



# **Northstar Academy & Career Center**

## **Student-Family Handbook 2025-2026**

Northstar Academy and Career Center  
11501 Nuckols Road  
Glen Allen, Va 23059  
(804) 747-1003  
[www.Northstarva.org](http://www.Northstarva.org)

Northstar does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its education policies, admission policies, or athletic and other school administered programs. It admits students of any race, color, sexual orientation, religion or national and ethnic origin to all of the rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

# Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| Welcome From The Head of School   | 5         |
| General Information and History of Northstar Academy and Career Center      | 5         |
| Northstar Mission and Vision  | 8         |
| Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, Accessibility, & Belonging (DEI JAB) | 8         |
| <b>Academics/Instruction</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| Add-Drop Courses  | 10        |
| Additional Assistance   | 10        |
| Advisory Program  | 10        |
| Assessments – Show What You Know (SWYK)                                     | 11        |
| Attendance  | 11        |
| Calendar  | 13        |
| Class Preparation   | 13        |
| Curriculum  | 13        |
| Program – Grades K-5  | 14        |
| Program – Grades 6-8  | 14        |
| Program – Grades 9-12   | 15        |
| Northstar Career Center   | 15        |
| Audio/Visual Equipment  | 16        |
| Evaluations   | 16        |
| Faculty Contact Information   | 16        |
| Grading Policy  | 16        |
| Graduation Requirements   | 17        |
| Summary of Requirements:  | 17        |
| Homework  | 20        |
| Make up Work  | 21        |
| Meeting Rules and Guidelines  | 21        |
| Conferences (K-12 & Career Center)  | 22        |
| Report Cards, Interims and Daily/Weekly contact                             | 22        |
| Social Skills Development   | 23        |
| Standardized Testing  | 23        |
| Student Records   | 23        |
| Tests and Quizzes   | 26        |
| Transition  | 26        |
| <b>General Policies and Procedures</b>                                      | <b>26</b> |
| Admission Guidelines  | 26        |
| Admission Process   | 28        |
| After-School Hours  | 29        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Alumni Association  | 29        |
| Board of Directors Responsibility                                   | 30        |
| Complaint Resolution Procedure                                      | 30        |
| Discharge Guidelines  | 30        |
| Fundraising   | 30        |
| Inclement weather   | 31        |
| Individual Academic Plan – (IAP)                                    | 31        |
| Individualized Education Program – (IEP)                            | 31        |
| Individual Student Alternative Education Plan – (ISAEP)             | 32        |
| Local Educational Agency (LEA)                                      | 32        |
| Parking Lot   | 32        |
| Physical Entrance Examination                                       | 33        |
| Promotion/Retention Policy  | 34        |
| Publications  | 34        |
| School Property Damage/Property Rental                              | 34        |
| Student Acceptable Use Policy 2024-2025                             | 34        |
| Consequences  | 38        |
| Transcripts   | 39        |
| Transportation  | 39        |
| Carpool – Drop Off  | 40        |
| Carpool – Pick Up   | 40        |
| Carpool Plan and Contact  | 40        |
| County Transportation   | 40        |
| Independent Student Dismissal: Drive, Walk, Bike, or Rideshare Home | 40        |
| Driving Privilege   | 41        |
| Walk, Bike or Rideshare   | 41        |
| Tutoring  | 47        |
| Use of Images   | 47        |
| Vandalism/Property damage   | 47        |
| Visitors  | 47        |
| <b>Student life</b>   | <b>48</b> |
| Celebration   | 48        |
| Clubs   | 48        |
| Dances  | 48        |
| Dress Code/Appearance   | 48        |
| Relaxed Dress Code (Dress Down) Guidelines                          | 49        |
| Prohibited Attire – All Students                                    | 49        |
| Enrichment/School Sponsored Activities                              | 50        |
| Integrity   | 51        |
| Lunch   | 51        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Positive Behavior Program                   | 51        |
| Physical Education (PE)                     | 52        |
| Telephones and Cell Phones                  | 52        |
| Toys and Sports Equipment                   | 53        |
| <b>Behavior and Discipline</b>              | <b>54</b> |
| Behavior and Discipline Overview            | 54        |
| Conduct and Behavioral Expectations         | 54        |
| Consequences                                | 56        |
| Disruptive Behavior                         | 58        |
| Fighting/Assaults and Threats               | 58        |
| Bullying/Harassment Policy                  | 59        |
| Personal Harassment                         | 60        |
| Racial/Ethnic Harassment                    | 60        |
| Sexual Harassment                           | 61        |
| Nonviolent Crisis Intervention              | 61        |
| Other Serious Offenses                      | 61        |
| Suspension & Dismissal                      | 62        |
| Dismissal                                   | 62        |
| <b>Health and Safety</b>                    | <b>62</b> |
| Clinic                                      | 62        |
| Child Abuse                                 | 63        |
| Concussion                                  | 63        |
| Contraband Items                            | 65        |
| Contingency Plan                            | 65        |
| Crisis Plan                                 | 65        |
| Eating Disorders                            | 65        |
| Medication                                  | 65        |
| Pandemic                                    | 66        |
| Safety                                      | 67        |
| School Counselor                            | 67        |
| Staff Training                              | 68        |
| Student Accidents                           | 68        |
| Substances – Unlawful                       | 68        |
| Work Experiences                            | 68        |
| <b>Parents’ Rights and Responsibilities</b> | <b>69</b> |
| Parents’ Rights                             | 69        |
| Family Responsibilities                     | 69        |
| SCOPE                                       | 71        |
| <b>Financial Policies and Procedures</b>    | <b>71</b> |
| <b>Business Office Procedures</b>           | <b>71</b> |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Student Accounts   | 72        |
| <b>Tuition</b>   | <b>72</b> |
| Tuition Refund   | 72        |
| Tuition Payment Options  | 72        |
| Tuition Reimbursement Insurance  | 73        |
| Veteran Tuition Benefits   | 74        |
| <b>To be completed electronically during the Registration Verification process in the Achieve Family Portal.</b> | <b>75</b> |
| <b>Handbook Agreement/Signatures Page</b>  | <b>75</b> |
| <b>Appendix</b>  | <b>76</b> |
| <b>Course Descriptions for all Students</b>  | <b>76</b> |
| <b>Lower School Course Descriptions</b>  | <b>76</b> |
| <b>Upper School Course Descriptions</b>  | <b>80</b> |
| Electives & Enrichment   | 85        |
| <b>Addendum A</b>  | <b>89</b> |
| Contingency Plan   | 89        |

## Introduction

### **Welcome From The Head of School**

Thank you for choosing Northstar for your student's education. As the new Head of School, I am honored to join this dedicated and vibrant community as we celebrate Northstar's 30th anniversary. This milestone marks our deep commitment to supporting student learning and growth, as well as strong partnerships with families like yours across Central Virginia.

As we begin our new school year, I look forward to building on Northstar's legacy and working together to ensure every student thrives. Family involvement is essential to your student's success both in and out of the classroom. When schools and families collaborate, students thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

This Student-Family Handbook is a tool to support our collaboration. Inside, you will find important information, expectations and resources to help you stay informed and engaged in your child's learning throughout the year.

I am excited to partner with you in the year ahead as we guide, support, and challenge our students to reach their full potential.

Kind regards,

Bethany Raffanello

### **General Information and History of Northstar Academy and Career Center**

Northstar was founded in 1996 by a group of parents and professionals concerned about educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Originally located at Epiphany Lutheran Church in Richmond, Virginia, Northstar served 14 students in its first year of operation.

In 1999, Northstar Academy moved to the beloved "train-car" campus housed at 8055 Shrader Road in Richmond's West End area. The campus consisted of three buildings. The main "train-car" building housed a reception area, administrative offices, library, business office, Specialized learning labs and classrooms. The STEAM Building houses classrooms, computer labs and offices. The Northstar gymnasium used for health/P.E. programs, as a dining hall and for larger group activities such as talent show, basketball and dances.

After extensive planning and design Northstar was thrilled to announce the grand opening of its new campus for the 2022-2023 school year, located at 11501 Nuckols Road, Glen Allen, Virginia 23059. The new location sits on more than 10 acres and includes a newly renovated 21,000 square foot facility that will house both Northstar Academy and Northstar Career Center (formerly named Career Academy). Future

plans include the addition of a multipurpose gym and Community Center as well as an athletic field.

Northstar Academy and Career Center is central Virginia's premier K-12 independent, not-for-profit school educating students with a wide range of disabilities and intellectual abilities. Northstar is licensed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to serve 12 of the 13 disability categories identified under IDEA. Northstar is accredited by the Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS). In addition to privately placed students, we educate students in elementary, middle, and high schools from many school districts representing the Central Virginia region. While our students come from many neighborhoods and different backgrounds, they share challenges with academic achievement and the skills required for successful interactions. They also share a desire to realize their dreams and aspirations, both now and in the future.

Northstar Career Academy, now Career Center, was founded in 2014. It is a full-time or part-time program offered through Northstar. Career and Technical programs are offered to students 16 to 22 years of age on the first day of school. Students may be current high school students, homeschooled students, high school graduates, or others who have taken different life paths. Specific course or program requirements will be outlined in the course syllabus.

#### 1996 - 1997

- Northstar Academy begins operation in shared space at Epiphany Lutheran Church with 14 students.

#### 1997 - 1998

- Student enrollment grows to 28 and Northstar Academy looks for more space.

#### 1998 - 1999

- Northstar Academy relocated to the Congregation Or Atid on Parham Road.
- Northstar establishes its first basketball team.

#### 1999 - 2000

- Northstar Academy purchases property and moves the school to its current location on Shrader Road.

#### 2000 - 2002

- Multi-purpose Room/Gymnasium designed and built.

#### 2003 - 2004

- Building Blocks campaign raises \$425,000 to build upper school classroom building.
- Verizon Wireless Technology Lab is designed and installed in the new classroom addition.

#### 2004 - 2005

- First Northstar student receives a scholarship to attend a four-year college.

#### 2005 - 2006

- Northstar Academy Golf Classic is held at the Crossings Golf Club raising over \$18,000 for Northstar's student scholarship fund.
- Northstar Academy is licensed to add kindergarten classes.

#### 2007 - 2008

- Northstar Academy was awarded grant to institute a Transition Program for current Junior and Seniors. The students are taught skills needed to search, apply and interview for employment as well as receiving on the job training.

#### 2008 – 2009

- Northstar Academy partners with Kluge Children's Rehabilitation Center at the University of Virginia to design and institute a quantifying Social Skills program designed to meet each student's individual needs.

#### 2009 – 2010

- First Northstar Academy Special Needs Forum and Compass Awards Dinner developed and organized in conjunction with the Jepson School of Leadership Studies "Leading Change" Class at the University of Richmond.

#### 2010 – 2011

- GRASP funds are raised to provide scholarships to qualifying families and increase enrollment.

#### 2011 – 2012

- Northstar Academy Board of Directors begin a new strategic planning process and website revision project plan.

#### 2012 – 2013

- Northstar Academy implements Lindamood Bell pilot program.
- Northstar implements school wide technology integration by installing promethean boards, Kindles and iPads for student use in the classroom.
- Faculty wide training of the Lindamood-Bell Learning Process.

#### 2013 – 2014

- Northstar Career Academy was founded, domain name registered and licensed by Virginia Department of Education.
- Northstar Academy became a Department of Rehabilitative Services (DARS) vendor.
- APEX Virtual Learning courses offered and teachers trained to facilitate.

#### 2014 – 2015

- Northstar Career Academy opened offering four Vocational/Technical Education courses for full and part-time students ages 16-22.

#### 2015 – 2016

- Through grants awarded to Northstar Academy, the purchase of 2 vehicles afforded the expansion of student-business partnership opportunities for upper school students.
- Northstar Career Academy adds a 5<sup>th</sup> course-Veterinary Assisting Occupations and also doubled their enrollment.

#### 2016 – 2017

- Northstar Academy received NAP credits allowing for the opportunity to increase enrollment by offering scholarships to students who need financial assistance
- Commendation from the Virginia General Assembly in February, 2017.
- Northstar Academy applies for and receives VAIS accreditation in addition to VAISEF accreditation.
- Northstar Academy recognized as a School of Excellence by NASET

#### 2018 – 2019

- Northstar Career Academy began providing job development and supported employment services on a private pay basis.

#### 2020-2021

- Northstar celebrates its 25th year serving students with disabilities.
- Northstar Career Services was launched to provide supported employment services to adult clients supported by both DARS funding and private funding.
- Northstar kicks off their first capital campaign to raise funds for a new building.

#### 2022-2023

- Northstar opens their new Nuckols Road campus to both Academy and Career Center students.
- Northstar unveiled its refreshed look signifying a new chapter in its history. A new logo and website domain were updated. The School will now do business as Northstar inclusive of the Academy for our K-12 students, Career Center and Career Services.
- Northstar continues to be recognized as a School of Excellence by NASET.

#### 2023-2024

- Northstar breaks ground on its new track & field and gymnasium.
- Northstar continues to be recognized as a School of Excellence by NASET.

### **Northstar Mission and Vision**

#### **Mission Statement**

At Northstar we promote educational excellence and career opportunities for students with disabilities who have academic, physical or social challenges.

#### **Vision Statement**

Northstar Academy and Career Center empowers students to develop and value their diverse abilities, chart a successful course for their lives, and create their own futures. We cultivate communities where people of all abilities thrive.

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, Accessibility, & Belonging (DEI JAB)**

With a strong spirit of community, Northstar develops students with active, creative minds and encourages compassion and a respect and understanding for individual differences and for one another. We present our community of learners with a challenging educational environment, inspiring confident students who are willing to take intellectual risks and meet academic challenges with openness, enthusiasm, a willingness to solve problems and to make thoughtful decisions. Ultimately, we create an atmosphere that addresses the unique needs of our students in a changing society and culminates with their becoming active citizens and responsible stewards of our world.

Northstar admits students of any race, color, sexual orientation, religion or national and ethnic origin to all of the rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its hiring practices, education policies, admission policies, or athletic and other programs.

As educators, we haven't been blind to injustices and inequality in the education system and our country. Our students' education remains our top priority and in order to demonstrate that, we need to include the perspective of all students.

All members of the Northstar community deserve kindness and respect regardless of the color of their skin, their gender, their sexual orientation, the language they speak, or their background. This expectation is extended to everyone without exception.

At Northstar, we strive to provide a safe environment where students are welcomed and supported in their learning regardless of their immigration status. Northstar does not collect information regarding immigration status. Additionally, access to student records is limited by federal law including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Finally, with few exceptions, Northstar does not allow law enforcement to speak with students without a parent/guardian present and will remain with students until a parent/guardian is available

Northstar intends to provide equitable and inclusive educational opportunities for all. Equitable education is an ongoing and learning process for the entire Northstar community. Throughout that process, Northstar's community is encouraged to lead with kindness in all interactions and demonstrate respect and understanding for the diversity of the individuals and their opinions within our community.

Diversity in education means students, staff, families, and community are our greatest strength, and diversity is viewed as an asset. Diversity means being different or having differences, including, but not limited to, sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, socioeconomic class, religion, and ability, and other human differences. Northstar will embrace diversity and move beyond tolerance and celebration to inclusivity and respect, which will help create a school community that ensures that each voice is heard and valued.

Equity in education is based on the principles of fairness and ensuring that every student has access to the resources and educational rigor they need.

Inclusivity in education is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honored and all individuals are respected.

All employees and students are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects respect and kindness.

## **Academics/Instruction**

### **Add-Drop Courses**

#### **Policy**

A student may add or drop a course as follows:

1. A student experiencing serious academic difficulty may drop or add a course no later than the end of the first nine weeks.
2. After the first nine weeks the student is expected to remain in the course for the remainder of the school year.
3. The Head or Assistant Head may change a student's schedule during the school year if there is a need.

**NOTE:** In special circumstances, a teacher may recommend that a student drop a course after the first semester. In such a case, that recommendation must be made by the end of semester I. If approved, the student will then repeat the course the following year. The Head of School or Assistant Head are the only person(s) who may authorize the dropping or adding of any course.

#### **Procedure**

1. The teacher of the course that a student wishes to drop must discuss the request with the student and approve the decision.
2. The teacher of the new course that the student wishes to add will be informed by the Head of School or Assistant Head that the student wishes to join the class.
3. The Head of School or Assistant Head will discuss this change with the parents of the student. If approved, the student's schedule will be changed and records changed to reflect the add/drop.
4. When steps 1-3 are complete the student may attend the new class.

### **Additional Assistance**

All Northstar students may receive extra help from their teachers by appointment. Students should schedule the help session no later than lunchtime with a particular teacher for the next day. Assistance during lunch time is also an option, if agreeable to the teacher. These are also the best times to schedule parent-teacher conferences, upon request and preferably between 3:15 – 3:45 p.m.

### **Advisory Program**

The Advisory program at Northstar assigns each student in grades 6-12 and full day Career Center students to a member of the faculty who will serve as the student's advisor, advocate, and mentor. Advisories meet every day.

In addition to academic matters, the faculty advisor will counsel and direct their advisees in matters of student-teacher, student-administrator, and student relationships.

### **Assessments – Show What You Know (SWYK)**

Assessments are scheduled for grades 6–12. In grades 9–12 mid-term assessments will be given at the end of each semester, as noted on the school calendar. Please encourage your student to begin studying well in advance of their assessments and to get plenty of rest during the assessment week. Parents can be very helpful in assisting their students through the assessment period.

