by an adult to the main office to sign in
- Teachers are requested to refer cases of chronic tardiness to administration
- Tardiness will count against scholars' citizenship/conduct grade

### **Teacher-Responsibilities:**

NRCS teachers have several key responsibilities to their scholars and families, including:

- To inspire and motivate scholars to develop a lifelong love of learning
- To be flexible, adaptable, and demonstrate excellent organizational skills
- To be confident and creative as an educator
- To have a strong academic background
- To be approachable & compassionate toward scholars while being both firm & fair
- To approach & interact with each scholar as a unique individual, and to meet individual needs
- To give scholars independence while ensuring that respect for others is maintained
- To teach responsibility
- To set a good example

### **Teacher Rights:**

Teachers have the right to:

- Expect scholars to behave properly
- Be respected by scholars and parents
- Be protected from physical assault and from harm or theft of personal property
- Call a parent/teacher conference when necessary

### **Technology:**

Internet access will be available within the school. All users will be required to complete and submit a *NRCS Technology Agreement* consent form. The Internet will be used as a communication and research tool and will be monitored periodically utilizing the Websense software on the server. Scholars do not have unsupervised computer access after school hours. Use of technology is a privilege and not a right. GoGuardian is also used by staff to monitor scholar usage of technology.

### **Textbook Fees:**

Scholars will be charged an annual book fee. This amount will change yearly and by grade. Parents will be notified of this fee by the start of the school year. School fees are due by the end of the first grading period. A Free and/or Reduced Application based upon income guidelines are available to determine eligibility for free or reduce prices for textbook fees. Direct certification is obtained from the state when a family is certain state assistance. In addition, arrangements can be made to assist in cases of financial hardship or a payment plan established. To receive free and/or reduced books, parents will be required to complete an application that will be approved or denied. Your scholar may be approved by direct certification. Direct certification is obtained from the state when a family is receiving any type of state assistance. These families will be notified at the start of school and no application is necessary.

### **Title I:**

Title I is a federal program that allows selected staff to provide interventions to scholars who have been identified through assessments, teacher's input, test scores, and academic achievement as needing specific academic support. Support is provided to these scholars to help improve their academic performance.

### **Transportation:**

Scholars who walk or ride bicycles to school should follow correct safety standards. Parents who wish to drive their scholars to school should deliver them to the area that has been determined by the school. Safety tips for scholars who ride school buses are as follows:

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#### Waiting on the bus:

- Dress appropriately
- Be at the door watching for the bus 5 minutes prior to the arrival time of the bus.
- If waiting outside, stay away from the curb while waiting for the bus.
- Wait until the school bus has stopped all traffic before stepping out onto the road.
- Never run after the school bus if it has already left the bus stop.
- Don't push getting on or off the school bus. Be patient and wait your turn. Use the handrail, especially if the stairs are slick from rain or snow.
- Many buses have a yellow bar that swings out from the front of the bus, but if not, remember to walk at least 10 feet in front of the bus when crossing so that the school bus

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#### Riding the Bus:

- After getting onto the bus, find a seat quickly.
- Keep your hands to yourself and remain in your seat.
- When the school bus is moving, always stay in your seat.
- Never put your head, arms or hands out of the window.
- Don't set back packs, bags, or feet and legs in the aisle.
- Don't play with the emergency exits, and don't block them with backpacks or bags.

- Only two people should sit in a school bus seat.
- If the bus is equipped with seat belts, we recommend using them.
- Don't stand up to get off the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Voices must stay at a whisper.

Getting Off the Bus:

- Use the handrail when getting off the bus.
- Walk in places where there are sidewalks.
- Walk at least 10 feet in front of the bus or in front of the yellow swing bar.
- If you need to cross the street, use a crosswalk with a crossing guard if possible.
- If you leave something on the bus or drop something on the ground near the bus, don't go back for it.

