

**NORTHSHORE  
ACADEMY Upper  
School**

Student Handbook

School Year: 2024-2025

Dear Parents/Guardians and Scholars,

Welcome to Northshore Academy Upper School (NSAU), a program of the Northshore Education Consortium (NEC). At Northshore Academy we are committed to the principles of opportunity, growth, and compassion and look forward to providing an exhilarating, challenging, and satisfying learning experience for our scholars.

This handbook contains excerpts of many NSA's most critical policies. Northshore Academy's policies and procedures assist with maintaining a safe and therapeutic learning environment. The full [2024-25 NEC Parent & Student Handbook](#) is available on our website, [nsedu.org](https://nsedu.org), under the "[Resources](#)" section. The electronic version will be updated regularly, and you will be notified of any significant changes or updates. If you would like a printed copy, please contact Kathy Mahoney at [kmahoney@nsedu.org](mailto:kmahoney@nsedu.org) or 978-232-9755 ext. 1258. Please let us know if you need a copy in a language other than English.

Northshore Academy's academic and therapeutic approach seeks justice, balance, and equity regardless of race, gender, or disability by utilizing collaborative problem solving techniques. We provide a supportive culture that values diversity and the expression of personal perspectives that enhance both individual and group identities. As such, social emotional learning (SEL) is embedded in every aspect of our program to support the development of the competencies necessary for personal growth and achievement free from bullying, ridicule, and violence.

As a parent/guardian with an enrolled scholar, it is important that you review this information. Doing so will help you understand and support the learning environment in which your child will spend their valuable time. Your collaboration with us and district liaisons as we seek to educate our scholars will provide essential support and allow your scholar to achieve the best possible outcomes here at Northshore Academy. We welcome your advocacy!

If you are a scholar at NSAU, we are delighted to have you as part of our community! Please take time to review this handbook. Your understanding of the Northshore Academy Mission, rules and expectations, and the support services available to you will help you to have a successful and enjoyable year.

Sincerely,  
David Mercier, M.Ed., Principal

# CONTACTS

**Main Number: (978) 338-1450**

<b>Title Name</b>	<b>Phone Extension</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Principal David Mercier	ext. 2163	dmercier@nsedu.org
IEP Chairperson Walter Hopkins	ext. 2160	whopkins@nsedu.org
Assistant to the Director Stephanie McGeney	ext. 2162	smcgeney@nsedu.org
Front Desk Reception Bridget Buckley	ext. 2100	bbuckley@nsedu.org
School Nurse Nicole Lipton	ext. 2143	nlipton@nsedu.org

## **My Student's contacts (Please contact your student's counselor to fill in below)**

Counselor Lauren Bowen	ext. 2139	lbowen@nsedu.org
Counselor Allison Broughton	ext. 2140	abroughton@nsedu.org
Counselor Lynn Burns	ext. 2141	lburns@nsedu.org
STAR Coordinator/Counselor Lauren McVay	ext. 2138	lmcvay@nsedu.org
Counselor Josh Morgan	ext. 2221	jmorgan@nsedu.org
Counselor Tyler Petroccione	ext. 2216	tpetroccione@nsedu.org
Counselor Sarah Rossman	ext. 2142	srossman@nsedu.org
Counselor Kellie Schneid	ext. 2127	kschneid@nsedu.org
Intake Coordinator/Counselor Robyn Steinberger	ext. 2217	rsteinberger@nsedu.org
SSC Coordinator Adam Espinola	ext. 2225	aespinola@nsedu.org

Academic Advisor

English Teacher

Math Teacher

Science Teacher

History Teacher

## **Referrals and Admission**

### **The Northshore Academy—Upper School has educational programs available for students in grades 7 through 12.**

To be considered for admission, a referral will be made by the Department of Special Education of the student's sending school district. The referral packet generally includes a current IEP, psychological and academic testing results, applicable school reports, a psycho-social history, pertinent medical information, and reports from other collaterals (i.e. Programs, Therapists, DCF, DMH, DYS, etc.) This information is beneficial in evaluating the appropriate placement in our school.

After a thorough review of materials, if it is deemed that NSA may be a suitable placement, an interview and site visit with the student and family/guardian/program will be scheduled.

The NSA team will make a decision regarding admission after a review of written materials and the interview. Notice of acceptance or refusal will be communicated as soon as possible to both the family and the referring school district. Upon acceptance, the student's parent/guardian is asked to fill out a school permission packet and submit medical information including a recent physical and the student's immunization records. A signed IEP is also needed to complete the intake process. A student may start school after all required documents have been completed and submitted.

The above referral process is also applicable to all students being referred to the STAR program, our 45-day educational assessment program, as well as to our summer school program.

## **Program Description**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**To Build a Respectful and Responsible Community Dedicated to Academic and Personal Success.**

In order to support the NSA mission, the program contains the following components:

- An underlying philosophy that emphasizes building positive and meaningful relationships between all students and staff.
- Small, structured classrooms with a low student to staff ratio
- Individualized attention and programming within the context of the student's known and evolving academic, social, and emotional needs.
- Student support services aimed at promoting academic success and personal development.
- Structured and unstructured opportunities for social and emotional learning.
- Clear and constructive school rules and expectations, with ongoing modeling by and feedback from, caring, dedicated, and trained professional staff.
- A team approach to student success, which includes input from students, families, and community collaterals as well as NSA staff.