At the end of each semester, the school offers 2 review days prior to the assessment period. The semester ends the day before the first review day. As a result, on the review days, no tests or quizzes may be given and no new material will be presented. A schedule will be provided to students and families along with dismissal times.

### **Assessment Schedule**

All assessments will be given untimed, providing the student is attending to the assessment and has continued to work steadily, even though breaks may have been needed.

Students may bring a snack to eat during the break, but must refrain from eating and drinking during assessments. They will be required to stay in the assessment and are encouraged to bring a book or study material to read if they finish early. **Please plan to pick up your student at the designated dismissal times.**

### **Attendance**

#### **Absence/Illness:**

Monday through Friday school begins at 7:50 a.m. and dismisses at 3:05 p.m. **Students are expected to attend school daily and arrive on time.** There are a minimum of 180 school days per year, and attendance is essential for learning to occur. Please know that in the case of absence without a note or email from parent/guardian, the student's absence will be counted as unexcused.

Additionally, students who are absent excessively or who have missed over **15 percent of school hours may not be given credit for the nine weeks, quarter, or year depending on the extent of the absence during the time period.**

- **Excused Absence** – There are various types of excused absences:
  - Illness counts as an excused absence if the parent calls the school or sends a note on the day the student returns to class. For excessive absences, the school may request a note from a medical professional. Students who become ill after arriving at school must report to the clinic and the nurse/clinic attendant will determine if the student should be sent home. The nurse/clinic attendant will contact the parent/guardian(s) for permission to leave school, and the parent must make arrangements for the student to be picked up. Parent/guardian(s) will notify the front desk that they are taking the student home. Student drivers must have parent/guardian permission before leaving school.

- There may be special situations, other than illness, when students may be excused. A written request must be submitted to the Head of School one week prior to the event to qualify for an excused absence.
- Observation of religious holidays, such as Rosh Hashanah and Eid al-Fitr, are considered an excused absence. While classes continue to meet, students will be given sufficient time to prepare and make up assignments. Each student is expected to work out extensions that are acceptable to both the student and teacher.
- Full medical leave: When a student is unable to attend school due to medical or psychological reasons, at the recommendation of the student's personal physician in consultation with the school, the administration may grant that student a medical leave of absence.
- The Head of School, or designee, is responsible for communication with the student's parent/guardian(s) and teachers, including the terms of medical leave.
- During absences, the student is expected to keep up with course content as much as possible. Work assignments will be adjusted to the student's ability to complete the assignment.
- The school and/or LEA may request a meeting when a student incurs excessive absences.
- If a student's medical leave precedes or coincides with the exam period, the exam will be rescheduled so that the student may take it at a time commensurate with their stamina and ability to prepare. If a student has missed nine weeks of school because of medical leave, the administration will meet to determine how or whether credit can be earned. Flexibility will be the rule, and time required to accomplish the goals generally will be liberal.
  1. We encourage families to schedule students **dental and doctor appointments** after 3:05 p.m., if possible. Northstar does not have a private location for virtual appointments or services during the school day.
  2. Unexcused Absence – In the event that a student is absent from school and returns to campus without a parental/guardian note, that student's record will indicate an unexcused absence. For excessive absences, the school may request a note from a medical professional
  3. Notification of Absence – If the parent/guardian is aware that the student will be absent, parents are encouraged to contact Northstar the evening before the absence. Families may leave a message in the school's general voicemail box at 804-747-1003 or email the receptionist at [frontdesk@northstarva.org](mailto:frontdesk@northstarva.org). A note is required when the student returns to school.

**Note: If a student leaves school grounds without supervision or permission, administrators, for the safety of the student, will be forced to first call the police and then contact the parent/guardian.**

## **Tardy**

**If your student will be tardy on any given day, please call or email the school no later than 8:30 a.m.** A written notice from the parent/guardian will be required each time the student is tardy. Any student who is absent for more than half the day will be counted as absent.

- **Unexcused Tardies** – Five (5) unexcused tardies will count as one (1) unexcused absence.
- Students who miss any part of the school day may not practice or represent the school that day or evening in athletics, or other activities without permission from administration.

## **Calendar**

The current academic school calendar for both the K-12 Academy and the Career Center can be found on the website at [www.northstarva.org](http://www.northstarva.org). You can also [subscribe to our calendar](#) on our website.

## **Class Preparation**

If a student is unprepared for class (written work not completed or assignment not read), the student will be asked to remain after school or have lunch-time detention to complete late assignments. When a student without extenuating circumstances fails to turn in a major assignment at or by the end of the semester, the student receives an *"Incomplete."* (Incompletes are only given in cases of illness or bona fide extenuating circumstances.) If the incomplete work is not made up within two weeks, the incomplete may become an "F". It should be noted that such work, even when turned in within the two-week grace period, will still be assessed a penalty for lateness. The point of this policy is to signal in the strongest way possible that Northstar will not permit a student to "take an F" on a major assignment and still pass the term or course.

## **Curriculum**

Northstar's curriculum was designed by experts in the field of special education. Our program is based upon the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) and offers:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ● Literature-based curriculum                       | ● Real life skills and training                      |
| ● Ongoing, informal assessment                      | ● Multi-Sensory instruction                          |
| ● Emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving | ● Hands-on-activities                                |
| ● Self-esteem enhancement                           | ● Emphasis on independent functioning                |
| ● Guided practice and reinforcement                 | ● Specialized Reading for Decoding and Comprehension |
| ● Social Skills/Executive Function Skills           | ● Specialized Math                                   |
| ● Integrated language arts                          | ● Vocational/Technical Courses                       |
| ● Academic skills taught within context             |  |

Northstar Academy and Career Center professionals embrace the need for small learning groups (with a low pupil-teacher ratio). They participate in ongoing professional development throughout the school year to stay abreast of current practices to meet student needs. See "Appendix A" for course descriptions at the end of this handbook.

#### Program – Grades K-5

Students are placed in small, cohesive groups determined by age, ability, and instructional level and grade. A student may move through the classes depending on academic skill level, and social/emotional development. The Lower School is dedicated to the belief that each child is an important individual created with special gifts and abilities. The beginning years of education, therefore, should mold a student's academic, social, and emotional view of school. It is our goal to provide an atmosphere conducive to this growth and to the development of a love for learning. Because elementary education is the critical beginning of this development, we want our students to be challenged in a way that stimulates their natural curiosity so that learning becomes a process of guided discovery and personal growth. We hope to channel each child's abilities and gifts toward their potential.

Education must, however, be a partnership shared by families, students, and teachers. Communication is an essential ingredient in this partnership. The Student Agenda, allows each family the opportunity to get a glimpse of their child's day. We encourage each family to read the Student Agenda together and discuss with your child about their day. Please do not hesitate to communicate back to the teacher with any questions or concerns. The faculty and administration are here to help the students and their families.

#### Program – Grades 6-8

Grades 6-8 mark the beginning of a more structured academic program. Emphasis is placed on reading and comprehension development beyond simple decoding, however individualized and/or small group instruction will continue to be provided for those students who need remedial reading. Emphasis is placed on critical reading, formal writing assignments, refining organizational and study skills, preparing for tests and assessments, and developing critical thinking preparation for high school and life.

We help the student grow in personal responsibility and enthusiasm for learning as we recognize the steadily increasing academic and social demands that each student will experience. Social cognition training and development will continue to be integrated into each area of study and serve as the cornerstone of the advisory period.

Career and vocational exploration begin during this time, and students are encouraged to become involved in community service and other outside activities. Students also have the opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports.

We stress the development of character, and students are encouraged to model good behaviors and leadership. The Advisory period gives students an opportunity to work as a group and participate in activities designed to promote responsibility and self-esteem.

All students in grades 6-8 will be issued a Student Agenda on the first day of school. Students are expected to bring it to class each day and record assignments. Parents are asked to assist in seeing that the assignments are completed on a daily basis. **It is understood that if a student does not complete homework assignments or misses classwork, it is the student's responsibility to ask the teacher for missed work and submit it when it's due.**

#### Program — Grades 9-12

The high school years serve as another transition period in which the student is developing intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally into an adult. Grades 9-12 build on those expectations established in grades 6-8.

Academic and behavioral expectations increase, as do responsibilities and privileges. **It is understood that if a student does not complete homework assignments or misses classwork, it is the student's responsibility to ask the teacher for missed work and submit it when it's due. Students in grades 9-12 will earn credits towards their diploma for each course taken. Failure to complete assignments and absences can impact earning credits.**

Students take an academic program to prepare them for further educational opportunities. Career and vocational opportunities are explored along with personal goals.

Sportsmanship and group participation in interscholastic sports and clubs is encouraged.

Character development is addressed in all aspects of the student's life at Northstar. It is our goal to prepare young people in their academic, social/emotional maturation and to equip them in such a way that they become independent, self-directed, and responsible.

#### Northstar Career Center

Northstar Career Center is a program offering students with disabilities the opportunity to participate in career/technical education courses. Our Career Center aims to help students develop self-determination, self-advocacy, job readiness and employment skills. Students may attend one of five programs offered: Business Technology, Construction and Maintenance Occupations, Materials Handling Occupations, Hospitality, and Veterinary Assisting. Programs are open to students who are 16-24 years of age. Students may be a current high-school student, homeschooled student, high school graduate, or have taken a different life path. Students may attend Northstar Career Center as part-time students or take a course as part of their full-time Northstar Academy academic schedule. Student's skills and progress will be assessed using performance and projects.

Northstar Career Center Career/Tech Ed Courses:

Construction and Maintenance Occupations

Business Technology

Materials Handling Occupations

Veterinary Assisting

Hospitality

**Audio/Visual Equipment**

The School encourages all teachers to make use of technology and multi-sensory activities in their teaching to help bring variety and versatility to their instruction.

**Teachers should check with an Administrator before showing any film other than those that are "PG" Rated.**

**Evaluations**

**Middle & Upper School – Grades 6–12**

Progress reports are provided every 4 ½ weeks and report cards every nine weeks, as noted on the school calendar. **Teachers will contact families of students with a "D" or "F" average, or if a student's grade has dropped significantly.**

**Faculty Contact Information**

Faculty email contact information can be found on the school website. Faculty telephone extensions can be provided by the front desk.

**Grading Policy**

Lower School Grading Scale – E=Excellent; G=Good; P=Progress; MP=Minimal Progress

Middle and Upper School Grading Scale:

|        |    |       |    |       |    |             |    |
|--------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------------|----|
| 97–100 | A+ | 87–89 | B+ | 77–79 | C+ | 68–69       | D+ |
| 93–96  | A  | 83–86 | B  | 73–76 | C  | 66–67       | D  |
| 90–92  | A– | 80–82 | B– | 70–72 | C– | 65          | D– |
|        |    |       |    |       |    | 64 or below | F  |

**Grading Policy – Grades 6–10**

It is extremely rare for Northstar teachers to issue a failing grade to a student. However, in a situation where a student does not take responsibility for learning by not studying for assessments, completing assignments or failing to participate in class or excessive unexcused absences, an "F" is the only option. On the occasion that a failed course is required, it must be repeated. In special cases and at the discretion of the Head of School an approved class may be taken at another facility or an elective may be substituted. In all cases, arrangements for making up failed courses must be in writing and approved in advance by school administration.

### **Grading Policy – Juniors (Grade 11)**

Any required course failed as a junior must be made up as a senior or at another facility in a summer session. Credit earned in the latter will carry the transcript notation “Summer School Credit”.

Because a transcript is a complete record of the student’s performance in high school, both original failures and subsequent make-up credits are recorded. This means make-up credit for a failed course does not replace or remove the original “F” on the transcript. It does, however, show that a student has remedied the deficiency. Credit for a high school course (e.g., Algebra I) taken during the middle school years (Grades 7-8) is recorded on the transcript. On the other hand, failures by middle school students attempting high school courses are **NOT** recorded on the transcript.

Sometimes a student may pass a course technically, but their degree of mastery of the material is not deemed sufficient to ensure a reasonable chance of success in subsequent sequentially related courses. In which case, a “D” grade does not show adequate understanding to be able to continue to the next level (i.e., a “D” in Algebra I is not a good indication for success in Geometry and Algebra II). In such cases the Administration usually recommends that remedial work be undertaken during the summer or that, if possible, the student repeat the original course. When questions arise concerning a student’s perceived weakness in any subject area, please consult the Head of School for specific recommendations.

**Grading Policy – Participation (all students)** – Northstar teachers may use a participation grade when awarding grades. Participation grades do not make up more than 25% of a student’s grade.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Graduation Requirements for students placed at Northstar Academy and Career Center are determined by each student’s IEP/IAP and the specific requirements set for each type of diploma established by the placing school system and/or Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) diploma requirements. The graduation requirements listed below are for students entering the 9th grade in the 2018-2019 school year and beyond. Please contact your student’s IEP / IAP liaison for more information about graduation requirements for students who entered the 9th grade prior to this date. Families are encouraged to visit the [VDOE graduation requirements page](#).

### **Northstar Standard Diploma**

Standard diplomas are awarded based on a combination of completed coursework and assessment scores.

#### **Summary of Requirements:**

- 22 Standard Units of Credit (Public & Private)
  - Five (5) verified credits – Public
  - Two 9th-grade level proficiency assessments – Private

- 1 Career & Technical Education Credential (Public & Private)
- 1 virtual course (Public & Private)
- First Aid, CPR & AED Training (Public & Private)
- Demonstration of 5 C's: critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship (Public & Private)

| <b>Subject</b>   | <b>Standard Units of Credit</b> | <b>Verified Credits (Public)</b> | <b>Grade level Proficiency (Private)</b> |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| English  | 4                               | 2                                | 9th Grade - Reading                      |
| Math   | 3                               | 1                                | 9th Grade - Math                         |
| Science  | 3                               | 1                                | n/a                                      |
| History  | 3                               | 1                                | n/a                                      |
| Economics & Personal Finance                               | 1                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |
| World Language, Fine Arts, or Career & Technical Education | 2                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |
| Health & PE  | 2                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |
| Electives*   | 4                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |

\* Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives.

**Career and Technical Education Credential** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013-2014, students must earn a career and technical education credential approved by the Board of Education in order to earn a Standard Diploma. This credential could include, but is not limited to, an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.

**Virtual Course** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013-2014, students must complete one virtual course, which may be a non credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.

**First Aid, CPR & AED Training** – Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED), including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.

**Demonstration of the 5 C's** - In accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate, students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in Virginia's 5 C's: critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

**Northstar Advanced Studies Diploma\*\***

Honors or Advanced Studies diplomas are awarded based on a combination of completed coursework and assessment scores. The use of on-line facilitated coursework may be a consideration for certain courses.

**Summary of Requirements:**

- 26 Standard Units of Credit (Public & Private)
  - o Five (5) verified credits - Public
  - o Two 11th-grade level proficiency assessments - Private
- 1 Career & Technical Education Credential (Public & Private)
- 1 virtual course (Public & Private)
- First Aid, CPR & AED Training (Public & Private)
- Demonstration of 5 C's: critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship (Public & Private)

| <b>Subject</b>                              | <b>Standard Units of Credit</b> | <b>Verified Credits (Public)</b> | <b>Grade level Proficiency (Private)</b> |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| English                                     | 4                               | 2                                | 11th Grade - Reading                     |
| Math  | 4                               | 1                                | 11th Grade - Math                        |
| Science                                     | 4                               | 1                                | n/a                                      |
| History                                     | 4                               | 1                                | n/a                                      |
| Economics & Personal Finance                | 1                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |
| World Language*                             | 3                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |
| Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education** | 1                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |
| Health & PE                                 | 2                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |
| Electives***                                | 3                               | 0                                | n/a                                      |

\* Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

\*\* Northstar strongly urges students seeking an Honors diploma to receive a Career and Technical Education credit.

*\*\*\* Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives.*

**Career and Technical Education Credential** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013–2014, students must earn a career and technical education credential approved by the Board of Education in order to earn a Standard Diploma. This credential could include, but is not limited to, an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.

**Virtual Course** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013–2014, students must complete one virtual course, which may be a non credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.

**First Aid, CPR & AED Training** – Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED), including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.

**Demonstration of the 5 C's** – In accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate, students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in Virginia's 5 C's: critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

### **Applied Studies (IEP/IAP) Diploma**

The Applied Studies Diploma is a diploma option available for students identified as having a disability and meet the requirements of their IEP/IAP, but do not meet the requirements for a Standard or Advanced Studies diploma. Successful completion of IEP/IAP goals will satisfy graduation requirements in part for those students who will receive an Applied Studies Diploma.

### **Homework**

Homework is intended to provide reinforcement for automatic performance and to develop the processes for learning that are a part of Northstar instruction. The assignment of homework presents students with the opportunity to work independently and practice known skills.

An additional goal is to establish a routine and expectation that homework is a part of school and home life. Families should:

1. Establish a regular homework time, since consistency is important
2. Provide a quiet place for the student to work
3. Help with organization and provide study tools (e.g., pencil, paper, etc.)
4. Sign the Student Agenda to indicate that homework and reading were completed
5. Communicate with teachers
6. Offer encouragement and positive feedback

Each student is given a Student Agenda in which homework assignments should be written each day and brought home with the materials needed to complete the assignments. **Families should monitor homework time and ensure that the assignments are completed.**

**Homework time should not be a battle.** If homework is causing a problem or the student does not seem to understand the assignment, families are asked to note it in the Agenda book and stop the homework session.

**Homework should not become a power struggle,** however it is a time where the students should review and independently practice learned skills. The Agenda book can serve as a daily communication log between school and home.