The safety of your scholar is of the utmost importance to us at Northern Rush County Schools. This includes their safety on NRCS and NRCS-contracted buses on school routes and field experiences. Your scholar's behavior on the bus (at rest or in transit) and while entering/exiting the bus is critical to the safe operation of the bus and to the safety of everyone not only on the bus, but in the vicinity of the bus when it is in motion. Disruptive behavior on the bus will not be tolerated. Forcing a bus driver to stop the bus, turn off the bus, and deal with disruptive behaviors is dangerous to all and prevents the driver from meeting the assigned schedule.

- Food is not allowed on buses unless approved and under supervision on a field experience. Your scholar may bring their lunch to school, but the lunch box is not to be opened on the bus
- Throwing of objects and physical activity between scholars is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED**
- Medicines may not be transported on a bus, unless on a field experience and supervised by an adult
- Instructions by bus drivers are to be followed **IMMEDIATELY**
- **VIOLATION OF THESE POLICIES CAN AND MAY RESULT IN REMOVAL OF scholar FROM BUS ROUTES FOR UP TO THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**
- Our bus drivers need to be focused on safely transporting your scholars and not being distracted by manageable behaviors on the bus

**Vandalism:**

It is important at NRCS that our scholars learn how to be good neighbors in a community. Part of this is an emphasis on taking care of property belonging to the school or others. NRCS will not tolerate intentional damage to school property including, but not exclusive of school equipment, textbooks, library materials, the garden pond, and school building. Scholars who vandalize will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including filing charges with law enforcement.

Depending on the severity of vandalism, consequences may also include restitution for damages and fines, a report to the juvenile authorities of any scholar whose damage of school property has been serious or chronic in nature, and/or a civil action may be filed in a court of competent authority against parents of a scholar who willfully destroys NRCS property.

### **Violence and Weapons:**

NRCS takes threats of violence very seriously. Any act or threat of violence by or against anyone associated with our school community – including scholars, employees, parents, suppliers, partners, volunteers or visitors is strictly prohibited. This policy applies to all members of the school community.

Any use or possession of weapons, whether illegal or not, is prohibited on school property or while on school business. This includes knives, guns, martial arts weapons, or any other object that is used as a weapon. Scholars possessing weapons could be subject to severe penalty up to, and including, expulsion. Toy guns and knives are also unacceptable as they can often be confused for the real thing.

### **Visitors:**

Parents, visitors, and volunteers are always welcome at NRCS. We want to be known as a friendly school where people are acknowledged. **All visitors must sign in at the office and receive a name badge.** Those who do not report to the office for a name badge will be considered unauthorized and could create concern for your scholar's safety. Visitors will be accompanied by a staff member. While we encourage visitors in our building, at no time can your visit disrupt the learning environment. Our staff will strive to make your visit informational and productive. Visitors may not photograph/video record scholars for the safety and security of our scholars.

If a visitor is disrespectful to any staff member, scholar or breaks any of the NRCS rules of behavior, they will be asked to leave the building. NRCS expects that while within school walls all adults act appropriately and set a good example. If an incident does occur, each incident will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### **Volunteers:**

Any volunteer working directly with scholars must have a criminal history check cleared with the school office.

A background check can be completed at the following website:

<https://secure.safehiringsolutions.com/app.cfm?id=7585E441-D475-432D-A121-9F26207D1CF7>

**All volunteers or visitors who are in the building from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for any other purpose than to drop off or pick up their scholars are required to first go to the office to sign in upon their arrival. Visitors and volunteers will also obtain a nametag to wear while in the building to be identifiable to any staff member to assure the safety of all scholars and staff.**

**The building is locked from the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to assure the safety of your scholars. Doorbells signal staff in the office. scholars are instructed to not open doors to anyone during school hours so the doorbells are part of the safe procedures implemented by administration to assure that no one may enter the building without the knowledge of staff.**

**Please sign and return this page.**

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the above handbook with my scholar and by signing this I understand that my scholar and my family understand the frameworks of NRCS.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Name (printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scholar's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scholar's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scholar's Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scholar's Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

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