The Northshore Academy recognizes that learning, as well as personal growth and development, occur not only in the classroom, but during social experiences as well. Students at NSA often need adult support and guidance when certain psychosocial stressors are encountered and learn valuable social and life-skills in our therapeutic milieu.

## **General Policies**

If your student will be absent please contact the school and leave a message with the receptionist.

**ABSENT LINE: (978) 338-1450 x2100**

If your student will be absent and does not need to be picked up by their bus/van, please call the number provided to you by your school district or transportation 2 company. This courtesy call will prevent other students from unnecessary time on the bus/van. Please communicate with the transportation company if your student will not travel home on the bus/van if dismissed early or sent home sick or has another form of transportation for the day

## **Arrival**

- Students are expected to arrive at school between 7:45 and 8:00 a.m. Any student dropped off or arriving at school before 7:45 a.m. is likely to be unsupervised, thus creating a potentially unsafe situation.

- Students are considered in school the moment they arrive on campus (by bus, foot, car, or bicycle). All school rules apply from the moment a student arrives on campus in the morning until they leave campus at the end of the day. This includes field trips and staff supervised off campus activities.
- Upon arrival students are expected to move to areas specified by their program.
- Homeroom begins at 8:00 and students arriving after 8:00 a.m. are tardy and will need to sign in at the main office and obtain a pass in order to be admitted to class.
- Students who arrive tardy to school without a note are expected to make up missed class time and assignments. Make-up time and work are coordinated through the Student Support Center (SSC).

## **Transportation**

- Students are expected to take the bus transportation provided to them by their sending school district. Any alternative plans for transportation are discouraged, but if necessary, a request must be in writing and approved by the NSA director and the sending school district to avoid any complications.
- Parents/guardians who transport their children to school are asked to drop the student at the front door and wait until the student enters the building. At dismissal, parents/guardians should line their cars up in the middle parking lot (not in the line used for the numerous buses and vans).
- Students who reside in Beverly are the only students who are eligible to walk to school. This plan will need to be confirmed and approved by all appropriate parties, and is to be considered a yearlong plan.
- If students plan to leave school together via parent/guardian pick-up, BOTH students must provide a written note to their school counselor upon arrival at school. The note should include contact information for verification of the noted plans, as well as the adult who is transporting the students and the consent of the guardian. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to provide close supervision to NSA students at all times.

**\* Please note: alternative transportation plans will only be supported on an occasional basis \***

### Student Driven Automobiles

A student car approval form must be filled out and approved before a student brings a car to school. These forms are available in the main office. In addition, students must present a valid driver's license and registration. Failure to do so will result in the loss of permission to drive to school. Students who fail to demonstrate safe operating procedures may lose their privilege to drive to school. Additionally, student drivers may not transport any other student from school.

## **Dismissal**

- Students will be dismissed at 2:00 p.m. NSA Staff will supervise all students at dismissal to

make certain that all students take their previously scheduled form of transportation.

- Students who drive to and from school follow these same dismissal policies. A student who drives to and from school may NOT drive his/her friends to or from school in the morning or at dismissal.
- Students are not permitted to “Sign Out” of school during the school day. Early dismissals or temporary changes to their previously scheduled form of transportation must be communicated to school personnel in advance, and may be confirmed with a follow up call or other means, by school personnel. Attempts to alter transportation plans near or at dismissal times will not be facilitated.

## **Early Dismissal Procedures**

- Please report any changes in your child’s dismissal (i.e. early dismissal for an appointment or a change in transportation) to the school as soon as possible, via a written note stating the reason and time of early dismissal and preferably with 24 hour notice. If you are unable to send a written note with your child, it is best to call your child’s school counselor and confirm that staff is aware of the change so that there is minimal confusion. If you are unable to reach your student’s school counselor, please leave the information with the front desk and it will be directed toward the appropriate staff.
- If your student is to be dismissed early please enter the main office, and the student will be called for dismissal and appropriately signed out of school.
- If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up the student, please indicate this on your note. Identification will be required if office personnel do not know or recognize the person picking up your student. Please note that all individuals who pick up students of the Northshore Academy must be 18 years of age or older.
- If a student walks out of school and/or off school property prior to dismissal and/or without the appropriate permission to do so, this will likely be addressed via disciplinary action, generally a 1 day out of school suspension.

## **Inclement Weather / School Closings**

1. NEC Schools will be closed if the TOWN IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED closes school due to a weather emergency.
2. NEC may choose to close ALL NEC SCHOOLS even if not all host towns are closed.
3. If an NEC School is open, but some towns are closed, those towns may choose not to transport students. This is the town’s decision and is considered an excused absence. Parents can choose to bring their child in if the school is open.
4. Given the fact that our schools are in multiple locations and students come from multiple towns, we generally DO NOT do late starts or early releases due to weather even if districts do so. Please be aware that this may affect your child’s transportation.

5. Communication regarding school closures will take place primarily via Automated email, text and voicemail alerts, so it is essential that we have correct information on file. In addition, we will post closings on WBZ and on our website.