### **Late Paper Policy**

To ensure a uniform understanding about major assignments that are turned in late, all classes will observe the following policy:

- The teacher establishes with the student a non-changeable, yet suitable date for the assignment.
- If an occasion arises when a student feels unable to get the assignment completed on time, they should resolve the problem with the teacher.
- An assignment submitted one day late (with or without extended time) will be penalized one full letter grade.
- For every two succeeding academic days that an assignment is late, an additional penalty of one letter grade will be assessed.
- After three days, the teacher will report the tardy assignment to the Assistant Head of School or the Head of School and parents, and the student will receive no grade higher than a "C".
- All major papers and assignments must be turned in or a grade of "Incomplete" will be recorded. Students will not be given credit for any course that does not have a grade recorded within two weeks after the end of the grading period.
- All papers must be turned in on the due date, whether or not the student is present at school. If the student has received permission for an excused absence, the papers must be submitted in advance.

### **Make up Work**

Teachers will assign make-up work as they deem necessary. Students may be asked to stay after school or meet during lunch to complete assignments or for disciplinary reasons.

### **Meeting Rules and Guidelines**

Northstar may refuse to meet with a parent/guardian if a meeting has not been scheduled. Northstar staff upon refusing, will offer other times and dates that are mutually agreeable and would be available for the parent/guardian to return for a meeting.

Northstar does not allow videotaping of conferences, IEP/IAP meetings or any other

meetings without the express written permission of each individual involved in the meeting. Additionally, a person who is audio recording any Northstar employee during a meeting, conversation, conference or an IEP/IAP meeting must inform the Northstar employee prior to the recording and must gain permission to make the recording. If a family is recording, Northstar will also record the meeting.

Meeting requirements for Northstar at all times include:

- Maintain a positive manner in tone and language.
- Each member of the meeting will be shown and treated with respect.
- Listen quietly and respectfully when other people talk; let each person finish.
- Only one person should talk at a time.
- Do not interrupt when another person is talking.
- Only discuss the student whom the meeting is about, remain on topic.
- Use of profanity, yelling, name calling will result in termination of the meeting.
- Making implied threats or making threats will result in termination of the meeting.

### **Conferences (K-12 & Career Center)**

Conferences with teachers may be scheduled by appointment, based on the school calendar. These conferences facilitate an exchange of information about your student: how they have acclimated to the school year, what you see as their needs and interests, and how both school and home can help in generating a happy and productive year.

Additional conferences can be scheduled at any other time during the school year if the teacher or family considers it desirable. Questions regarding a student's well-being or overall progress will always be gladly answered, and if the questions are of a nature and range beyond classroom queries, please do not hesitate to call the Head of School.

### **Report Cards, Interims and Daily/Weekly contact**

Interim reports are provided every 4 weeks and report cards are provided every nine weeks. The report card is individualized for each student and based on the student's Individual Academic Plan/Individualized Education Program. Depending on the individual situation, documents may be mailed or received electronically.

Daily and/or weekly communication to families are given via the Student Agenda book/Folders. Teachers will communicate with families concerning recent successes and/or problem areas. Please read and return the Student Agenda daily.

### **Reporting**

Teachers report to families each nine weeks. Additional conferences and written communications are scheduled as needed for an individual student. All families are strongly encouraged to attend conferences whenever possible. ***If families wish to schedule conferences with teachers at other times during the school year, it is***

***suggested they be scheduled after school, beginning at 3:15 p.m. It is best to schedule the meeting at least three to four days in advance by calling the school office or e-mailing the student's IEP/IAP Liaison .***

### **Social Skills Development**

Students often come to Northstar with difficulties related to a previous school failure, lack of friends, and poor self-esteem. Lessons in Advisory class help students develop the social, emotional, and behavioral skills needed to succeed as members of society. Lower school students receive social skills instruction as part of their daily classroom activities.

At Northstar, we help students gain a more positive attitude about themselves and others. Individual student goals are based on teacher and family assessments. Data is collected on individual student goals. Lessons follow monthly themes and are tailored to each student's developmental needs. Social support is woven into the school day with one-on-one coaching available as needed.

### **Standardized Testing**

Each fall and spring teachers administer standardized tests to objectively measure achievement in math and reading progress. The results of your student's standardized achievement will be on file. These scores provide a framework for interpreting performance in relation to others of your student's age. They also provide a starting point for developing the Individual Academic Plan (IAP) and instruction.

### **Student Records**

A cumulative record is maintained for each student who attends Northstar. This record includes progress reports, aptitude test scores, achievement test results, notable achievements, accomplishments, disciplinary issues, and extracurricular activities. This record is of importance, not only to the individual and to Northstar, but also may be required by future schools to which the student may seek admission. Information received by Northstar and its reports become part of the permanent student file. These records are available for inspection and review in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Requests for records to be sent to another school or agency must be made in writing. **Please allow at least two weeks for the request to be processed, and note that all financial obligations must be met before records can be released.**

### **Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

(FERPA updated April, 2020)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Northstar Academy ("School") receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education

records should submit to the Head of School a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend their child's or their education record should write the Head of School, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The

name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) – (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to

adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))

- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as “directory information” if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

### **Tests and Quizzes**

Tests and/or quizzes may be given by classroom teachers at their discretion. All full-period tests and long-range assignments are announced to the students in advance. In general, we strive to have no more than two tests per day or two long-range projects scheduled for any one student on the same day.

### **Transition**

In preparation for independent living after graduation, Northstar’s Transition Services program focuses on developing social thinking skills. Students learn how to make and maintain good relationships with others – whether at school, home, work, or play. Students explore post-secondary opportunities such as college/community college, vocational programs, internships and employment opportunities. Families must give written consent for the student to participate in “Family Life” instruction.

## **General Policies and Procedures**

### **Admission Guidelines**

Northstar is Central Virginia’s premier nonprofit school for K-12 students (ages 5-22)

with a wide range of disabilities. Northstar educates students with 12 of the 13 identified disabilities such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, Other Health Impairment, Speech-Language Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Traumatic Brain Injury, Orthopedic Impairment, Intellectual Disabilities, Vision Impairments, Hearing Impairments, Emotional Disability (mild anxiety/depression), Developmental Delay, and Multiple Disabilities.

Northstar's mission is to promote educational excellence for students with disabilities who have academic, physical or social challenges. With a strong spirit of community, we provide a challenging and supportive educational environment that addresses the unique needs of our students. Northstar Academy and Career Center is an educational facility thereby affording the student a least restrictive environment. Northstar does not serve students who demonstrate defiant or aggressive behavior towards themselves or others. Northstar does not serve students with significant emotional needs who may require a therapeutic environment. Students must be able to navigate the campus safely, engage in the classroom independently, and attend to their personal needs.

Admission to Northstar Academy and Career Center is based on the Individual Education Plan (IEP), assessments, student records, evaluations and staff feedback after the student's visit/observation days to determine "goodness of fit". Teachers provide feedback based on the student's ability to follow the general structure of the academic setting and the student's ability to meet Northstar behavioral requirements. Once a decision is made by Admissions, the family and/or SPED representatives are contacted regarding acceptance or denial. Privately placed students who are invited to enroll, receive an acceptance letter and an enrollment contract. When students are invited to enroll from a public school system, a placement agreement is signed between Northstar and the school system. Northstar Academy and Career Center may, at its discretion, accept students on a provisional basis or request the family or the public school system provide an aide to support the student. If admission is declined, a letter along with information regarding other schools is provided to the family, guardian and SPED representatives. When a student is accepted, families may apply for a scholarship through FACTS. Once an enrollment contract is signed, families are required to set up electronic tuition payments through FACTS. Prompt payment is expected according to the admission and tuition payment plan as outlined in the enrollment contract. Northstar Academy and Career Center, with written consent, will request additional records within 5 business days of enrollment.

Upon enrollment, Northstar families are provided information regarding Northstar policies and procedures through access to the annual Student/Family Handbook located on the school website. Copies are made available upon request. Families and students submit a signed consent form stating their agreement to follow the guidelines and rules of the Student/Family Handbook.

Students are enrolled at Northstar based on their grade level. They follow a course of studies determined by grade, ability, goals and diploma status. A school calendar and an individual class schedule is provided for each student. Once enrolled, Northstar uses a standardized assessment tool to determine each student's level of

academic performance. For parentally placed students, the assessment is used to develop an Individual Academic Plan (IAP), which is created within 30 business days of enrollment. For students placed by the public school system, Northstar implements the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and assessments are administered as directed by the IEP and the school system.

### **Admission Process**

Northstar recognizes the challenges you may have experienced as you search for the best school for your student. We understand as you begin to explore different educational options, it is important to ask questions and gather facts. Whether you are considering parental placement or placement through a school system, the process towards gathering information and determining goodness of fit at Northstar may include the following steps.

Northstar Academy and Career Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs and athletic or other agency-administered programs.

The admission process for Northstar Academy, Inc. may include:

**\*\*Please note, for the Career Center, the student is a key team member during the admission process and should participate throughout the process.**

#### **Step One: Inquiry**

- Northstar contacted by interested family or referral source. Appointment scheduled for discussion and tour with families, legal guardian and/or county representative, if appropriate.
- Student history and contact information is provided.
- A visit to the school is scheduled.

#### **Step Two: Discussion & Tour**

- Discuss needs of student and benefits of Northstar
- Tour the school and grounds
- Receive Northstar Admission packet
- The student, the student's family members, and referring parties (if applicable) should attend.

#### **Step Three: Observation**

- Families return the completed application along with payment for the \$50 processing fee. (if applicable)
- Prior to the observation day, families provide a current IEP, eligibility minutes and school/independent evaluations and any other required documentation.
- Student spends a day(s) at Northstar shadowing another student.

#### **Step Four: Consideration & Decision**

- The student application and documents are reviewed along with teacher observation/recommendation for placement.

- The Admission Committee determines if Northstar is the right solution for the family.
- The prospective student determines whether or not Northstar Career Center is the right career step for their personal and professional goals.

#### **Step Five: Enrollment**

- If it is determined that it is in the best interest of Northstar and the prospective student, admission is offered.
- Family is informed of scholarship process and payment plans.
- Contract and enrollment forms are mailed.
- Contract and student forms are returned to Northstar and a date of enrollment is set.
- For privately placed students, an Individualized Academic Plan (IAP) is developed within 30 days of enrollment. For publicly placed students, Northstar collaborates with placing agencies to create or revise student service plans (local education agencies – Individualized Education Plan; Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services – Individualized Employment Plan). Services are then delivered and reporting is provided as delineated by these plans.
- For the Career Center, priority enrollment will be given to students who are currently enrolled at Northstar until the course request deadline. After this deadline, enrollment will be considered in the order they are received.

#### **After-School Hours**

Students are expected to leave the school grounds at the end of their school commitments or at the conclusion of the extra-curricular activity.

#### **Alumni Association**

All former students and extended family members (eg. parent(s)/grandparent(s)) may be members of the alumni association of Northstar.

#### **Board of Directors Responsibility**

Directors have the final authority on the operation of Northstar Academy and Career Center. The prime functions of the board are selection of the Head of School, determination of overall policy and planning for the school's development educationally as well as financially. The board also assists the Head of School with policies, goals and budgetary considerations. The Head of School is an ex-officio member of the Board.

#### **Complaint Resolution Procedure**

While we do not anticipate any tension or conflict between Northstar and families, we do realize that from time to time a disagreement may arise. In the rare case that occurs, we encourage you to first speak directly with your student's teacher. If you feel a need to jointly speak with the teacher and the Head of School, please call and make an appointment. In the event that a complaint cannot be resolved at the school level, a complaint should be filed with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with the Division of Special Education and Student Services Office of Dispute

Resolution and Administrative Services, P. O. Box 2120 Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120.

The process for filing a complaint with the VDOE may be found on their [website](#) or in the handbook [The Virginia Family's Guide to Special Education](#).

### **Discharge Guidelines**

Students determined to be unsuccessful during the school year will be discharged, or given the opportunity to withdraw, or asked not to return the following year. Through counseling with families, students, and/or placing agencies, more suitable opportunities will be developed for those students asked not to return, and a list of other alternative schools will be provided.

Northstar reserves the right to terminate a contract mid-year or to not offer a contract for re-enrollment. The basis for such a decision might be any of the following:

- Lack of academic progress
- Poor attendance
- Behavioral reasons
- Lack of demonstrated ability and/or willingness to adhere to safety expectations either on campus or in the community.
- The ability to work with a student and their family is compromised.
- The relationship between the student, the family, and the school has deteriorated to such an extent that the school can no longer maintain a positive working relationship.
- Lack of ability of the family to fulfill the financial obligations of their contract
- A student's health/emotional health poses a risk to the school population.
- Outstanding financial responsibilities.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising is an opportunity to raise additional funds to supplement school-sponsored academic, co-curricular programs and social opportunities for students. Participating in fundraising is optional. Students must have permission from their families to participate in Northstar fundraising activities and events.

### **Inclement weather**

Snowfall and road conditions vary widely throughout the Richmond area. The decision to close school is based on road conditions, weather forecasts, and the distance students must travel. School may be canceled or a late arrival may be issued based on the weather. For this information please listen to local news for emergency school closing information or refer to the school website and/or social media. The school on call system will be utilized whenever possible.

Occasionally, when a storm is approaching or driving is precarious, families may choose to pick up students early. Please contact the front desk if you plan to do so. A student will be dismissed only to drivers designated on their emergency form.

If a decision is made to close school early due to weather conditions, families will be notified by our on call system. In addition, the early closing will be posted on the local

news channels, school website and/or social media..

Make up days are notated on the yearly school calendar but may change at the discretion of the Head of School.

### **Individual Academic Plan – (IAP)**

Each year, an Individual Academic Plan (IAP) is developed for all private students in grades K-12. IAPs are developed at the beginning of each year for new students, at the end of the year for returning students, and 30 school days after enrollment for students enrolling during mid-year. Northstar will initiate and families may choose to meet with their case manager to review the IAP. A signature by a parent / guardian or adult student will initiate the implementation of the IAP. Each year, the family and IAP liaison will discuss the Least Restrictive Environment for the student.

The student's teacher(s)/family and the IAP Liaison will develop this plan. This plan will include goals and objectives related to the student's weakness in academic areas and behaviors. Testing and other data gathered prior to the meeting will determine the weaknesses focused on when developing new objectives. Each objective will be dated when it is initiated and mastered.

### **Individualized Education Program – (IEP)**

Each year, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed for all publically placed students with disabilities in grades K-12. The IEP defines the individualized objectives of the student including a discussion of the Least Restrictive Environment. It is intended to help students reach educational goals. It aids teachers and service providers in understanding the student's disability and how the disability affects the learning process. When the IEP team determines it's appropriate, they will consider transition and plan for the student's return to public school.

### **Individual Student Alternative Education Plan – (ISAEP)**

Northstar does not participate in Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAP) or General Education Diplomas (GED) programs.

### **Local Educational Agency (LEA)**

On an annual basis an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed for publicly placed students. Northstar will work with local school divisions in developing and implementing IEPs when the student has been placed at Northstar by the school division. This includes discussion regarding the administration of the Standards of Learning assessments by Northstar and/or the LEA. At the enrollment date, Northstar will ensure the student has a current IEP and that Northstar has received all appropriate evaluation components. Northstar will initiate contact with the LEA and family, sixty days (60 days) prior to the triennial due date or the IEP due date. Additionally, Northstar will report interim progress, and nine week grades. Staff will also meet with the local school divisions when the student has been unilaterally placed at Northstar by their family. It is important that families review their student's Individual Plan (IAP/IEP) in order to increase communication and understanding of their student's progress at Northstar.

### Parking Lot

The safety of our students is our primary concern. With regard to transportation, we ask that all drivers exercise extreme caution when transporting students to and from school. Please be careful when passing vehicles that are dropping off or picking up.

During the school year, the carpool line is subject to change as needed to adapt to ongoing construction. The carpool line is formed by entering Northstar at the entrance on Nuckols Road and following the carpool signs with arrows signaling where to go to form the line.



(carpool map as of 8/2/2024. Subject to change)

A student of good conduct with a valid driver's license and permission to drive a vehicle to school may use the school's parking facilities. Parents and persons leaving the premises should drop off students at the front door. Cars needing to wait for a student must pull out of the flow of traffic. Please do not block or park in handicapped parking spaces without prior authorization.

Students who wish to drive, walk, bike, or use rideshare to and from school may contact the Head of School for required permission forms and guidelines. Please see

the section "Independent Student Dismissal: Drive, Walk, Bike, or Rideshare Home"

### **Physical Entrance Examination**

Northstar must have a current Comprehensive School Physical and an up-to-date Immunization Record on file for all enrolled students. You can obtain this form from the Nurse/Clinic Attendant or on the school's website. A portion of the form must be completed and signed by the student's parent/guardian, the remainder must be completed, signed, and dated by a physician. Please return the form to Northstar as soon as possible, because students may not be allowed to return to school if the form is not received in a timely manner.

A separate form, The Sports Physical (which may be obtained from the clinic Nurse/Clinic Attendant or the website) is required annually for students participating in activities such as soccer, basketball, tennis or pep squad.

### **Promotion/Retention Policy**

Lower and middle school students, who are making satisfactory progress as indicated through curriculum instruction and on their individual education goals, shall be promoted. Students making unsatisfactory progress due to excessive absences or lack of progress in curriculum or individual goals may be retained. This determination will be made on a case by case basis.