## **Restraint Policy**

All staff at the Northshore Academy are trained in the use of physical restraint. Physical intervention is used as a last resort and only in situations where all other interventions have failed, and there is a risk of imminent danger to the student, other students, or staff.

## **Medical Policies**

NSA adheres to all policies as outlined in detail in the Northshore Education Consortium Health Care Manual. The complete [2023 - 2024 NEC Parent & Student Handbook](#) is available on the NEC website. A copy is also available for review at the program in the main office.

A registered nurse is on duty at Northshore Academy each day school is in session.

**\*\*Please do not send medication to school with your child\*\*** Please contact the school nurse if you need to make other arrangements in order to get necessary medications to school.

- The medication will be counted (when necessary) and locked in the medication cabinet.

## **Allergies**

The Academy discourages students and staff from sharing their food or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some students' diets. The Northshore Academy will continue to be an Allergy Aware School and will make accommodations necessary to support students with known food allergies.

## **Illness and Exclusion from School Guidelines:**

The school nurse or program administrator may exclude a student from school for health reasons if the student presents with the following:

- Fever: Temperature of 100.4 or higher. Students must be fever free for a full 24 hours before returning to school.
- Respiratory: A congested cough or are coughing up thick mucus.
- Eye/Nose Drainage: Any that is not normal for your child.
- Skin Problems: Rashes, infected sores, sores with drainage that are undiagnosed or contagious.
- Diarrhea: Increased loose stools within a 24 hour period, without a defined underlying cause. Must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting: Two or more episodes of vomiting within a 24 hour period, without a defined underlying cause. Must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.



### **Other considerations for exclusion:**

The student has a condition which requires immediate intervention or requires ongoing supervision, which cannot be adequately provided in a school setting, i.e. - The student is very sleepy or experiencing excessive bleeding after a dental procedure. - The student has untreated pediculosis, scabies, or body lice.

### **Wellness Policy:**

Northshore Academy follows the Food and Nutrition, and Wellness Policies of the NEC.

- **Energy Drinks or Products:**

The Northshore Academy does NOT allow students to bring to school or consume energy drinks in school. Examples of these include Monster, Red Bull, 5 hour Energy, etc. (Students may bring in coffee or other non-energy sodas or non-alcoholic beverages.) Energy drinks/products/substances will be confiscated if found.

### **Academics: Courses, Credits, Grading, Reporting**

Course Offerings: NSA offers classes based on the grade level requirements outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Core classes include Math, Science, Social Studies/History, and English Language Arts. Vocational strands for High School students include Expressive Arts, Media, and Culinary Arts. Additional elective classes are also provided and have previously included Health, Philosophy, Technology, Outdoor Adventure, MCAS Prep, and Sports to allow students to be exposed to a well-rounded education. All students are expected to participate in a variety of psycho-educational classes and activities that are developmentally targeted to foster social, emotional, and life-skill development.

Credits: Students receive credit/grades on a quarterly basis for any subject for which a grade of 65% or above is achieved. If the student's final grade at the end of the year is 65% or above, the student will receive credit or a passing grade for the full year. The amount of credit earned is calculated by a "Time on Learning" formula.

Examples:

50 minute class 1 x per week = .25 credits per quarter

50 minute class 2x per week = .5 credits

50 minute class 5 x per week = 1.25 credits per quarter

Additional credit earning opportunities are occasionally available via Mentoring, Independent Studies, Volunteering, and Work-Study (See Below). These opportunities are discussed with the NSA team, to determine their value in supporting a student's academic and personal goals.

#### **Work Study Credits**

Many school districts allow students to participate in a work-study program to earn from 8 to 10 credits toward graduation. To qualify for work-study, students must be in their junior or senior

year (grade 11 or 12) and be passing all academic subjects. Work-study opportunities are considered on a case-by-case basis by NSA staff and the sending school district. The sending district will credit the student on their official transcript if work hours and length of employment are satisfactory.

#### Dual Enrollment

When deemed academically appropriate, and relevant to a student's transition goals, Dual Enrollment at a local college may be explored and facilitated. If this option is appropriate, the student and family are responsible for all tuition, fees, and transportation.

#### Grades

Each teacher has a method of grading students that takes into account attendance, class participation, test and quiz grades, applicable project grades, completion of class assignments, and conduct.

#### Breaks

The daily schedule includes a mid-morning break and a lunch break to allow NSA students the opportunity to relax and re-energize. Students may choose from numerous supervised social and recreational activities in a variety of settings including our gym, art room, tech lab, cafeteria, or outdoor areas when weather permits. Vending machines and a school store are available and adhere to the Northshore Academy's Wellness policy referenced above.

#### Homework

Most students need additional independent work to meet their full potential as learners. NSA Teachers have individualized homework expectations. Please communicate with teachers directly to clarify expectations or discuss concerns.

#### How attendance affects grades

Missed class time means missed learning opportunities and missed assignments. Students who miss excessive days or classes during a quarter can expect lower grades. If a student is absent 8 or more times from a class in a quarter, he/she must meet with each teacher in order to develop a contract to obtain missed information, materials and make-up work to ultimately earn a passing grade and credit. Once a student is absent for 13 days, although a numerical grade will be assigned for determining final grades, a passing quarterly grade cannot be earned.

#### Progress Reports

An academic Progress Report is sent home at the mid-quarter mark if a student is in danger of earning a grade of a D or an F. Parent follow-up with teachers regarding any concerns will greatly help student success. IEP progress reports are also sent home on a quarterly basis and arrive separately from classroom Progress Reports.

#### Report Cards

Report cards are sent home and to the sending district at the close of each quarter. Grade

equivalents, credits, and attendance data are outlined on the report cards.

## School Records

Student record regulations ensure parents and students the right to confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records.

## MCAS

The following information can be found on the Department of Education Website:

### Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Overview

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is designed to meet the requirements of the Education Reform Law of 1993. This law specifies that the testing program must

- test all public school students in Massachusetts, including students with disabilities and English Language Learner students;
- measure performance based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework learning standards;
- report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts.

As required by the Education Reform Law, students must pass the grade 10 tests in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and one of the four high school Science and Technology Engineering tests as one condition of eligibility for a high school diploma (in addition to fulfilling local requirements).

In addition, the MCAS program is used to hold schools and districts accountable, on a yearly basis, for the progress they have made toward the objectives within the Every Student Succeeds Act.

**Graduation:** In order for students to receive a diploma, they must meet the graduation requirements of their sending school district. Northshore Academy will compile information for the student's transcript and this will be sent along with a letter of intent to the Special Education Administrator of the sending school district. School counselors work closely with students, families, and districts to assure that students are meeting necessary requirements. Students who complete sending school graduation requirements earn their diploma from the sending district, as well as from NSA.

**Transcripts:** Official transcripts, necessary for college and other post high-school opportunities, are available through the guidance department of your sending school district. Your school counselor can help your district compile a final transcript.

## Field Trips

Students take occasional field trips by bus for recreational and learning purposes. All field trips should be considered a "class" occurring off campus, and all school rules and expectations will remain in place. Staff will review any changes in expectations with the students and, as needed, with parents/guardians, before the trip. Permission slips for such field trips will be distributed as needed and must be signed and returned in order for a student to attend the field trip. A

permission slip for walking field trips is enclosed in the Student Information Packet. This will provide permission for all walking field trips for the school year. Attendance in any field trip is at the discretion of Northshore Academy staff. If a decision occurs that does not allow a student to attend the field trip, both the student and their guardian will be notified as soon as staff are able to do so.

## **Meals, Food and Drink Policies**

**Breakfast:** The Northshore Academy offers breakfast each morning. The breakfast program runs from 7:45 am to 8:00 am. Students determined to be eligible may receive a free or reduced price breakfast.

**Lunch:** Northshore Academy offers free lunch provided through Beverly Public Schools.

- The school lunch menu will be available at the beginning of each month and distributed to students by their homeroom teacher.
- Refrigerators are available for students who choose to bring lunch.
- Microwaves are available to heat items as needed.

**School Store** Students who have met the behavior expectations necessary to participate in break and lunch time in the school's common areas will be allowed to purchase items from the school store. The students and staff operate the school store and a variety of drinks, snacks and microwaveable foods are generally available. All foods meet the school's wellness policy. Occasionally, home-cooked items, or items cooked during culinary arts classes are available to purchase.

**Food or drinks in class** Teachers establish their own food/drink policies. While some teachers may allow certain items in class, others may not. Students are expected to follow the expectations set forth by the classroom teacher.

## **Personal Property Policies**

Cell phones NSA recognizes that many of our students have cell phones for personal and family communication. The following are strict expectations regarding cell phones at school:

ALL cell phones are considered to be UNAUTHORIZED DEVICES and must be turned in to Student Support Staff upon arrival.

- All cell phones will be collected upon arrival, stored in a secure location, and returned to the student upon exiting the building at dismissal.
- If a cell phone is concealed and discovered later, it will be confiscated until picked up by the parent or guardian.
- If the student refuses to give up their phone they will be withheld from attending class and supportive disciplinary action will begin.

## **Personal Technology Policy**

Students are not allowed to bring in personal devices (laptops, ipads, chromebooks, tablets, etc) unless approved by their District, written into their IEP and meet the following criteria.

- Any technology that is brought to school, and intended for classroom use must be authorized by the NSA Technology Specialist and the student's counselor.
- Any approved device can only be used during approved classes when under teacher supervision.
- If a device is approved it will be stored in the corresponding classroom and the student's name will be placed on our 'Personal Technology Approval' list.

Curriculum Examples of Reasons that a device may be approved if not written into an IEP: ~  
Graphic Arts Projects/Classwork (Tablet Drawing, Video Editing, Media Editing) ~ Sanctioned  
Computer Repair Activities

**Allowable Devices that require Authorization by the NSA Technology Specialist:**

- Ipods/mp3 players and personal gaming devices without wifi, photo, video, or voice recording capabilities.

**Unauthorized Electronic Devices (Including Cell Phones):**

- All unauthorized electronic devices will be collected upon arrival, stored in a secure location, and returned to the student upon exiting the building at dismissal.
- If an electronic device is concealed and discovered later, it will be confiscated until picked up by the parent or guardian.
- If the student refuses to give up the device they will be withheld from attending class and supportive disciplinary action will begin.