Upper school students, who are making satisfactory progress as indicated through curriculum instruction, on their individual education goals, and meet the required number of seat hours to earn course credits, shall be promoted. Students making unsatisfactory progress due to excessive absences, lack of progress in curriculum or individual goals or don't meet the required number of seat hours to earn course credit may be retained. This determination will be made on a case by case basis.

### **Publications**

General information and the school events calendar are shared with families. Northstar also maintains regular communications with families throughout the school year via email, the school website, social media, and "ConnectEd" (our on call system).

### **School Property Damage/Property Rental**

Any breakage or damage to school property, accidental or otherwise, will be reported to the family and will be billed a minimum of \$100 or the cost of repair, whichever is greater.

*Buildings and Grounds* - On occasion the school may rent a part of the facility to families for special events. Arrangements can be made through the business office.

*Equipment* - School-owned equipment is not available for the personal use of students, and they are not allowed to use school office machines. Equipment issued to students for class work or sports activities must be returned in reasonable condition. Students will be charged for school-owned equipment that has been lost or damaged, with replacement/repair costs assessed after the total amount of damage has been determined.

## **Northstar Academy & Career Center** **Student Acceptable Use Policy 2024-2025**

### **Overview:**

Northstar students have access to technology including classroom computers, tablets, and the internet throughout the school day. Our internet uses a firewall with high security, including content, and safety filters. Northstar students have access to email through Google and Google Workspace including Google Classroom and other online learning subscriptions. ***These e-mail accounts are set up so that they may only send and receive information within the Northstar network.***

### **What is expected?**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network both in the classroom and while accessing accounts at home. It is expected that users will comply with the student handbook and the rules stated below. The use of the network is a privilege that may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for their actions when accessing and using computer resources.

***Northstar has the right to inspect any school accounts and computers or other electronic devices on the school network and the contents contained, on-demand with or without notice to the user.***

### **Device and Network Use Agreement:**

- I will use all tech tools in a responsible and careful manner.
- I will treat all technology with respect. I will not intentionally damage or destroy any tech resource.
- I will only access **teacher-approved websites**. The purpose of the internet at school is for education. I will use Northstar technology only for **school assignments**.
  - I will not use Northstar's network to access social networking, gaming, or other non-educational sites including personal email accounts.
  - I will not view, send, transmit, download, print, or otherwise distribute material that is obscene, profane, violent, discriminatory or depicts or describes illegal activities.
- I will lead with kindness when interacting virtually. I will not use technology to harass, frighten, or bully anyone.
- I will tell a teacher or trusted adult if I see or read something that is inappropriate, dangerous, threatening, or makes me feel uncomfortable.
- I will keep my account secure by only sharing my password with my family or a teacher.
- I will help others keep their accounts secure. I will not ask for another user's account information, impersonate another student, and/or access another student's account.
- I will follow internet safety rules. I will not give out personal information (name, address, phone, etc.) over the Internet.
- I will obey copyright laws and not take credit for other's work (no plagiarism).

- I will follow the **school firewall restrictions**. I will not use unauthorized software/ websites to bypass school filters, send viruses, or otherwise damage the network including making changes to system files.
- I will follow school guidelines for accounts. I will not change account settings – including personalization settings (desktop background, etc).
- I will help maintain the privacy of myself and others in the classroom. I will not use Northstar devices to record audio or photograph myself or other students without teacher permission.
- I will follow the Northstar rules when using a school computer or email account. I will not use technology in any other inappropriate way.

#### **Email Use Agreement:**

- I will only use my Northstar email for school assignments.
- I will not use my school email to create or use accounts for social media, gaming, or other online sites.
- I will only use my school email account for **school assignments**. I will not harass others with unsolicited messages including forwarding of “chain” emails.
- I will follow the Northstar technology code of conduct anytime I use school email on or off-campus.

#### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy:**

This policy is designed to guide the responsible and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs, such as ChatGPT, across all educational activities within the school. While AI can significantly enhance the educational experience by supporting learning and creativity, its improper use may undermine academic integrity and learning objectives. This policy ensures that the use of AI tools aligns with our educational values and standards.

#### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Agreement:**

- Obtain approval from your teacher before using AI for school-related activities.
- AI programs should be used to supplement and enhance learning, not to replace student effort or traditional learning methods. Users must engage with these tools ethically, respecting copyright and privacy laws.
- Work produced with the aid of AI must be original and include proper attribution when AI-generated content is used. The school does not tolerate plagiarism, regardless of whether the content is generated by AI or obtained through other means.
- Students must maintain academic integrity when using AI tools. This includes honesty in how AI-generated work is presented and used.
- Users must respect privacy and data security guidelines when using AI programs, ensuring that sensitive information is protected and that AI tools are used in compliance with data protection regulations.
- AI should serve as an educational tool to assist learning and understanding, not as a substitute for critical thinking or effort.
- Assignments or projects created with the assistance of AI are subject to review. Students may be required to verbally explain their work and the extent of AI's role in it to ensure understanding and original contribution.

### **What is Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)?**

Northstar students use technology on a daily basis for research, documentation, collaboration, and other technology-related activities. Northstar allows students the option to bring their own devices to school. Northstar has classroom sets of devices for students who opt not to bring their own.

### **What are the requirements for BYOD?**

Students may choose to bring a laptop computer, netbook, or tablet without a mobile data plan. This device must have current antivirus software.

### **Bring Your Own Device Agreement:**

- I am responsible for arriving at school with my device charged and ready.
- I will access only my own or school-assigned devices. I will not borrow or use devices from another student.
- I will **only store my device at the front desk or in an area designated by Northstar faculty**.
- I will respect "OFFLINE" times such as lunch, advisory, and any other times designated by teachers.
- I will **only use the Northstar Student wifi** while on campus. I will not use mobile data such as 4G, 5G, or LTE coverage.
- I will only use my device for school assignments during teacher-approved times.
- I will **not photograph, video, or record** any event on campus without teacher permission. This includes classes, assemblies, and off-campus activities.
- I will only access **teacher-approved websites**. The purpose of the internet at school is for education. I will use my device only for **school assignments**.
- I will follow the **school firewall restrictions**. I will not use unauthorized software/ websites to bypass school filters, send viruses or otherwise damage the network, or make changes to system files.

**Northstar will continue to collect cell phones and gaming devices including electronic watches at the start of the school day.**

**Northstar is not responsible for lost or damaged devices.** Northstar staff will not be responsible for troubleshooting or fixing broken devices. Students are responsible for the care of their devices. Broken devices will be placed in a locked cabinet at the front desk and returned home.

### **Recommendations for Families:**

- Clearly label any personal electronics that come to school with the student's first and last name. Protective cases are also recommended.
- Ask your student to share their Northstar email and Google Apps with you when reviewing their planner nightly. We encourage families to monitor their student usage when accessing school accounts at home.
- Establish a routine for charging devices each evening.
- Discuss internet safety and digital citizenship. Students will be learning about these topics in their advisory class. Encourage your students to share their passwords and what they learned in class with you.

**Students – Be prepared to be held accountable for your actions and for loss of privileges on all computers and school accounts if the rules of appropriate use are violated.**

If you have any questions or concerns about your student accessing the internet or Google Workspace including email please contact Wanda Ramsey at [wramsey@northstarva.org](mailto:wramsey@northstarva.org).

### **Prohibited Activities**

In addition to the Northstar Acceptable Use Policy, the following activities involving Northstar's computer resources including the network and accounts are prohibited:

1. Intentionally destroying or altering software or licensed software.
2. Capturing or guessing another user's password, identifying code, personal identification numbers, or other confidential information without the permission of its owner.
3. Creating, modifying, executing, or re-transmitting any computer program or instructions intended to gain unauthorized access to, or make unauthorized use of a computer resource, software, or licensed software.
4. Creating, modifying, executing, or re-transmitting any computer program or instructions intended to obscure the true identity of the sender of electronic mail or electronic messages, including but not limited to forgery of messages and/or alteration of system and/or user data used to identify the sender of the messages.
5. Making unauthorized copies of software or licensed software.
6. Using computer resources in a manner inconsistent with Northstar's contractual obligations to suppliers of computer resources or with any published Northstar policy.
7. Using computer resources for financial or commercial gain.
8. Publishing or transmitting inaccurate or falsified information about oneself, another person, or the school.

### **Consequences**

Students accused of violating Northstar's technology policies are entitled to due process in resolving the violation:

1. Suspension or revocation of access privileges.
2. Referral to the Head of School, with possible suspension from Northstar.
3. Referral to the Assistant Head of School and notification to faculty and staff of the violation and the consequences.
4. Involvement of state and federal law enforcement authorities if the violation involves state and federal laws.

Internet access generally will be permitted only for class-related activities or assignments. The school's Internet connections may not be used for commercial purposes including purchasing products or services. Parents/guardians will assume financial responsibility for products or services purchased by their students. Students may not knowingly access material that is obscene or profane, material that

advocates illegal acts, or material that advocates violence or discrimination against other people. Students accessing objectionable material should immediately notify a teacher as a protection against a claim of intentional violation of the guidelines.

The use of the school's Internet access is a privilege, not a right. Students may access the Internet only from the school's account; access on family accounts will not be permitted.

### **Violations**

Behavior perceived to constitute harassment will be reviewed by the administration. Those found to be in violation will be subject to appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the school.

### **Transcripts**

Averages are based exclusively on courses pursued at Northstar Academy and Career Center. For students transferring into our school, averages from prior school(s) will not be "folded in." If a student transfers in at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and graduates from Northstar, the cumulative average on the transcript will not reflect 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Rather a transcript from the former school(s) will be appended to Northstar's transcript.

Transcript requests should be made to the School Registrar, Kathy Llewellyn, [kllewellyn@northstarva.org](mailto:kllewellyn@northstarva.org). Please allow 1-2 weeks to process requests.

### **Transportation**

It is each family's responsibility to provide transportation to/from Northstar. The school helps facilitate carpool arrangements by publishing the Student-Family Directory early in the school year, but assumes no responsibility for transporting students to/from school.

The school owns and operates mini vans and bus vehicles that are used to transport students to and from field trips, transition work sites and school sponsored activities. Northstar has policy and procedures in place for vehicle insurance, staff/faculty that operate and drive any Northstar vehicle, permission forms and vehicle maintenance. These vehicles are maintained and equipped according to state code and triangular safety reflectors are included as part of their safety equipment. Northstar staff/faculty driving records are reviewed with the Division of Motor Vehicles before being allowed to drive.

#### **Behavioral Expectations on Northstar Vehicles**

1. At all times, students will follow directions of Northstar staff members.
2. Students are to behave as respectful passengers while traveling in Northstar vehicles. This includes sitting in assigned seats with seatbelts securely fastened, refraining from inappropriate comments or gestures to persons in other vehicles, following directions of the staff members, and in all actions respecting safety as the top priority.

3. Students, regardless of age and independence, will remain with the group when approaching and leaving the vehicle. No student should walk through parking lots or across streets without the direct supervision of Northstar staff members.
4. Students should demonstrate with their behavior that the primary goal of riding in a vehicle is to get to a destination safely. Students should demonstrate patience and flexibility regarding secondary goals such as music selections and seating preferences.

Failure to meet behavioral expectations on Northstar vehicles may result in suspension from Northstar-provided transportation, even if this means that the student will miss out on important field trips, internships, or job shadowing experiences.

#### Carpool – Drop Off

**Families and ride shares should not drop off a student before 7:30 a.m.** A Northstar representative must be outside, stationed at their post, and prepared to monitor student arrivals. **Do not drop off a student if an adult is not yet on duty.**

**Morning drop off ends at 7:50.** After this time, the adult dropping off the student must park and walk in with the student in order to sign them in.

#### Carpool – Pick Up

As construction continues on our campus, parking lot space remains limited. In order to limit the number of cars in the carpool line at one time and expedite the dismissal process, students will be dismissed in groups at 3 separate dismissal times. Families are able to rank their preferred dismissal times via the dismissal survey sent at the beginning of the year.

All families will be given 3 placards with their student's name on it. This placard is not required to pick up a student. If no placard is visible during dismissal, staff will ask to see the driver's identification. Additional placards will be made available to families who need them.

#### **Carpool Plan and Contact**

Each family must have a backup transportation plan in place for their student.

1. Emergency phone numbers should be on file with the School.
2. If there are problems, **call the school office and let the receptionist know what arrangements you have made.** Remember, if the custodial parent is not picking up the student and the student is not going home in the usual manner, then the emergency person on file is expected to pick up the student. Students will not be released to another person without the appropriate arrangements and proof of identity.

Families planning to change their student's regular transportation must inform the receptionist, as well as the regular driver (in a timely manner). This will help to eliminate confusion with the regular transportation providers. Call 804-747-1003 or email [frontdesk@northstarva.org](mailto:frontdesk@northstarva.org).

### County Transportation

Communication with your county driver is essential. Miscommunications or delays are not acceptable excuses for tardiness. Be sure to notify County Transportation Departments when schedules change, especially if a student is sick, leaves school early, or is staying after school. It is the responsibility of the family to communicate with county transportation departments. **The school must be notified in writing or by phone of any changes in transportation plans.**

### **Independent Student Dismissal: Drive, Walk, Bike, or Rideshare Home**

#### Driving Privilege

High school students who have good behavior and are in good academic standing with "C" or better grades in all subject areas and who have a valid driver's license are allowed to drive automobiles to school with administration and their family's permission. Student drivers & families must complete a Student Driver Authorization Form prior to driving to school. Students are not allowed to go to their cars during the school day. It is also prohibited to give other students rides without written permission (for each occasion) from the student's family and the driver's family. Northstar reserves the right to revoke student driving privileges.

#### Walk, Bike or Rideshare

There are no laws around age or distance of walking to school. Likewise, there are no laws around age of using rideshare services. Individual companies have their own age restrictions for unaccompanied riders. This policy is intended to cover use of commercial rideshare (Uber/Lyft) and specialized transportation services for individuals with disabilities.

Parents are obligated to ensure their student(s) get to school and attend regularly, but this in itself does not prevent independent travel. Particularly in light of the students we serve, as a school, we have a duty of care for the safety and well-being of our students.. Therefore this policy is to help advise parents in the decisions they make for their children in relation to safety to and from school. We also have a legal mandate to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

Only students who are in middle school, upper school, or Career Center may walk or bike to and from school. Only students in upper school or Career Center may use Rideshare apps.

In deciding whether your student is ready to walk/bike to school or use Rideshare apps, you should assess any risks associated with the route to school and assess your student's confidence. There are many ways you can prepare your student to make an independent journey. One way is to follow them a few times on their journey, so you know how safe and sensible they are. It is also strongly advised that students who are walking or using Rideshare without an adult, have a cell phone or other means of communication that they are able to use if they need help. All cell

phones must be turned in at the front desk (K-12 Academy) or to the teacher (Career Center) upon arrival at school, per our current policy.

**Consider the following for walking or biking:**

1. Do you trust them to walk straight to school or straight home, using the agreed safe route?
2. Are there roads to cross on the route and how busy/safe are those roads?
3. Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend or group of friends?
4. Are they road safety aware?
5. Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
6. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
7. Do they understand about keeping themselves safe and not making any dangerous choices, either by themselves or with a group of friends?

**Consider the following for using Rideshare:**

1. Who will control the rideshare app: the student or the parent/guardian/adult ally?
2. If the student controls the rideshare app, does the parent/guardian/adult ally have a way to track their location?
3. Does the student know how to safely identify the vehicle and driver? (check for your name, check the license plate, check the driver and car photos, check for the rideshare company sticker)
4. Does your student know what to do if they feel unsure about their ride or unsafe during the ride? (don't get in the car, call 911 in an emergency).

**If you decide that your student is ready for this responsibility, please complete the form(s) below.**

**How to complete the forms:**

1. Circle yes or no for each statement (please note that if you circle 'no' for any of the statements, consider if your student is ready to walk/bike to or from school or use Rideshare apps.
2. Read the information and if you agree please sign and date if you want your child **to walk/bike to and/or from school alone or use Rideshare apps.**
3. Please return these forms to school prior to any independent travel.
4. If at any time you need to change the arrangements, please ensure you let us know in writing.

As part of keeping your student safe and the school being able to support our families in the case of an emergency, we do request that parents provide us with a copy of the walking/biking route or the names of which Rideshare companies your student will use.

You will receive a letter/email from school to confirm that we have received your permission form for your child to either walk/bike to or from school alone.

### **STUDENT DRIVER AUTHORIZATION FORM**

Please read carefully, as student parking is a privilege and may be revoked for failure to abide by expectations. Parking privileges can be revoked at any time if the student is in violation of the guidelines and/or school administration deems the privilege to be rescinded.

As shared in the Student-Family Handbook, students are expected to maintain good behavior (e.g. maintain good attendance and no tardies, follow school wide behavior support, etc), and good academic standing.

Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Excessive tardiness or absences may result in loss of parking privileges.

Students who drive must travel with their class on school outings and may not drive to community-based work sites.

Students are prohibited from giving other students rides without written permission (for each occasion) from the student's parents and the driver's parents. Students may not give other students rides when shuttling between campuses.

For student drivers under age 18, a parent/guardian note is required for each occasion of an early dismissal (eg. doctor's appointment) before leaving. A parent/guardian note is required upon arrival for each tardy.

All drivers are expected to follow all directional signs in the parking lot. This includes one-way, do not enter, and other signs. Speeding/reckless driving, failure to obey street signs, and loitering are violations of parking expectations, and may result in loss of parking privileges.