Though all attempts will be made to treat students fairly and on an individual basis, possession of unauthorized electronic devices will not be tolerated. The school's disciplinary response will be progressive until the problem is resolved and may, if necessary, include suspension from school or confiscation of the electronic device until the end of the school year.

Please note that students will still be allowed to use unauthorized electronic devices while in transit unless prohibited by the transportation company or if confiscated during the school day.

- Students who choose to bring personal electronic devices to school do so at their own risk. Many of these devices are quite expensive. NSA takes NO RESPONSIBILITY for lost, stolen, damaged, broken, or other problems that occur with electronic devices UNLESS the item has been collected or confiscated by a staff.

Note: NSA provides gaming devices for use at break time and supplies appropriate games and peripherals.

**Other Valuables**

- Students are discouraged from bringing valuable items to school. This includes jewelry, large

amounts of money, as well as the aforementioned cell phones, iPods/MP3 Players, gaming devices, etc. Students should not bring items to school to sell, trade or buy. In addition, we strongly discourage lending or borrowing of valuables. Students who bring valuables to school do so at their own risk.

## **Miscellaneous Information**

### **School Telephone Usage and Student Messages**

- A student who needs to make a phone call during school time is expected to see their school counselor or staff from the Student Support Center to discuss the purpose of the call. The student will be given access to a school phone, if necessary, to complete calls deemed necessary.
- If a parent/guardian needs to reach their student during the school day, please call your student's school counselor or the main number and speak to the main office staff. Your call will be directed to the staff most able to help you with your call.
- Calls to student cell phones during school hours are expected to go unanswered given the expectation that all phones are turned in. Please help your student follow school cell phone rules by neither arranging to call nor texting them during school hours.
- Urgent messages for students can be left with their school counselor. If you are unsure of their extension, the main office will direct your call.
- Phone calls to teachers will not be answered during instructional time, as this is disruptive to class. Please leave a message and it will be returned as soon as possible.
- Please try to avoid calls to the school immediately before and during dismissal time.

### **Change of Address**

Please notify the school as soon as possible with any change in home/program address or telephone number. For student safety it is critical that we have accurate information regarding contact names and numbers in case of emergency.

### **Sex Education**

Prior to any course or curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, NSA will notify parents/guardians of students in writing. Such notification will include a brief description of the curriculum and will inform parents/guardians that they may exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum without penalty. Parents/guardians may arrange with the Director to inspect and review instructional materials of those curricula.

### **Release of Student's Name**

The Northshore Education Consortium does not issue the names, addresses and personal information about students to any outside agencies without the consent of the student and parents in accordance with Massachusetts Law 603 CMR 230.07 (4)

# Support Services

## School Counselors

Every student is assigned a school counselor. The school counselor will meet regularly with the student to establish and make progress on goals aimed at helping students develop effective skills for academic, social, and emotional competence. School counselors strive to work closely with students, families, and community stakeholders in an effort to support student success both at school as well as at home and in the community. School counselors function as members of the student's treatment team which includes academic, counseling, and support staff. This team, with the input of the student and his/her parents or guardian, works together to achieve identified academic and social/emotional goals. Information viewed to be relevant and important to the student's overall functioning may be shared among the team. Although school counselors work closely with the students, they do not function as a student's primary individual therapist. School counselors will facilitate a referral for individual therapy as appropriate and if requested.

Psychosocial Education: Northshore Academy is an academic school with a strong therapeutic component. All students are encouraged to work on their social/emotional issues by properly accessing our abundant therapeutic resources. These may include:

- Small group counseling sessions
- School events and activities
- Psycho-Social educational classes such as:
  - Anger Management
  - Addictive Behaviors
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Life Skills
  - Healthy Relationships
- Break time activities
- Community meetings
- Individual counselor check-ins
- Outdoor Adventure programming
- Career Exploration and Education

## Student Support Center (SSC)

The Student Support Center provides behavioral and emotional support to help students succeed in the classroom. In the SSC, students who are struggling to meet classroom expectations are provided resources to meet their academic expectations while remaining in the therapeutic milieu. All staff at the Northshore Academy are trained in Safety Care, which helps us to identify

student's social/emotional needs and the appropriate responses with a variety of modalities and techniques.

The SSC staff is actively engaged in providing the following supports to students as needed:

- Supportive 1:1 time with staff
- Conflict resolution and problem solving to assist the student to return to class
- Crisis Prevention and De-escalation
- Facilitating appropriate consequences including break loss, detentions and suspensions, community service and behavioral planning.
- Coordinating Positive Behavioral Interventions
- Engaging in Collaborative Problem Solving with the student in the hopes of developing the optimal solution.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

The following are the expectations for student behavior and presentation while at school:

### **Demonstrate respect at all times**

In order to maintain a positive and supportive school community, all students are expected to act in a respectful manner towards peers and staff. Understanding that this can be challenging during times of distress, there are many support services available that can assist the student in learning and using appropriate coping and self-management skills.

- **Use Respectful Language (See section below)**
- **Be considerate of other people**
- **Treat people with civility, courtesy, and dignity.**
- **Never intentionally ridicule, embarrass, bully or hurt other people.**
- **Accept personal differences and choices.**
- **Solve problems without violence.**

### **Take Responsibility for your actions and your academic success.**

By enrolling at NSA, students have acknowledged a desire to obtain an education in an alternative setting. Success can only be truly achieved with daily attendance, completion of assignments, and self-advocacy. While there are many resources available to you to help you optimize your education, most of it is up to you.

- **Follow through on your commitment**
- **Answer for your own action**



- **Take care of your own matters.**
- **Be trustworthy.**
- **Always use your head.**
- **Don't put things off.**

### **Demonstrate Integrity**

Integrity is a quality characterized by honesty, reliability, and fairness. Your integrity is something you demonstrate over time.

- **Have personal standards and live up to them.**
- **Be honest, reliable, and loyal;**
- **Have the moral courage to stand up for what is right**
- **Do not cheat, steal, or lie.**

## **Behavioral Expectations, Responses and Consequences**

Our educational program rules and expectations are:

- To promote individual social/emotional growth.
- To maintain a healthy and safe school environment.
- To maximize academic achievement.

To reach these goals, students receive the most normal, logical or natural consequences for their behavior. All staff will assign consequences on a case-by-case basis.

### Northshore Academy Discipline System

Depending upon the level of behavior, disruption, and/or impact upon the school and other students, various levels of disciplinary response will be utilized. This can start at very low-level responses that include verbal re-directions, dismissal from class for short periods of time, and check-ins within the Student Support Center (SSC). Additionally, loss of breaks, in school detentions and suspensions can be implemented.

### Student Support Center (SSC) Expectations

Refusal to report to the SSC when requested, leaving the SSC without permission or unsafe behavior in the SSC are considered major safety violations and can result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the SSC staff and/or NSA team. When appropriate, a behavior plan may be developed by the team to address behaviors and encourage change and growth. When verbal redirection and specific requests are not sufficient to help students follow school rules and expectations, and negative

choices are made, a variety of consequences can result. The level of response is directly related to how disruptive, destructive, or dangerous a student may be:

#### Dismissal from Class

A student may be dismissed from class if his/her behaviors are disruptive and hinder other students from learning. If a teacher dismisses a student from a class, they may be asked to take a break, or to check in with staff at the Student Support Center (SSC). If a pattern of behaviors leading to repeated class dismissal is evident, the student will also meet with his/her school counselor.

#### Break Loss

At times a student will lose the privilege of spending their break time in social areas. Students will spend their free time in SSC to process their behavior, make up class work if necessary and possibly make restitution.

#### In-School Detention

In-School Detentions usually occur when a student has demonstrated an inability to meet the school's expectations for conduct. The student support staff, based on the student's behavior and attitude, determines length of time.

This is an opportunity for students to:

- Focus on schoolwork away from the mainstream.
- Demonstrate their ability to cooperate with staff and comply with school expectations.
- Think through, process, and internalize alternatives to their inappropriate behavior.

The expectation of the student while in detention is to follow the expectations of remaining seated in the assigned area and to complete the required academic assignments. School Counselors may initiate counseling sessions to process with the student while they are serving their detention. Complying with SSC expectations facilitates a more rapid return to classes and social activities, while refusing to follow expectations can lead to additional time in the Student Support Center, and possibly more serious consequences. School Counselors or SSC staff will inform guardians about significant events that lead to time in SSC or that occur while a student is in SSC. A student who refuses to attend in-school detention when requested or who disrupts detention will receive further disciplinary action.

#### In-school suspension

Depending on the severity of the incident and its impact on the school environment, a student may be given the opportunity to serve their suspension time in school under the following criteria:

- The student has committed to meeting in-school suspension expectations.
- The parent/guardian is available to pick up the student if needed in the event that the student is unable to comply with the expectations of the in school suspension.

## Out of School Suspension

- Suspension from school is a serious behavioral consequence used at the discretion of the Director or director designee for extreme misbehaviors, such as violations of our safety rules, continuous disruptive behavior or refusal to go to the SSC.
- Every effort will be made to notify parents/guardians and/or appropriate D.C.F. or D.Y.S. or court appointed care workers on the day of suspension.
- Written notice regarding the incident, the date of the incident, and the suspension will be sent to parents as well as districts within 24 hours.
- A re-entry meeting with parent/guardian may be required the following day.
- When the accumulated suspensions approach a total of 7 or more days, a TEAM meeting will be called to review the I.E.P. and possibly the appropriateness of the placement. If the NSA team has significant concerns about the student's ability to be successful following any suspension, a TEAM meeting may be called to address the continued issues and concerns.
- Unless determined eligible for an in-school suspension, students who are suspended out of school are prohibited from being on or near school property before, during or after school hours.

### **The following actions may result in suspension:**

- Violating any of our school's safety policies
- Leaving the SSC without permission
- Not going to the SSC when directed
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Possession of drugs weapons, drugs, alcohol, or contraband
- Refusal to cooperate with search due to suspicion of weapons, drugs, alcohol, or contraband
  - Threatening a student or staff person
- Destruction of Property
- Pulling a false fire alarm
- Bullying another student
- Dangerous behaviors especially if they result in injury to another person or destruction of property
- Demonstrating continuous disrespect for school rules and authority figures, and has not responded to other interventions.