All students must be licensed and covered by insurance. The school is not responsible for drivers, automobiles or their contents. Loitering in the parking lot before and after school is prohibited. Students who park at school should enter the building when they arrive, and exit the building and parking lot, safely and promptly, at the end of the school day. Please wait until the dismissal line is complete before leaving. If traveling between campuses, students should follow current procedures and are expected to arrive on time. Students are not allowed to go to their cars during the school day. Any weapons, drugs, tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, or the like of any kind in the vehicle are prohibited. If found, the student will be referred for disciplinary action. Students parking in the school parking lot and designated areas are assumed to have knowledge of any such materials in their vehicle, per State Law.

Students are required to abide by the code of conduct as outlined in the Northstar Academy Student Family Handbook while in parking areas.

Student Name:

Driver's License #:

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name:

Primary Vehicle Make  
& Model:

Primary Vehicle Color:

Primary Vehicle License Plate State & #:

Secondary Vehicle  
Make & Model:

Secondary Vehicle Color:

Secondary Vehicle License Plate State & #:

By signing below, you agree to abide by the above expectations:

Student Signature:

Date:

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date:

# Northstar

## Permission to walk/bike to and/or from school alone

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_

The route to school is within safe walking distance yes      no

I consider the route to school to be a safe route yes      no

I have provided school with a map of my child's route to and from school yes      no

My student does not need to cross any busy/main roads yes      no

I have taught my student to cross safely yes      no

My student is aware of the potential dangers, including weather, regarding roads/traffic and how to avoid dangers and stay safe yes      no

My student understands and follows pedestrian crossing signs yes      no

My student understands stranger danger yes      no

My student knows what to do if they need help and in an emergency yes      no

My student will have a cell phone that is charged and knows how to access entry to our home yes      no

My student will have my number, the school number and an emergency contact on their phone yes      no

I acknowledge that there will be other risks yes      no

When walking home, my student will go straight home or to another location. Please list here: \_\_\_\_\_ yes      no

### Permission slip to WALK or BIKE to/from school:

Please check relevant boxes

- ☐ I have read and understand this policy on safeguarding my student walking/biking to school.
- ☐ I fully understand that it is my responsibility to ensure my student gets to and from school safely including getting to school on time. If circumstances change then I will communicate this with the school.
- ☐ I fully understand that if my student attends an extracurricular activity, they should always be collected by an adult.
- ☐ I have provided a map of the route to/from school.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Adult Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Northstar

### Considerations for the Use of Rideshare Services

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_

|   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| My student knows how to check the identity of a rideshare driver  | yes | no |
| I have provided the name of the rideshare company(ies) to school  | yes | no |
| I have a way to track my student's location/route.  | yes | no |
| My student understands 'stranger danger'  | yes | no |
| My student knows what to do if they need help   | yes | no |
| My student knows what to do in an emergency   | yes | no |
| My student will have a cell phone that is charged and knows how to access entry to our home   | yes | no |
| They will have my number, the school number and an emergency contact on their phone   | yes | no |
| I acknowledge that there will be other risks  | yes | no |
| If using commercial rideshare, payment information is preloaded into the phone (Northstar staff cannot assist with entering credit card information). | yes | no |

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#### Permission Slip to use Rideshare Apps: Please return to Northstar

**(parent/guardian signature required for students who are not their own guardian):**

Please check relevant boxes

- ☐ I have read and understand this policy on safeguarding my student using rideshare.
- ☐ I fully understand that it is my responsibility to ensure my student gets to and from school safely including getting to school on time. If circumstances change then I will communicate this with the school..
- ☐ I have provided the name of approved rideshare companies to school.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Adult Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Tutoring

Students who are in need of ongoing individualized instruction that cannot be provided at Northstar may hire outside professionals, at the family's expense, for tutorial help after the school day. Tutors working on the school campus must have permission from the Head of School. Northstar staff who are tutoring students must provide tutoring services on campus.

### Use of Images

Please be advised that in the normal course of operation, student and staff photographers take pictures of student activities and that these photographic and electronic images may appear in school publications and communications, such as our school yearbook, social media, school brochures, marketing materials, and the school website. A "Student Media Release and Consent" was provided during the registration process for your decision regarding consent to use your Student's Media Information.

### Vandalism/Property damage

Vandalism is the willful marring, defacing, or destruction of school property, including leased property and any employee's or student's property. Writing in books, on walls, taking apart technology equipment, or attempting to cause damage to school property and personal property of others is prohibited.

**Those students found to be responsible for any damage will be held accountable for the material and labor cost of all repairs or replacements. Other disciplinary measures may also be taken at the discretion of administration.**

### Visitors

While Northstar Academy and Career Center is a close-knit community, it is not considered an "open-campus." **While friends and families are always welcome, parents/guardians are requested to contact the Assistant Head of School if they would like to observe, visit or join their student for lunch.** During the course of the school year, many visitors including prospective families and students tour the school. The administration is very careful not to release names of students to visitors for any reason. If your student knows a visitor, we expect them to be polite and to inform you of the meeting the same evening. **ALL PERSONS (PARENTS, GUARDIANS, FAMILY MEMBERS, FRIENDS, ETC.) ENTERING THE BUILDING MUST SIGN IN AT THE FRONT DESK AND WEAR A VISITOR BADGE AT ALL TIMES WHILE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.**

Families seeking to have outside service providers or therapists observe at school should contact the IEP/IAP liaison to arrange a mutually agreeable time. This ensures coordination with the front desk for awareness and facilitates a smooth visitation process.

For safety reasons, we prohibit the delivery of lunches or other items from third-party providers such as DoorDash or UberEats to the school premises.

## Student life

### Celebration

Classroom celebrations are allowed. If students bring a celebratory snack or treat to school, they should bring enough for all their classmates and not exclude others. Notify the Family and Student Engagement Coordinator in advance so other arrangements can be made for students with food allergies. If private parties are scheduled outside of school, the invitations should not be delivered at school, and if possible, the entire class should be invited. Students are very aware and feelings are hurt when they are excluded.

### Clubs

Enrichment, cooperation, socialization and leadership training are strong aspects of a whole-child approach to education. Faculty may sponsor student clubs at the discretion of Administration. Families wishing to organize an after-school club please contact the Family and Student Engagement Coordinator.

### Dances

Northstar sponsors dances each year for students, including a Junior/Senior Prom in the spring. Behavioral guidelines for these dances should reflect the standards of conduct established by our school. A faculty chaperone has the authority to enforce the rules and remove any student from the dance if he/she feels the student's behavior is inappropriate.

- A casual dance will follow "non-uniform guidelines." For "semi-formal" events, the dress code will be communicated with the invitation.
- No excessive displays of affection will be allowed.
- Slam dancing, moshing, and other forms of inappropriate dancing are not allowed.

Once a student enters the dance, they are not allowed to leave the building unless they do not plan on returning. Families must come into the building to pick up their student. Any person suspected of using/having used an illegal substance, marijuana, or tobacco products will be asked to leave the school property, and the student's family will be notified.

### Dress Code/Appearance

Students are expected to dress appropriately throughout the academic school year. Clothing other than what is detailed in the dress code policy is not allowed. **Please make sure that all personal items are marked with the student's name.**

Northstar operates under the premise that school teaches the skills necessary for life after high school, whether that's the world of work or continued education. A student's dress and presentation reflect personal and school standards. Accordingly, we expect all students to come to school ready to work in a learning state of mind.

### Overall Guidelines for Dress

- Clothing should be clean and in good repair (no holes, fringe, or decorative alterations such as beads or cut collar), ride on the waist, and fit appropriately.
- Clothing should be opaque and cover all undergarments and midriff when sitting, standing, or moving. Students are active during the school day both in the classroom and on the worksite, attire should be appropriate for movement.
- Coats are strongly encouraged during especially cold weather. Heavy jackets/coats, lined flannel shirts, hooded sweatshirts, and fleeces (with or without sleeves) should be left in the student's backpack except when the temperature is below 50 degrees.
- Career Center students should wear shoes and clothes appropriate for their course (please refer to the syllabus for your student's course).

### **Daily Dress Code Requirements:**

- Solid color t-shirt, "polo" shirt (collared), turtleneck or button down. Shirts should have no graphics or text. Northstar branded t-shirts, "polo" shirts, and hoodies are permitted.
- Solid colored sweaters, hoodies, jackets, or sweatshirts without graphics or text.
- Neutral bottom including pants, shorts, or skirts that are solid colored with no holes and appropriate length. (**NO** jeans)
- All bottoms must be of good fit and length.
- Tennis-type shoes with socks (velcro allowed)
- All students are required to wear athletic shoes for physical education.

### **Relaxed Dress Code (Dress Down) Guidelines**

On relaxed dress code days (Fridays or special occasions as announced) students are allowed to wear jeans or shorts (weather permitting). Students are allowed to wear attire with graphics as long as the writing and/or images are school appropriate.

### **Prohibited Attire – All Students**

Students who are dressed inappropriately will not be allowed to sit with their class, attend field trips, or participate in athletic events.

### **Distractions must be kept to a minimum:**

- Distracting hair styles are not permitted. Fantasy/non-natural hair color is permitted on pieces or chunks of hair, but should not cover the entire head.
- Piercings and tattoos should not be distracting.

### **Unacceptable attire includes, but is not limited to:**

- Clothing depicting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sex, violence and other questionable material such as messages that negatively represent a religion, ethnicity, culture, gender, or people, or other offensive slogans/expressions that could cause disruption to the learning environment.
- Cut off or torn, ripped, or slashed clothing
- Excessively baggy/oversized clothing. Students may be asked to wear a belt as needed.
- Tight/form fitting or revealing apparel/clothing including above the waist

shirts.

- Clothing that is see through, revealing the midriff (while standing, sitting, or moving around the classroom), or resembles undergarments.
- Tops must be at least 2 inches wide at the shoulder.
- Shorts, dresses and skirts must be an appropriate length for movement as to not be revealing. Students may wear leggings or shorts under skirts or dresses.
- Sandals, flip flops, bedroom slippers, or shoes with wheels
- Sleepwear and beachwear (which includes bathing suits, trunks)
- Hats (on heads), hoods, or face masks (that cover more than the mouth and nose) indoors, unless required for religious or medical reasons
- Sunglasses (worn indoors), unless prescribed by a physician
- Accessories should be safe for learning and minimize distractions. Wallet chains, spiked jewelry, and items which could cause injury are prohibited.
- Clothing including bandanas suggestive of gang colors, designs or symbols.

The guidelines provided for dress code never outweigh the subjective judgment of the school administrators. The school reserves the right to evaluate a student on a daily basis, and the possibility exists that a student would be technically within guidelines and still be viewed as inappropriately dressed. Determination of the Dress Code will be at the discretion of the Head of School or designee.

Families must cooperate in seeing that students are appropriately attired. Students not in compliance with the dress code will be asked to obtain appropriate attire before attending classes. **Note that this may require a special trip to the school by the family.** Repeat offenders may be ineligible for “dress down” days.

### **Enrichment/School Sponsored Activities**

Participation in athletics or other extra curricular activities (e.g. yearbook or other clubs) can have a positive influence on a student’s mental, physical, and social development. Learning the basic skills of various sports and good sportsmanship is the basis for a lifelong participation in healthy physical activity.

Northstar encourages students to participate in team sports. Activities are open to all who wish to abide by team requirements, including: submitting a sports physical and signed contract, commitment to the team, attendance at all practices, an appropriate attitude, and a genuine desire to improve and practice.

Since we participate in an informal league, eligibility for participation is at the discretion of the coach and the league and under the guidelines established by the organization and in consultation with the administration. Our athletes learn good sportsmanship and the value of cooperative teamwork.

All Northstar Academy and Career Center instructional staff are First Aid and CPR trained. Therefore, all school sponsored activities, extra-curricular, sports, field trips, etc. will be supervised by a certified staff member. Northstar does not offer outdoor adventure activities.

### **Integrity**

Northstar students are expected to perform honestly throughout the school day. Students are expected to produce their own work and demonstrate respect for the belongings of others.

The actions below are not tolerated at Northstar:

1. **Cheating** – includes the actual giving, receiving, or use of any unauthorized aid or assistance.
2. **Falsification** – includes the verbal or written statement of any untruth, including the production of forgery or use of forged writing.
3. **Lying** – is communicating something that is not true.
4. **Plagiarism** – includes the copying of the language, structure, idea, and/or thought of another and representing it as one's own original work.
5. **Stealing** – includes acquiring another's possessions without right or permission. The possession of stolen property is considered theft.
6. **Unauthorized use of technology** – and information gained through its use without permission including the use of artificial intelligence (AI) or using computers or other technology equipment without permission from a teacher or administrator.

### **Lunch**

Students have the option of bringing their lunch to school or purchasing a catered lunch delivered to Northstar each day. Menus will be sent home for family completion each academic semester.

All students not buying lunch should bring a nutritious lunch. Students in K-5 also should pack a healthy snack. Please pack non-perishable food or use insulated containers since microwaves and refrigeration are not available. Please check your student's lunch to ensure that an abundance of sugar-laden foods are not included (especially after holidays, such as Valentine's). If your student forgets lunch, we will call you and ask that you bring your student lunch.

For safety reasons, Northstar prohibits the delivery of lunches from third-party providers such as DoorDash or UberEats to the school premises.

**\*\*Due to food allergies students are not allowed to share their lunch/food (including gum) with other students.**

### **Positive Behavior Program**

Each student works within a school-wide positive behavior support system and is expected to attempt class work and homework and follow the four basic-school Rules: follow instructions, use materials as intended, use appropriate words, voice volume and tone, and keep a safe body, hands and feet. Students will use a checklist to self-monitor at the end of each class whether they have followed these expectations. Following their own self-monitoring, their teacher will review with the student their observation about the student's behavior. By meeting or exceeding these expectations, students can earn a stamp in their planner in each class daily.

Stamps are counted on Thursdays at the end of the day and students with a predetermined number of points are rewarded with a weekly reward on Friday. Additionally, students who maintain these expectations throughout the quarter will be given the opportunity to earn larger rewards.

### **Physical Education (PE)**

The physical education program (including modified instruction) emphasizes the skills necessary for individual recreation and team sports. Our program emphasizes a healthy, active lifestyle and celebrates personal effort.

#### **PE Program — Grades K-5**

Students in the Lower School participate in physical education in the multi-purpose building and outside. The development of gross motor skills is very important. Children are exposed to a variety of activities and should dress appropriately. Students are required to wear tennis shoes and socks, and notes will be sent home if special clothing is needed.

#### **PE Program — Grades 6-10**

All students in grades 6-10 must participate in physical education. Students are exposed to a variety of activities and should dress appropriately. Students are required to wear tennis shoes and socks, and notes will be sent home if special clothing is needed.

### **Telephones and Cell Phones**

***Students are required to turn in cell phones and other electronics including electronic watches that can send / receive messages in the morning when they arrive.*** Northstar phones are not available to students for social calls. Students may use the front desk phone for necessary communication with families after permission has been granted. Emergency messages for students will be given to them in a timely fashion, trying not to interrupt class. Students may not text or use cell phones or electronic watches during school hours. Students may not use personal or school electronics to take or transmit recordings, pictures, or videos of themselves or other students.

Except in an emergency situation, neither students nor teachers will be called from class or study area to answer the telephone. Families who wish to leave a message for a student or teacher may call the receptionist who will forward it as soon as possible.

When instructionally appropriate, Career Center students carry their cell phones with them during the school day and while receiving employment support services.

#### **Career Center Cell Phone Use Guidelines:**

1. Student cell phones should be kept turned off and out of sight (in pocket, backpack, purse, or left in the vehicle of students who drive themselves). **Teachers may require students to turn their phones in until they are needed in individual classrooms.**

2. It is the student's responsibility to keep their phone charged. Students may bring charging cables to school, but should not expect to use school equipment to charge their devices.
3. Students may use phones for instructional purposes only when specifically directed by the teacher.
4. Apps should not be purchased at school on a student device. Students may "try out" apps on school devices. Staff may make recommendations of apps to families who then may choose to purchase and install on a student's phone.
5. Northstar's acceptable use policy applies to use of cell phones. Phones may not be used to make calls, text, send messages, or connect on social media during the school day. Students must have permission to use their cell phones for academic purposes through a signed Bring Your Own Device agreement.
6. Students who violate the cell phone guidelines, acceptable use policy (including on other devices), or other school rules will have this privilege revoked.
7. Cell phones that are used in violation of these guidelines will be confiscated by administration. For the first offense, the device will be returned to the student at the end of the day. For subsequent offenses, the device will only be returned to a parent or guardian (including in the case of adult students).
8. Cyberbullying and other forms of harassment using cell phones or social media are unprofessional and unacceptable at Northstar. Students who engage in this behavior outside of school may lose their cell phone privileges at school.
9. School administration may allow exceptions to cell phone use guidelines on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances.

### **Toys and Sports Equipment**

Northstar has a supply of fidgets, recess equipment and outdoor equipment. **Toys (including plushies), games, balls, skateboards and fishing rods must be left at home.** This policy is for safety reasons and to prevent hurt feelings should something be damaged, lost, or misplaced. Also, the items can be very distracting for the students in the school setting. If equipment is requested for P.E., (e.g., softball mitt), it must be marked with the student's name.

## **Behavior and Discipline**

### **Behavior and Discipline Overview**

Maintaining proper behavior and school discipline is essential to a safe and positive learning environment. Students are responsible for understanding the established rules of the school and for abiding by them in a cooperative manner. **Any conduct that interferes with the maintenance of a proper learning environment is considered a breach of discipline.**

Acts of behavior that are antagonistic to the welfare of other students, the staff, and/or Northstar, will not be tolerated. Disciplinary actions are determined primarily by the type of offense committed. Other factors, such as frequency of the offense and the age of the student, also are considered.

The disciplinary actions listed reflect a progressive disciplinary process; however, not all steps in the action process may be applied or appropriate in a given situation. Offenses of repetitive or more serious nature may result in discipline commensurate with the offense and may justify separation without reference to past reprimands.

Northstar understands that behaviors which occur may be related to the disability. While this will always be taken into consideration, the safety and welfare of the student and other students and staff are our foremost responsibility. Northstar is not a school for students who display serious emotional disability(ies) or harmful behaviors.

Most importantly, in order to ensure that all students attending Northstar Academy and Career Center have an opportunity to benefit from their education, the collaborative role of families is emphasized. Cooperation between school and families will reduce misunderstandings that can undermine student success in the educational process.

Strip searches and body cavity searches are prohibited at Northstar. Pat downs will only be conducted in an extreme situation involving prohibited dangerous contraband. In such a rare instance, pat downs will only be conducted by a member of the administrative team (authorized personnel) and will be of the same gender as the student being searched. Pat downs shall be conducted with dignity and in the presence of at least one witness.

### **Conduct and Behavioral Expectations**

Northstar's Head of School holds the responsibility for providing a safe and secure environment for all students who come to our school. Many of our students have come from environments in which they have been teased, picked on, and ridiculed, while others come with different attitudes. It is important that each student feels safe and secure. There are clear expectations for appropriate behavior. Violations of school rules will lead to direct and immediate consequences.

Northstar aims to develop each student's potential for learning, foster positive interpersonal relationships, and nurture sound decision making. To accomplish these goals, a positive and orderly environment is essential. We expect students, families, and staff to be partners in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere where every individual is valued and respected.

Northstar faculty do not physically restrain students unless in an emergency situation for safety reasons. Northstar does not use time out rooms or seclusion for behavioral reasons. Students requiring time outs, multiple interventions or restraint as a last resort, may be discharged with recommendations for a more appropriate

environment as their behavioral needs cannot be met by Northstar.

Students are subject to school jurisdiction and standards whenever they are on the school grounds for academics or extracurricular activities, and when they attend any school-sponsored trip or activity, regardless of location.

Students are expected to respect school property at all times, to be considerate of others, and to conduct themselves with honor and honesty. Specific regulations are addressed under pertinent topic headings; other general rules designed to create a respectful atmosphere are:

- I will follow instructions
- I will use materials as intended
- I will use appropriate words, voice volume and tone
- I will keep a safe body, hands and feet.

If a student violates these rules, teachers will promptly implement the discipline policy in order to promote maximum use of classroom instruction time.

**Please discuss these standards of behavior and their consequences with your student.**

1. **We are courteous and kind to others at all times.** This means that everyone, student or adult, is allowed to work without disruption in the classroom and elsewhere. By implication there are classroom voices, courteous listening, and on-task behavior. **There will be no name calling, swearing, inappropriate language, rudeness, or “put-downs.”** Verbal harassment is treated with the same seriousness as physical harassment. Fighting, hitting, kicking, biting, etc. will not be allowed.

Any physical aggression, fighting, or repeated rudeness will result in an in-school suspension. Repeated infractions may result in out-of-school suspension or dismissal.

2. **We have respect for the person and property of others.** Students are taught to care for school equipment and materials. They are expected to pay for any property that has been defaced or lost.
3. **Parents help by reinforcing self-discipline and teaching problem-solving skills.** An essential component of high self-esteem and resilience is the belief that one has some control over what is occurring. To acquire this attitude of ownership, students need experiences in which they can learn and apply decision-making and problem-solving skills. This can be accomplished by involving students in discussions of how best to solve particular problems, or enlisting their input in the development of rules and consequences that affect their lives at home and at school.

### **Consequences**

Consequences for inappropriate conduct and behavior are noted below, in order

from the least to the most severe consequences. A teacher/administrator may use discretion as to what consequences are appropriate in a given situation.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Verbal reprimand  | 8. In-school suspension                      |
| 2. Removal from the classroom                              | 9. Suspension from school-related activities |
| 3. Lunch Detention   | 10. Out-of-school suspension                 |
| 4. In-School Detention ( <i>after 3 lunch detentions</i> ) | 11. Referral to local agencies               |
| 5. Conference  | 12. Long-term suspension                     |
| 6. Behavior contract                                       | 13. Expulsion                                |
| 7. Head of School/teacher/family conference                |  |

| <b><u>LEVEL FOUR OFFENSES</u></b>   | <b>Consequences</b>  |
|---|--|
| <p>Behaviors that are intended to, or have the potential to, cause another individual physical or mental harm and or are illegal. These behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Possession or use of weapons including fire arms or explosive devices</li> <li>2. Intimidation, extortion, threats, repeated harassment (Middle and Upper School)</li> <li>3. Felony theft</li> <li>4. Fighting, assault, or battery of any kind</li> <li>5. Hitting, biting, kicking with intent to cause physical harm</li> <li>6. Gross disrespect toward an adult or student (cursing, name calling, etc.)</li> <li>7. Possession, sale and/or use of alcohol, tobacco, vapes marijuana, and/or drugs</li> <li>8. Sexual harassment or sexual assault of any kind</li> <li>9. Arson</li> <li>10. False alarms (fire and bomb threats)</li> <li>11. Criminal vandalism</li> <li>12. Leaving school grounds without permission</li> <li>13. Inappropriate use of a motor vehicle</li> <li>14. Gambling</li> <li>15. Defamation, harassment, libel or slander of any kind, including information placed on social media, internet or e-mail.</li> </ol> | <p><b>Minimum</b><br/>Office referral with "out-of- school suspension," days to be determined</p> <p><b>Maximum</b><br/>Expulsion and/or law enforcement involvement</p> |

| <b><u>LEVEL THREE OFFENSES</u></b>  | <b>Consequences</b>  |
|---|--|
| <p>Behaviors that occur outside the classroom, not intended to cause physical or psychological harm, and are not illegal (does not meet the definition of Level 4). These behaviors may include, but are not limited to the</p> | <p><b>Minimum</b><br/>Verbal reprimand.</p> <p><b>Maximum</b><br/>Out of school suspension</p> |

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <p>following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intimidation (Lower school level)</li> <li>2. Cheating</li> <li>3. Disruptive behaviors in the hallway, lunch area, at school-sponsored activities before- or after-school activity</li> <li>4. Skipping class</li> <li>5. Truancy</li> <li>6. Being in the hallway without a pass</li> <li>7. Inappropriate display of affection</li> <li>8. Inappropriate literature (drawings, photos, text which could be offensive to others, including computerized materials)</li> <li>9. Habitual dress code violations</li> <li>10. Inappropriate use of equipment (e.g., technology)</li> <li>11. Disrespect or defiance toward an adult or student</li> </ol> | <p>– days to be determined.</p> |
|--|---------------------------------|

| <b><u>LEVEL TWO OFFENSES</u></b>  | <b>Consequences</b>  |
|---|--|
| <p>Behaviors occur in the classroom and disrupt the learning of other students. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Talking at inappropriate times</li> <li>2. Blurting out</li> <li>3. Horseplay</li> <li>4. Disturbing another student in any way</li> <li>5. Being out of seat without permission</li> <li>6. Not following directions</li> </ol> | <p><b>Minimum</b><br/>Verbal reprimand.</p> <p><b>Maximum</b><br/>Removal from the classroom/ conference with families and Administration.</p> |

| <b><u>LEVEL ONE OFFENSES</u></b>  | <b>Consequences</b>   |
|---|---|
| <p>Behaviors that occur in the classroom and interfere only with the learning of the student who demonstrates the behavior. Such behaviors can usually be corrected without disrupting the learning of others, and the teacher should not stop the learning activity to correct the behavior. These behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not having appropriate equipment, supplies, materials</li> <li>2. Sleeping</li> <li>3. Being off task, but not disrupting others</li> <li>4. Failing to turn in homework/failing to complete assignments</li> <li>5. Failing to participate or dress out for Physical</li> </ol> | <p><b>Minimum</b><br/>Verbal reprimand.</p> <p><b>Maximum</b><br/>Removal from the classroom/ family contact if habitual.</p> |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Education                |  |
| 6. Tardiness             |  |
| 7. Dress code violations |  |

### **Disruptive Behavior**

1. Any event, action, or statement that relies on chance for the monetary advantage of one participant at the expense of another, is gambling. This violation includes exchanging items of value as well as currency, and extends to keeping score for a later settlement. Gambling is not allowed on school grounds or any school functions on or off campus.
2. The possession of literature or illustrations which are obscene, violent, inappropriate, or significantly disruptive to the educational process, is prohibited.
3. The use of any type of unauthorized electronic or mechanical device is prohibited during the school day. This includes but is not limited to, cellular phones, electronic watches, handheld game devices, laser pointers, etc., and the representation thereof. Improper use of these items will result in their confiscation by the administration, where they will remain for the duration of the school year.
4. Cursing, threatening, or using abusive language or remarks intended to demean a person, including language related to race, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or intellectual ability, will not be tolerated. This includes action, displays, or written material of an obscene, violent, or inappropriate nature. Wearing of inappropriate jewelry that conveys violent or sexually suggestive messages, offensive statements towards school personnel and/or students, or vulgar language is prohibited.
5. Failure to appropriately respond to written or verbal directions given by school personnel, chaperones, or volunteers is considered insubordination.
6. Students wishing to sell goods to staff, such as scout fundraisers, must obtain prior approval from school administration and the sale must be conducted in accordance with school policies and guidelines. The selling of items between peers within the school premises is strictly prohibited. This violation includes exchanging items of value as well as currency, and extends to keeping score for a later settlement. Any unauthorized selling or distribution of items is not permitted and may result in disciplinary action.

### **Fighting/Assaults and Threats**

1. Fighting involves two or more parties in a conflict when they are striking each other for the purpose of causing harm or injury. This action is extended to mutual shoving, wrestling, or other aggressive actions which may result in danger, harm, or injury to a party, bystander, or school property.
2. Actions, comments, or written messages intended to cause others to fight or which may result in a fight is prohibited.
3. Intentionally hitting, shoving, scratching, biting, kicking, blocking the passage of, or throwing objects at a student is prohibited.
4. Conveying by gestures, notes, or verbal comments the intent to cause bodily

injury or to deprive a student of their rights is prohibited.

5. Any physical aggression directed toward any employee of Northstar is not allowed and will result in an immediate recommendation of expulsion.
6. Any inappropriate behavior which is of a sexual nature including, but not limited to touching of sensitive and private areas of a person's body is not allowed.
7. Unsafe conduct which endangers either oneself or others is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to bullying, teasing, or other acts of intimidation.

### **Bullying/Harassment Policy**

The American Psychological Association defines bullying as persistent threatening and aggressive physical behavior or verbal abuse directed toward other people, especially those who are younger, smaller, weaker, or in some other situation of relative disadvantage. Cyberbullying is verbally threatening or harassing behavior conducted through such electronic technology as cell phones, e-mail, and text messaging (from [APA Dictionary of Psychology](#)).

Northstar Academy and Career Center is a community which recognizes individual differences in sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, socioeconomic class, religion, and ability, and other human differences. Discrimination against a person based on these differences is a violation of federal and state law (culture, race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, and sexual orientation). In order to provide a positive environment for the mutual respect of one another, certain guidelines for appropriate behavior need to be recognized by each student.

Northstar prohibits any and all harassment and bullying based on an individual's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Any incident or complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be given prompt attention, including investigating the incident and taking appropriate corrective action, by the school administrator.

Inappropriate behavior, either verbal or physical, directed towards a person which disregards their feelings and is demeaning. It includes unwelcome physical advances, unwarranted verbal remarks, and derogatory or discriminatory statements.

#### **Cyberbullying**

The intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:

- Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
- Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
- Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
- Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
- Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a

group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.

- Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying.

**If a student feels they are being harassed, the student is encouraged to take the following steps.**

1. Let the offending person or group know that you want the behavior to stop. Firmly say "NO" or tell them to "STOP." Directly look at them with a straight face and give them a clear message about how you feel.
2. Keep a record about when, how, and by whom you were mistreated. Evidence of abuse is important and may include written communication, witnesses, and direct quotes.
3. Report the facts of the incident immediately to a teacher or administrator.
4. The family should also promptly contact the appropriate administrator, Head of School, or teacher.

Students must not engage in defamation, harassment, libel or slander of any kind. This includes information placed on non-school property, such as social media, internet or e-mail.

Personal Harassment

Personal harassment is the verbal or physical abuse of any member of the school community. Physical abuse is injury that is intentionally inflicted on another. Verbal or emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to another that results in an observable and material impairment in another's growth, development or psychological functioning. Personal harassment may easily be identified as acts of verbal or physical abuse, or it may take on more subtle yet equally damaging acts, such as rumor mongering, stereotyping, or abusive shunning.

Racial/Ethnic Harassment

Racial/ethnic harassment is any abuse—physical, written, or verbal (including "humor")—directed towards an individual or group on the basis of race or ethnic heritage. Racial/ethnic harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Demeaning graffiti
2. Epithets based on race or ethnicity
3. Racially/ethnically stereotyped remarks or "humor"
4. Insensitive comments in or out of class

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is illegal\* and is defined, in part, as unwelcome and unwanted sexual advances of a physical or verbal nature directed at another person. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Coerced sexual relations (rape)
2. Uninvited pressure for sexual activity—real or implied
3. Obscene, insensitive, stereotypical, or suggestive remarks, including jokes, insults, or verbal remarks of a sexual nature. This would encompass sexual comments about a person's clothing, body, or behavior.
4. Unnecessary touching in any form
5. Display of explicit, offensive, or demeaning materials, including photographs, inappropriate written communication.
6. Leering at a person's body
7. Sexual abuse is any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between a student and an adult or between two students. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the desires of the adult or the other student.

### Neglect

Neglect is the failure to provide for a student's basic needs or failure to protect a student from harm.

### **Nonviolent Crisis Intervention**

The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention program is a safe, non-harmful behavior management system designed to help service professionals provide for the best possible CARE, WELFARE, SAFETY and SECURITY for all individuals. The training provides nonverbal and verbal techniques used to de-escalate behaviors and prevent acting out behaviors. Physical interventions are used only as a last resort when the acting-out student is a danger to self or others. If trained staff are required to use physical restraint with a student the administrator in charge will determine if there is a need to call for assistance from local law enforcement. If necessary, a police report will be filed.

### **Other Serious Offenses**

The following conduct is considered a serious offense at Northstar. Involvement with any of the following could result in suspension or expulsion:

1. Disrespect toward faculty or other adults
2. Profanity, obscenity, lying, stealing, cheating, and fighting
3. Possession or use of tobacco, vape, alcohol, marijuana, or drugs
4. Possession of weapons
5. Deliberate defacing of textbooks, desks, or other items
6. Tampering with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or other school property
7. Possession of and/or accessing pornographic material
8. Sending viruses or otherwise damaging the school network
9. Derogatory actions/comments of a sexual or racial nature directed towards another person
10. Inappropriate behavior at assemblies and/or field trips
11. Inappropriate sexual behavior.

### **Suspension & Dismissal**

When the alleged misconduct becomes known, the Head of School will inform the student of the intention to suspend, the reasons for, and duration of the intended suspension.

Within twenty-four hours, the Head of School will notify the parent(s)/legal guardian/LEA of the student of the suspension, the reasons, durations, and whether the suspension will be served at school or out of school. Such notice may be oral or written. Reasons for suspension will be recorded in the student's school files. A conference may be required before returning to school.

Northstar adheres to local education agency's policies and procedures as it pertains to Manifestation Determination hearings.

### **Dismissal**

Prior to any dismissal, the Head/Assistant Head of School will notify the parent/guardian of the intention to dismiss. This notice will include the reasons for the dismissal before it takes effect. Such notice may be oral or written. If a meeting is requested, the time and place will be scheduled immediately and the meeting must take place quickly. Northstar may require that the student be kept home until the meeting has occurred. Reasons and circumstances will be recorded in the student's school files.

## **Health and Safety**

### **Clinic**

Northstar has in place certain procedures and forms for communicating with parents/guardians and faculty, regarding student health issues. Health information must be communicated to the clinic annually for completion regarding a student's current health. The nurse/clinic attendant will follow-up with all parents/guardians monthly regarding any changes. Any noted changes will be communicated to appropriate staff members. Families requesting feedback on medically fragile students should contact that student's IEP / IAP Liaison to complete the necessary paperwork for requested feedback. All other medical/health issues should be directed to the nurse/clinic attendant or an Administrator.

If a student has a medical condition requiring attention during the day, the parent/guardian will complete the Medical Consultation Form to allow the administration and/or nurse/clinic attendant to consult with the medical provider. The parent/guardian agrees to pay all costs incurred for the consultation and provide any needed equipment, medication and supplies.

Students should not be in school when ill and/or have the following:

- A fever of 100 degrees or greater before taking a fever-reducing medication.
- Vomiting or diarrhea because of illness.
- An unknown rash or possible contagious condition.

- Are unable to focus due to: pain, chronic health condition and acute illness.
- Flu-like illness (with or without fever) – headache, fatigue, cough, aches, weakness and sore throat.