## **Other Behavioral Policies**

### Individualized Behavior Support Plans

If the team determines that a more individualized and specific plan will best help a student meet

school expectations, an Individualized Behavior Support Plan will be written and reviewed with the student and family/guardian.

#### Supervision of Students

It is the expectation that staff supervise students at all times. There are very few exceptions to this expectation. Below are two related issues that will lead to disciplinary action:

#### Out of Area

A student who is not where he/she is designated to be and does not have a pass is considered to be “out of area”. Students found “out of area” must report to the student support center.

Off Campus without Permission/Runaway Students not accompanied by a staff, who leave the Northshore Academy property, are considered Off Campus without Permission.

Students who leave the school without permission and exhibit unsafe and/or noncompliant behavior will be considered a “runaway student”.

If a student runs away:

- Staff will make every attempt to keep the student within eye-sight and communicate the student's status via the use of a walkie-talkie or cell phone. - Staff will not chase and/or attempt to physically restrain the student unless the student is in imminent danger of hurting him/herself.

If the student is unsafe or out of eyesight, police will be notified, parents/guardians will be notified, and the district and DESE may be notified as required.

### **Use School Property Responsibly**

Students are expected to treat all school materials and property with care and respect. Any student who willfully damages the school or personal property or steals school or personal property will be held responsible for repairing and/or paying for the damages or returning the stolen item(s). When damage or theft has occurred the following may happen:

➤ Parental notification ➤ Suspension ➤ Police notification ➤ Community service to repair or contribute to property maintenance

#### Respect Physical Boundaries

For the safety and comfort of all students, it is a school wide policy that there is no physical contact of any kind. The one exception to this rule is courteous handshakes or “high 5’s”. There is absolutely no horseplay, hugging, hand holding or other form of person-to-person contact allowed.

#### Use Respectful Language

All members of the Northshore Academy community are expected to use appropriate language. Swearing and disrespectful manners of communication are never acceptable. Those who continue to use unacceptable language will receive consequences per the disciplinary code.

#### Follow Classroom Behavior Expectations

Northshore Academy teachers have the freedom to determine the behavior expectations of their own classrooms within the guidelines of the school's mission. Students failing to meet the stated expectations will receive a response to their actions as determined by the teacher and the school discipline system.

#### Comply with Break Area Expectations

Students are expected to behave in a respectful and responsible manner during breaks. Students may be asked by staff to leave a break area and go to another break area or to the SSC. Failure to respond to this request will result in further disciplinary actions.

### **Student Email Policy (studentfirstname.lastinitial@nsedu.me)**

- All student Electronic Mail (email) accounts are property of the Northshore Education Consortium. The user accepts all responsibility for understanding the policy.
- Electronic mail sent or received is not confidential. Although the NEC does not make a practice of monitoring electronic mail, the administration reserves the right to retrieve the contents of user mailboxes for legitimate reasons, such as to find lost messages, to conduct internal investigations, to comply with investigations of wrongful acts or to recover from system failure.
- The student will be removed from the system after graduation, leaving school, or infractions outlined below.
- The primary purpose of the student electronic mail system is for students to communicate school staff, access outside resources related to school assignments, and collaborate with fellow students to collaborate on school activities. Upon request, account usernames and passwords will be provided to parents so that parents can monitor the account and communicate with teachers. Use of the NEC email system is a privilege.
- Use of the email system will align with the school's code of conduct and the code will be used for discipline purposes. Communication through the NEC's email system will exhibit common sense and civility. It will abide by the community's mode of acceptable behavior. Students are responsible for messages sent from their accounts. Students should never share their passwords.
- Unauthorized use of another individual's email account is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
- Messages posted on the email system cannot cause disruption to the school environment or normal and acceptable school operations. Electronic mail can be checked from home or from school computers with permission, as long as it does not disrupt the operation of the classroom or school.
- The email system cannot be used to operate a personal business. The account may not be sold or otherwise reassigned. The account will be revoked if used inappropriately.
- Students will report any unusual activities such as "spam" communications, obscene email, attempts to lure them into dangerous behaviors, and the like. Students should not forward chain

letters, jokes, or graphics files.

- Students will not identify their home telephone numbers, or home addresses in any email correspondence unless authorized by parent/guardian or staff.
- When issues arise, the department will deal directly with the student, school administration and/or parents/guardians. Improper use of the system will result in discipline and possible revocation of the student email account. Illegal activities on the system will be referred to law enforcement authorities for appropriate legal action.
- As it deems necessary, the NEC may contract with outside agencies to operate the student electronic mail system. If this arrangement is made, all parts of this statement remain in force.
- The Instructional Technology Department is responsible to ensure the efficient use of the electronic mail system. The interpretation of appropriate use and future revisions of these guidelines are the responsibility of the Instructional Technology Department and/or the NEC administration.
- The NEC, at its discretion, may close the account at any time.

## **Internet Use Policies**

Connecting to the Internet expands our students' access to resources, information, collaboration and innovation. We hope to utilize these resources to assist students in achieving curriculum goals and outcomes.

It is important to note that the Internet is an open system that contains offensive material and may only be used under faculty supervision. However, as faculty members are not able to monitor student use at every moment, we expect students to become responsible users.