Please be prompt when picking up your ill or injured student in order to minimize his or her chance of spreading or acquiring a contagious illness.

A student should be free of symptoms of contagious disease (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, suspicious rash, etc.) for 24 hours before returning to school.

### **Child Abuse**

Child abuse is strongly forbidden and shall be investigated thoroughly and confidentially. Any faculty member who witnesses an incident of child abuse or receives a report of child abuse is obligated to report it to the Head of School immediately. Northstar prohibits the neglect, abuse or mistreatment of all students and complies with all state and local laws and regulations in regard to abuse such as mandatory reporting to Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services.

### **Concussion**

A concussion is defined by the 5th International Conference on Concussion in Sports (2016) as a traumatic brain injury induced by biomechanical forces. Several common features that may be utilized in defining the nature of a concussive head injury include:

- A concussion may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck, or elsewhere on the body with an "impulsive" force transmitted to the head.
- A concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurologic function that resolves spontaneously. However, in some cases, symptoms and signs may evolve over a number of minutes to hours.
- A concussion may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute signs and symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than a structural injury and, as such, no abnormality is seen on standard structural neuroimaging studies.
- A concussion results in a wide range of signs and symptoms that may or may not involve loss of consciousness. Resolution of the signs and symptoms typically follows a sequential course. However, in some cases symptoms may be prolonged.
- The signs and symptoms cannot be explained by drug, alcohol or medication use, other injuries (e.g., cervical injuries, peripheral vestibular dysfunction), or other comorbidities (e.g., psychological factors or coexisting medical conditions).

Appropriate licensed health care provider means a physician (i.e., M.D., D.O.), physician assistant, or athletic trainer licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine; a neuropsychologist licensed by the Board of Psychology; a physical therapist licensed by the Virginia Board of Physical Therapy; or a nurse practitioner licensed by the Virginia State Board of Nursing.

Cognitive rest describes limiting cognitive activities (e.g., reading, writing, video games, homework) below the level that triggers the onset of symptoms in the days following a concussion.

Return-to-learn protocol describes the individualized progressive stepwise plan for supporting learning while the student recovers from a brain injury (i.e., concussion) that gradually allows the student to participate in classroom activities and learn without worsening symptoms and potentially delaying healing.

Return-to-activity describes the gradual, stepwise reintroduction of physical activities without return of symptoms for students in the school environment and may include walking through the halls, recess, and participation in classes requiring physical activity (e.g., show choir, dance, physical education), but does not include participation in school-sponsored interscholastic athletics.

Return-to-play describes a gradual, stepwise increase in physical demands without return of symptoms for students participating in a sports program.

Non-interscholastic youth sports program describes a program organized for recreational athletic competition or recreational athletic instruction for youth that does not fall within the jurisdiction of the school.

Following a concussion, students may have difficulty in school, which could last from days to months. Families should work with the case manager, school nurse and the student's doctor to determine appropriate accommodations for the school environment based on the individual needs of the student. It is expected that the teachers will provide appropriate accommodations for the student.

Because concussion symptoms usually worsen with the increased cognitive strain of school, returning to school is not recommended until the symptoms are mild or absent at rest. Return to school should be done as a progression of gradually increasing periods of time. When necessary, accommodations should be made to assist the student in completing homework, tests, and/or projects. The treating physician in consultation with the school nurse will determine when the student can resume a full academic workload. The student may require rest periods if the symptoms become worse throughout the day. Avoidance of areas or times of extreme noise or overstimulation should be encouraged.

Because the concussed individual may appear normal, it is important that all school faculty understand the effects of a concussion as well as the management concerns. Typically teachers are the first to notice behavioral changes, therefore are a vital part of the progression back to normal daily activity. Faculty should notify the school nurse and family of any noted changes.

### **Contraband Items**

Any sharp object (such as a knife, razor, cutting tool, etc.), any item which could be used as a potential weapon, fire, or explosive (such as a lighter, match, bullet, BB,

firecracker, gun, etc.), or any projectile (such as a slingshot, handmade shooting device, etc.) is not allowed in the possession of students on the school premises or on school trips.

### **Contingency Plan**

Northstar has established a plan to address unforeseen crises should they arise. In the event that circumstances require an evacuation from the school premises, students and staff will relocate to a designated location to provide safety and will provide communication as appropriate. Please note that the ConnectED automated system will be used in the event of a loss of utilities. Northstar instructional staff have been trained in CPR and emergency First Aid.

\*NOTE: Contingency Plan Addendum.

### **Crisis Plan**

Northstar maintains a Crisis Plan in every room on campus. Faculty and staff are trained annually in the use of the Crisis Manual. Northstar's Policy Manual is updated and approved annually by the Board of Directors. A copy of the Policy Manual is maintained on the shared drive of the computer network for immediate access by faculty and staff. A paper copy of the Policy Manual will be provided upon request.

### **Eating Disorders**

Eating disorders are behavioral concerns that can be mild or severe, and are often linked to distressing emotions. These emotions can cause a very unhealthy relationship with food. While eating disorders can happen at any age and to any gender, it is more common in teens and young adults. Talking to your student about their eating habits is important. If at any time you are concerned about them, please discuss your concerns with their doctor. If left untreated, eating disorders can lead to serious health issues, such as Type II diabetes, or extreme thinness, very dry skin and loss of muscle mass. [Use this link](#) to find additional information from the Mayo Clinic.

### **Medication**

If your physician decides it is necessary for your student to receive medication including Cannabidiol (CBD) during the school day, specific instructions must accompany the medication. The nurse/clinic attendant will administer medication. At **NO** time should the student take medication on their own. All medication will be secured in the nurse/clinic attendant's office. **A completed medication form must be on file for all over-the-counter medication and/or prescription medication. parent/ guardians must bring medication to school. at no time should a student have medications on school grounds. this includes over-the-counter medication.**

The medication authorization form is available from the office or on the website. The following guidelines must be followed:

1. The bottle must have the student's name clearly marked.
2. The current correct dosage must be clearly marked
3. The medication must be in a prescription bottle.
4. Medication will not be given unless all paperwork is completed.
5. Changes in long-term medications require a new written order by the physician.

6. Faxed orders are permitted.

**NON-PRESCRIPTION (OVER-THE-COUNTER) MEDICATIONS** such as aspirin, cough syrup, Tylenol, cold medicine, Benadryl, or CBD products must also have a form signed by the parent/guardian.

1. The physician may either complete and sign the medication form, or write a prescription to label the medication.
2. The parent/guardian must fill out the top of the medication form.
3. If the over-the-counter medication is not prescription labeled, the parent/guardian must label the medication. Please remember that this is a service provided by Northstar but determined by state law and the above requirements must be followed.

### **Pandemic**

In the event of a pandemic event, the administrator or designee, will contact the local health department for guidance. The students and staff will be instructed by the nurse/clinic attendant on the importance of hand washing, coughing/sneezing into the elbow, using tissues and disinfecting areas of use. Students and staff will be monitored by the nurse/clinic attendant for signs and symptoms. If present, the student/staff member will be sent home with information on when they may return to school. They will be separated from others and given a mask to wear. Communication will be sent to the families via email on recommendations for students attending school during this event. The custodial staff will disinfect and sanitize all surfaces commonly touched (phones, door handles, desks, table tops, water fountains etc). The custodian will work with IT/technology teacher on the best way to disinfect electronic devices. If a student is absent for an extended period of time, the student will be provided work (digitally and/or sent home). After the event, the nurse/clinic attendant will continue to monitor for illness. A “return to learning” program will be initiated to help students get back on track and counseling will be provided as needed.

The Head of School shall immediately report any unusual occurrences of infection or contagious diseases, epidemic outbreaks, poisoning or other occurrences (such as mumps, head lice, scabies and bed bugs) which present a direct threat to the welfare, safety or health of any student, faculty, or staff to the licensure office, local health authorities and the student’s family.

Instances of chronic communicable diseases among Northstar staff will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the staff member currently poses a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves and/or others in continuing to perform essential job functions, with or without reasonable accommodations, and whether that staff member should be permitted to continue working at the school without restrictions, work under specified restrictions and conditions, or be excluded from school.

### **Safety**

During curricular activities, teachers adhere to the following safety plan. This plan applies to all curricular activities that could pose a risk to students including but not

limited to vocational education.

#### Safety Plan

1. Prior to using any equipment or substances that could pose a risk to students (e.g. tools, chemicals, heated surfaces, etc.), students first receive instruction in the associated risks. Students must demonstrate comprehension of both risks and procedures to remain safe before engaging in high-risk activities. Students may demonstrate their comprehension verbally, in writing, or with gestures in accordance with their learning needs.
2. Students must be closely supervised during any instructional activity that involves significant risk for students. Teachers may make arrangements for additional supervision before these activities.
3. Students will learn to identify and will use appropriate safety equipment such as gloves, masks, safety glasses, and weight belts.
4. Students will identify and will use appropriate safety procedures such as hand-washing, maintaining appropriate body space/distance, asking for help, and lifting techniques.
5. The school will maintain an inventory of necessary safety equipment and will check the items for proper functioning before use. The school will periodically check equipment used for instruction for safety and proper functioning.
6. Signs concerning critical safety hazards and procedures will be posted in critical locations.

**Instructional staff members will be regularly trained in emergency procedures and will have access to First Aid supplies in the classroom.**

#### **School Counselor**

School counselors are uniquely trained as school-based mental health providers to deliver school counseling programs and services to support the academic achievement, social and emotional development, and college- and career-readiness of every student. In addition, school counselors provide mental health awareness, early identification and short-term intervention, as well as crisis and referral services to students and their families. School counselors help make school communities a safe and respectful place to learn and grow.

School counselors do not provide therapy. Although we are highly trained, we are not able to diagnose or treat mental illness as a therapist would in a private practice or outside agency. If a student needs long-term, intensive services, school counselors can refer them to a therapist in the community who can help.

#### **PARENTAL NOTIFICATION:**

Please review the school counseling link below for student participation. Parents may opt-out their child(ren) from personal/social counseling. Complete and return this form only if you DO NOT want your child to participate in social emotional components of the school counseling program. A Comprehensive School Counseling Program is designed to meet the needs of all students and to be inclusive, preventive,

and developmental in nature.

### SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES OPT-OUT FORM

#### **Staff Training**

Northstar Academy and Career Center will have adequate faculty/staff who are trained in CPR, First Aid, Epi-Pen and AED procedures on campus during school hours and while out on school sponsored activities.

#### **Student Accidents**

Northstar assumes no financial responsibility for medical expenses resulting from injury or medical emergency suffered by a student at the school or while involved in a school-sponsored activity. Any accident should be reported to the nurse/clinic attendant who will then report it to the Head of School. Families will be notified immediately. A written report will be maintained on file.

#### **Substances – Unlawful**

Virginia Law prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages and marijuana by persons under the age of 21 and prohibits the consumption of illegal drugs by all persons, regardless of age. Criminal sanctions apply to any transactions involving alcohol and other drugs, and driving while under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or certain other drugs (illegal or not). These laws recognize, among other things, the social and health hazards from substance abuse and the devastation caused by combining drinking and driving.

Northstar agrees with the public policy embodied in these laws and is unequivocally committed to supporting them, both on and off campus. The school reiterates its strong opposition to the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, vapes, marijuana, and drugs at parties whether or not they are Northstar functions.

Northstar recognizes that the primary responsibility for a student's off-campus activities rests with the student and the family. It is not the school's intention to intervene in that relationship. Northstar does, however, encourage and support a commitment to social activities that conform to the law.

#### **Work Experiences**

Many of our students gain their first work experiences working while at Northstar Academy and Career Center. These experiences may be as part of a class' curriculum or a social activity. Whenever students work at Northstar, these work experiences are designed to be components of the student's instructional program and serve to help the student make progress toward educational goals. Northstar Academy and Career Center does not use student labor for the benefit of itself as an institution. All experiences involving student work maintain compliance with Child Labor Laws.

# Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

## Parents' Rights

Parents/guardians have the right to:

- Request to arrange a time to examine their student's data notebook and student records including clinic record.
- Request a time to meet with their student's teacher or other Northstar employees interacting with their student at school
- Be notified when medical services are being offered to their student.
- Be notified if their student has been involved in a behavioral incident (victim or perpetrator) or broken school rules.
- Expect an educational environment that is safe for their student.
- Expect an educational environment that respects their religious freedoms and beliefs.
- Decline involvement in school fundraising activities.
- Be notified when their student will be leaving campus for field trips, work internships or community based instruction.
- Be notified if their student is absent from school or classes.
- Have the opportunity to volunteer at school sponsored events.
- Receive written notice and have the option to opt-out of instruction on topics such as sex education and sexual orientation.
- Additional rights include those spelled out in the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education "Parental Rights in Special Education".

## Family Responsibilities

Families expect quality education from Northstar and in order to provide that quality, Northstar asks the following from families:

1. **Prompt delivery and pick-up.**

School starts promptly at 7:50 a.m. and is dismissed at 3:05 p.m. **Students should arrive no earlier than 7:30 a.m. and should be picked up no later than fifteen minutes after dismissal.** Students work hard all day; they are tired by dismissal time, making prompt pick up important. Carpool arrangements are the responsibility of families involved. School personnel must be informed in writing of changes.

2. **Send your student to school well rested.**

A student with learning differences often has difficulty "tuning in" and paying attention. Those difficulties are compounded when the student is not well rested, sometimes leading to increased educational *and/or behavioral problems. When a student is tired, they are more likely to respond impulsively, strike out at imagined wrongs, quarrel, and misbehave. Teachers need well-rested, cooperative students to provide the quality education expected of Northstar Academy and Career Center.*

3. **Provide your student with a balanced, nutritious diet – including breakfast.**

A student is better able to concentrate and learn if they follow a proper diet. A

good breakfast and pleasant morning are essential to beginning a productive school day, and a nutritious lunch (and mid-day snack for younger students) helps them maintain attention through the day. Check with your student to determine the right amount of food they require, and monitor changing needs throughout the year.

**4. Encourage regular student attendance.**

Students with learning differences lose more than one day's learning when their routine is interrupted. Consistently arriving late or leaving school early affects students's progress and growth. They also miss the opportunity to socialize with their friends, and then play "catch up" all day, which often leads to disruption in class and frustration. Every effort should be made to be on time. If a student arrives late, they must check in at the front desk before being admitted to the classroom. If they must pick up a student early, they must come to the front desk. A student will not be released directly to families from the classroom, lunch, or recess. The receptionist will call a student for early dismissal. These policies are designed to ensure the safety of all students.

- 5. Cooperation in setting and monitoring a nightly homework and silent reading time.** Northstar requires each student to read at home each night to strengthen their skills. Occasionally there also will be special projects that will require your help. Homework assignments are carefully planned to enhance skills, but because the process for learning is as important as the product, outside work is limited. Review and initial the daily homework log in the Student Agenda book each night.

**6. Pay tuition promptly.**

Northstar is a non-profit organization that maintains the lowest possible tuition. Payments must be paid on time in order for your student's continued enrollment. Arrangements for exceptions must be made with the Director of Finance and Operations.

**7. Communicate with the school regarding any medical, educational counseling, or special services your student is receiving.**

In this interdisciplinary field, close communication and exchange of information between the professionals involved is imperative, allowing for better service to your student.

**8. Adhere to oral medication policy.**

Medication to be administered at school must be accompanied by a completed authorization form that is signed by the parent/guardian. This applies to prescription as well as over-the-counter medications. Please notify the Nurse / Clinic Attendance if your student is using special medications, even those that are not administered at school. Also please refill prescriptions promptly so that there is no lapse in administration at school.

**9. Maintain realistic expectations for your student.**

Your student needs to feel that they are successful in your eyes.

10. **Contribute your time and talents to Northstar.**

We encourage you to take advantage of all that Northstar has to offer students and their families. There are many volunteer opportunities to get involved as a chaperone, club sponsor, library aide, fundraiser, SCOPE (Northstar's parent group) and more. Please contact Administration for more information.

11. **We encourage families to assist with field trips, special events, and in the library.** Northstar is grateful for family involvement. Younger siblings, particularly those of preschool age, should not attend these functions whenever possible.

12. **All students and teachers work to help keep the school building and grounds clean during the school year.** In addition to the daily custodial service provided by the school, students, families and teachers may take on special projects from time to time to clean, maintain, and improve our school environment.

### **SCOPE**

SCOPE is Northstar's family organized volunteer group. It is a way for families to be actively involved with our school. In coordination with school administration, SCOPE plans, supports, and implements activities for our students, staff, and families in order to bring fun events on campus.

## **Financial Policies and Procedures**

### **Business Office Procedures**

Any inquiries concerning tuition, scholarship, fees, account balances, etc. should be directed to the Director of Finance. No student will be allowed to begin school unless all previous financial obligations to the school have been paid in full/met. Students will not be permitted to begin school unless the first payment of the selected payment options has been made.

Cooperation in making payments on time is expected and appreciated because we count on tuition payments to meet our obligations.

#### **Business Office - Hours of Operation**

Regular School Year: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. or at the discretion of the Director of Finance.

Summer: Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

#### **Financial Assistance**

Applications are available for scholarships. A limited number are available, and awards are based on need. Scholarship recipients are determined by the scholarship committee, which includes the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Director of Admissions, and other appointed members. Students who receive scholarships from the school are not eligible for any other tuition discount. Students

who have received financial assistance/scholarships must display upstanding school citizenship including good behavior and grades equivalent to ability level.

#### Student Accounts

The business office maintains financial records for each student. Questions regarding student accounts and other financial matters should be directed to this office.