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Students are expected to follow the user guidelines, as well as those given orally by the staff and to demonstrate ethical behavior that is of the highest order in using the Internet.

*For students to use the internet, they must obtain parental permission through the use of the form found in our parent permission packet.*

### **Internet User Guidelines**

1. Students' use of the internet must be in support of education and research consistent with the objectives of the Northshore Academy/STAR Program.
2. Students may not post personal information such as a home address, telephone number or social media information related to themselves, staff, or peers. Doing so may result in disciplinary action and formal involvement of authorities such as police.
3. Students should note that plagiarism is the taking of material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own. It will not be acceptable to plagiarize material from the Internet.

4. Students should note that all communications and information accessible via the Internet should be assumed to be private property.
5. Students may not use the Internet for commercial purposes, product advertisement or political lobbying. Products or services may not be purchased or offered. The students and his/her parents will be responsible for any liabilities stemming from such unauthorized uses of the Internet.
6. Students may not use the Internet for illegal purposes or for the support of illegal activities.
7. Cyber bullying is prohibited, especially with the use of computers or electronic devices that are school property. Please see policies with regard to cyber bullying for more information.
8. Student use of the Internet must not serve to disrupt its use by other individuals or connecting networks.
9. Students' passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed. Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
10. Students who violate district policy or administrative procedures will be subject to suspension or termination of system/network privileges and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

## **Dress Code:**

We ask everyone to dress in a manner appropriate to a school environment. Students should dress in clothing that is clean and safe. Clothing that is provocative and/or detracts from the learning environment will not be permitted.

### **The following are prohibited:**

- Clothing that depicts illegal activities, drugs, alcohol, obscenities or violent themes, or with statements or graphics with profane or otherwise distasteful language or content.
- Wearing sunglasses or other items that cover a student's eyes or face other than medical masks.
- Clothing that exposes undergarments.
- Clothing that does not cover a student's midriff or torso.
- Clothing that is revealing or provocative in nature.
- Skirts and shorts that are not at least Mid-Thigh in length. Students may wear spandex shorts that are mid-thigh or solid leggings if their skirt is shorter than mid-thigh. Fishnet stockings or other see-through leg coverings are not considered leggings.
- Costumes or accessories which could be considered costume-like, blankets, or flags.
- Accessories that are deemed sharp or otherwise dangerous.
- Any clothing that creates a disruption to the milieu or learning environment. This is at the

Principal or his designee's discretion.

**Students are allowed to wear hats if they are school appropriate.**

**While we understand that numerous clothing stores promote trendy clothing and styles, many of them are not suitable for school as they disrupt the learning environment. Please help your student make clothing choices that comply with the above dress code.**

Any attire deemed inappropriate by staff will be discreetly addressed and, if the concern cannot be addressed at school, the student may be required to return home to change or have appropriate clothing brought to school. When possible, students will be offered clothing that has been donated to the school.

**The following are guidelines regarding student attire:**

- Please label your student's clothing if you are concerned he/she may misplace them.
- Please send your student with warm clothing during the winter months (coats, hats, gloves. etc) so they may spend time outside during break time if weather permits.
- Encourage students to dress appropriately given the weather, as well as the school dress code.
- If backpacks, coats, or other personal items become a distraction to the learning environment, or a safety concern, students will be asked to keep these items in their homeroom or the SSC.

## **Parent/Guardian Participation**

Parents/Guardians are valuable members of our team at the Northshore Academy. Some means of communication with parents/guardians may include daily notebooks, written progress reports, report cards, parent meetings, phone calls, home visits and yearly team meetings. We encourage parents to contact us with any pertinent information regarding their child. This may include medication changes, changes in family dynamics or other school/home issues.

Parents/guardians are also encouraged to be in contact with their student's team to get updates, address concerns or simply discuss their progress. We believe ongoing communication is vital to the success of NSA students. If your child is going to be absent or late, please contact the receptionist and your child's bus company.

Parent teacher conferences are held in the fall of the school year, and an Open House is held in the spring. Notices are sent home in the weeks prior to the planned events.

Additional parent programs may be held, including Transition Planning Nights, Art Shows, Talent Shows, and other planned events.

In addition, parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in monthly meetings of the Parent Support Group. Parent support groups are offered through the collaboration of the Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PAL) and focus on supporting parents and grandparents with behaviorally challenging children. Groups are facilitated by a professional and based on peer support. The groups are held monthly in the Family and Professional Learning Center at



Northshore Education Consortium. Groups are confidential, free and open to the public. More information can be found on our website: <http://www.nsedu.org/families/>

### Complaints

In the event that a student or a parent has a complaint about some aspect of our school program, the first procedure would be to discuss the issue with the student's teacher or counselor and attempt to reach a resolution. If the problem has not been resolved satisfactorily, the Program Director should be contacted to assist in finding a solution. In the event that the issue is not resolved in a satisfactory manner through communications and/or meetings with NSA staff and the Program Director, a meeting may be requested with the Executive Director of NEC.

**Please sign the slip below and have your student return it to the admin office, homeroom teacher, or counselor.**

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I have read and reviewed Northshore Academy's Student Handbook with my child.

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**Parent/Guardian's Signature**

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**Student's Signature**