**Students' grades, comments, transcripts, or diplomas cannot be released until accounts are paid in full. Students whose accounts are in arrears may not be allowed to attend school.**

#### Tuition

Annual tuition at Northstar varies based on grade level and enrollment date. Northstar updates its Private Tuition Rate sheet annually containing student enrollment fees, book & supplies costs, Tuition Reimbursement fees and options as well as payment options. The Private Tuition Rate sheet is included with the re-enrollment contract, in the admission packets and available upon request anytime from the Business or Admissions offices.

There is no blanket ruling concerning tuition as a Federal Income Tax deduction. Tuition that is paid by another person specifically for the use of a specific student is NOT considered a donation to the school and is NOT tax deductible. If you have questions, please consult your tax advisor.

Inquiries regarding tuition, financial assistance, fees, account balance, etc. should be directed to the Director of Finance.

#### Tuition Refund

In accepting a student for enrollment, Northstar assumes expenses which are not reduced by the student's withdrawal during the school year. For this reason the school cannot refund full tuition or cancel **unpaid obligations when a student is absent, withdrawn, or dismissed for any reason except as provided by Virginia law.**

#### Tuition Payment Options

Outlined below are the available options for tuition payment. Cooperation in making your payments on time will be much appreciated since we count on your payments to meet our obligations. Once the payment is received for the agreed upon payment option, your student may begin school. There are two options available.

Payment plans are set up through the electronic FACTS Tuition Management System.

- A. Payment in full by August 1: Deposit due on signing of Contract.  
Participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is recommended. I understand that Student may not start classes until tuition has been paid in full.
- B. Installment Payment Plan: Deposit due on signing of Contract. The remaining payments are due as agreed to with FACTS. A payment plan with FACTS must be set up prior to August 1 of the school year, or if the student is enrolling after August 1, within one week of signing the contract. Students may not start

classes until a FACTS account has been established. All Tuition and fees must be paid in FULL prior to May 31 of the current school year.

Once signed by the appropriate parent(s)/guardians and Northstar, the enrollment contract is in force as a binding agreement, unless withdrawn prior to the commitment date specified on the contract. The parent(s)/legal guardians are responsible for making tuition payments on a timely basis, consistent with the payment option selected. Northstar is entitled to retrieve all legal fees incurred if legal action becomes necessary to collect tuition owed.

Ancillary charges for such items as book fines and athletic equipment must be paid on a timely basis and may be added to the student billing accounts also. Payments for these fees are due to Northstar as billed. Final transcripts/records to colleges or any other school (should a student transfer) will not be released until outstanding bills are satisfied. Transcript/records requests should be made in writing two weeks in advance to the Registrar.

Once the payment is received for the agreed upon payment option, your student may begin school. Students are not permitted to attend school if there is an outstanding financial obligation to the school. If you select any payment option other than the Single Payment Plan you must set up an account with FACTS Tuition Management.

Monies for all activities of Northstar should be forwarded to the Business Office at 11501 Nuckols Rd. Glen Allen, VA, 23059. Please identify the purpose of the payment on the memo line of the check with a note accompanying the payment. Questions or concerns regarding student billing accounts or other related financial matters should be directed to the Business Office at (804) 747-1003.

A reservation deposit must accompany the enrollment contract. The remaining tuition is billed as scheduled on the enrollment contract. Textbook costs and incidentals are extra and are payable upon receipt of statements at the beginning of the school year or at other times students begin new classes.

#### Tuition Reimbursement Insurance

Northstar offers a Tuition Reimbursement Insurance Plan. This plan (subject to its terms, conditions, and limitations) may provide reimbursement of unearned tuition due the school in case of illness, injury, death of a parent or student, required withdrawal for scholastic failure, transfer of family, etc. If you choose to pay tuition by Payment Plan B, participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is mandatory. You may call the Business Office for additional information.

#### Veteran Tuition Benefits

Northstar accepts Veterans Educational Benefits for any individual who is entitled to educational benefits under chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, or chapter 33, Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. Northstar permits any covered individual to attend or participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to the educational institution a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 31 or 33 (a

“certificate of eligibility” can also include a “Statement of Benefits” obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) website – eBenefits, or a VAF 28-1905 form for chapter 31 authorization purposes). Northstar will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual’s inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under chapter 31 or 33.



**To be completed electronically during the Registration Verification process in the Achieve Family Portal.**

## **Handbook Agreement/Signatures Page**

2025-2026 Student & Parent/Guardian Signature Form

My student \_\_\_\_\_ and I have read the Northstar Academy and Career Center Student-Family Handbook and agree to the rules and policies set forth by Northstar.

-----  
Student Signature

-----  
Date

-----  
Student Name (Please print)

-----  
Parent/Guardian Signature

-----  
Date

-----  
Parent/Guardian Name (Please print)

## APPENDIX

### Course Descriptions for all Students

#### Specialized Decoding

The Specialized Decoding program develops symbol imagery. Taught by teachers trained in the strategies of Lindamood-Bell® and other strategies, instruction focuses on the sounds and patterns of letters and words as well as the positions, combinations and sequences of those letters. Students move through a series of steps – from single consonants/vowels to multisyllabic and contextual reading – to develop the imagery-language connection for competency in written language.

#### Specialized Comprehension

The Specialized Comprehension, taught by teachers trained in the strategies of Lindamood-Bell® and other strategies, through a series of steps, students learn to create a mental picture and integrate that imagery with language as a basis for language comprehension and thinking.

#### Visualizing & Verbalizing Skills & Strategies (VV Skills & Strategies)

Students receive additional reading reinforcement using Lindamood-Bell Visualizing and Verbalizing Comprehension strategies in a small group setting.

#### Math Resource

Students receive additional instruction on basic math skills, reinforce mastery of IEP and IAP goals and further prepare for SOLs. *This course is offered as an elective, and is not a math credit.*

### Lower School Course Descriptions

Students will receive instruction in classes with no more than an 8:1 student teacher ratio.

Instruction and activities outlined will be obtained from the Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The Standards of Learning will identify content for essential components of curriculum at elementary grade levels for the following subjects listed.

**Mathematics** Students will focus on the basic development of number and operations, measurement, algebraic thinking, geometry, data analysis and probability. Students will be exposed to age appropriate math instruction while mastering the skills at their instructional level as well as their individual goals.

**Science** In this course, students will analyze matter, life processes and systems, resources, interrelationships in earth/space system, earth patterns, cycles, and change. Students will familiarize themselves with common

materials, objects, and living things. Questioning and hypothesizing will become a more important stressor as the student prepares for middle level curriculum.

### **English**

Students will receive direct instruction on oral language, reading, and writing as well as understanding basic phonetic principles, demonstrating that print makes sense, and comprehension of fiction and nonfiction. Lower school English classes are multiage with emphasis on exposing students to appropriate grade and age appropriate instruction, but providing opportunities for remediation.

**Social Science** This course will focus on what it means to be an American and will develop an appreciation for those individuals and civilizations who have contributed to the diversity of America. Students will explore the contributions of Greece, Rome, Mali, American Heritage, Virginia Geography, Early Virginia History, Revolutionary Period, Nineteenth Century, and Twentieth Century.

**Social Skills** This course is to help prepare students to integrate with their peers at school and in the community and to develop social competence. Students will work on their individual social goals in the following areas: exploration of self and others, emotions, relationships, communication, social exchange, social language, and peer issues.

## **Middle School Course Descriptions**

Students will receive instruction in classes with no more than an 8:1 student teacher ratio. Each educational course will follow an appropriate curriculum as provided by the Virginia Department of Education. The descriptions distinguish the fundamental content implemented for the individual courses.

### **Mathematics**

Students will be exposed to age appropriate math instruction while mastering the skills at their instructional level as well as their individual goals. The curriculum is based on the standards and philosophy of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Math 6- Skills in mathematical understanding will be developed. Students will engage in activities based on the essential components of the mathematics curriculum at the sixth grade level to include transformations, geometric relationships, symbolic rules, angle measurements, graph predictions and comparisons, prime numbers, and square roots. Activities involving computers and calculators will be integrated into the classroom.

Math 7- Students will investigate and solve practical problems involving volume and surface area of rectangular solids. An understanding of scientific notation will be developed and an emphasis on linear and algebraic formulas will be recognized. Students will compare area models and organized lists as

well as use probability to make predictions.

Math 8– This course will focus on concepts of arithmetic and introduce the student to algebra and geometry through real world applications. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the connections between mathematical patterns and algebraic expressions. Students will demonstrate the skills on how to use functions on a calculator.

Specialized Math– The Specialized Math program focuses on strengthening the ability to visualize the concepts underlying math processes. This course will focus on understanding numbers and their meaning, their placement on the number line, computation, and problem solving. This course is taught by teachers trained in the strategies of Lindamood-Bell®. *Participation in this course is limited to one year.*

## **Science**

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

Discovery Science 6 – The course will emphasize data analysis, experimentation, and content related to Discovery Science. Students will recognize relationships and patterns in Earth and Space systems. The concept of change will be explored through the study of transformations of energy and matter. Students explore concepts such as force and motion, and a detailed understanding of weather, water, and living systems becomes a focus of instruction.

Life Science 7– Students will concentrate on content related to Life Science. The student will develop basic science concepts, and complete basic units of study supported by conceptual themes such as photosynthesis, zoology, and botany. This course shows a more complex understanding of change, cycles, patterns, and relationships in the living world. Students will explore cellular organization and the classification of organisms, in addition to the ever-changing relationships among organisms, populations, communities, and ecosystems.

Physical Science 8– Major areas of focus include the organization and use of the periodic table; physical and chemical changes; nuclear reactions; temperature and heat; sound; light; electricity and magnetism; and work, force, and motion. An understanding of the nature and structure of matter and the characteristics of energy will be stressed.

## **English**

The skills of oral language, reading/literature, writing, and research will be emphasized to help the student master basic skills and proceed to the next level of instruction. Curriculum will contain instruction and activities outlined by the Virginia

State Department of Education Standards of Learning. Emphasis will be on grade and age appropriate instruction with remediation of skills when necessary.

English 6- English 6 encourages students to share personal opinions, understand varying perspectives, and distinguish between fact and opinion. Students will read a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts and will use these texts as a means to study word origin and grow vocabulary. Narrative compositions will be planned, drafted, revised, and edited; and students will focus on sentence formation, usage, and mechanics.

English 7- Further development of oral communication skills are the main goal of this course, with students identifying the roles of verbal and nonverbal behaviors in communication. Through activities with fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, as well as an emphasis on figurative language, students will continue to enhance spelling, grammar, and vocabulary.

English 8 - Students will learn techniques to conduct their own interviews, which they will use to develop and present orally in groups and individually. Students will further develop communication skills by demonstrating the correct use of language, spelling, and mechanics to produce media messages. Generalization of reading and writing skills across subjects is a focus, as well as utilizing these skills to critically analyze literature.

## **Social Science**

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All social science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

US History to 1865- Concepts of civics, economics, and geography will be continued throughout learning United States history from the Pre-Columbian times to the middle of the Reconstruction Period. Students will strengthen their skills in using maps and globes and organizing events in a chronological order. The outline of this course will cover: United States History to 1865, Pre-Columbian America, Early Exploration, British Colonial America, The Revolutionary War, The Early Republic, Antebellum Period, An Expanding Nation, and The Civil War.

US History 1865 to Present- Students will continue to sequence events and demonstrate their knowledge of geography. There will be more of an emphasis on vocabulary acquisition and factors of causation in this course. Students will be able to label oceans, continents, and find locations given longitude and latitude. The outline of this course will cover: United States History from 1866 to present day, Reconstruction period, The Gilded Age, Expansion, Imperialism, World War I, The Great Depression and Roaring 20s, World War II, The Cold War, and The Civil Rights Movement.

Civics & Economics-8<sup>th</sup> - This course will use a variety of primary sources and

emphasize discussion and stimulation. Students will be exposed to current events while taking a look back at the events that shaped the United States government. This course will emphasize personal and civic responsibility while learning and understanding events such as: Foundations of Government, Foundations of American Government, Framing of the Constitution, Rights, Politics, and The Court System.

### **Physical Education & Health**

Students will combine fundamental skills into more complex movement forms in units such as physical fitness and conditioning. Students will experience recreational and team sports activities. Students will learn the fundamentals of a health issue including nutrition, diseases, personal growth, personal health, safety, first aid, consumer health, body systems, and substance abuse. Students will recognize healthy lifestyle choices, interpret health information and begin to set goals that promote good health.

### **Social Skills/Advisory**

The middle school social skills curriculum focuses on acquiring basic skills and understanding of social skills and concepts. Through whole-group, direct instruction, small-group role plays & practice and structured conversation with peers, students work on identifying emotions, learning how to ask for help, understanding personal goals, and begin to work on problem solving and conflict resolution skills.

### **Upper School Course Descriptions**

Students will receive instruction in classes with no more than an 8:1 student- teacher ratio. Each educational course will follow appropriate curriculum as provided by the Virginia Department of Education. The descriptions distinguish the fundamental content implemented for the individual courses. Occasionally, virtual/online courses may be offered through an accredited provider. All online instruction is supported by a classroom teacher.

### **Mathematics**

Students will be exposed to age appropriate math instruction while mastering the skills at their instructional level as well as their individual goals. The curriculum is based on the standards and philosophy of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Algebra I The goal of this course is to give students a gradual introduction to understand algebraic concepts. Students will participate in activities that apply mathematical concepts and skills used for problem solving. The course will emphasize the structure of algebraic expressions and use statistics and geometry to study linear expressions. *This course can be offered over a two-year span, as Algebra I – Part I, and Algebra I – Part II.*

Algebra II A deeper emphasis on algebraic concepts will be an important focal point in this course. Advanced algebraic concepts will be explored

through a study of equations, functions, inequalities, systems of equations, polynomials, rational and radical equations, complex numbers, and sequence and series. Students will demonstrate the knowledge of linear and quadratic forms, powers and roots, logarithmic functions, and polynomial functions. Real world situations will be used as a modeling tool to emphasize these concepts. *Completion of Algebra 1 and Geometry required.*

Algebraic Functions and Data Analysis (AFDA) – This course is designed for students who would benefit from additional instruction in algebraic concepts prior to taking Algebra II. Students will analyze function families and their characteristics, examine data and generate formulas, using previous knowledge of transformations to write equations. The student will evaluate probabilities and analyze the normal distributions. The course will emphasize the collection of data and how to design and conduct an experiment. *Completion of Algebra 1 required.*

AWOW – Algebra for the World of Work focuses on teaching algebra concepts such as one and two step equations, working with positive and negative numbers, fractions and percentages. The course is designed so that the students will be exposed to the algebra they will need for everyday activities without the complicated equations or graphs they may never see again. AWOW focuses on the use of manipulatives and concrete materials to introduce math concepts. *This course is offered as an elective, and is not a math credit.*

Geometry – This course emphasizes the skills developed in identifying coordinates, transformational geometry, measurements, theorems, and formal definitions of geometric terms. Students will use their knowledge to discover relationships between angles, solve real world problems using the Pythagorean Theorem, verify characteristics of polygons, and computer formulas to find coordinates. *This course can be offered over a two-year span, as Geometry – Part I, and Geometry – Part II.*

Trigonometry– An understanding of circular and triangular functions will be developed in this course. Students will be able to define the circular and triangular functions of an angle, use their knowledge to find angles in a unit circle, and use the inverse trigonometry function to find angle measurements. Study will emphasize solving real-world problems using triangles. *Completion of Algebra II required. One semester course, offered in conjunction with Algebra II review or Pre-Calculus.*

Personal Finance and Economics (virtual course)– The goal of this online course is for students to gain a basic knowledge of economic concepts. Students will show an understanding of the role of producers and consumers in a market economy, price system, income, the nation's financial system, and taxes. The course will provide students with the resources on how to manage a budget, obtain credit, and compute taxes.

Pre-Calculus– Concepts that will be focused on this course are: polynomial

and rational functions, composite functions, and logarithmic and exponential functions. Students will engage in activities to help gain further knowledge on how to formulate, investigate, and describe the concepts of these functions in problem solving. Students will practice the use of matrices to organize data and then solve equations using those matrices. *Completion of Algebra II required. One semester course, offered in conjunction with Trigonometry.*

Life-Skills Math - This course is focused on the real world application of mathematics knowledge, and includes hands-on practice and written scenarios. Concepts taught include: money, both paper and digital; budgeting and life planning; time and time management (e.g. reading a schedule); measurement; and fractions related to daily living (e.g. cooking). *This course is not a substitute for Personal Finance & Economics. This course is offered as an elective, and is not a math credit. Participation in this course is limited to one year.*

## **Science**

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

Earth Science/Earth Science Concepts- This course connects the study of the Earth's composition, structure, processes, and history. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of plate tectonic movement, the rock cycle, and identify renewable and nonrenewable resources. This course further studies the features of the ocean floor, compares and contrasts physical and chemical changes, and relates the material to our planet Earth. Other concepts reviewed in this course are: meteorology, oceanography, freshwater studies, astronomy, and geology.

Biology/Biology Concepts- This course's focus will be to provide students with a detailed understanding of living things. The history of biological thought and the evidence that supports it will be explored to provide the foundation for investigating biochemical life processes, molecular biology, heredity and evolution, organisms, and population. Students will observe cell division and the development of organisms, the role of biology in society.

Chemistry/Chemistry Concepts- This course is designed to provide students with a detailed understanding of the interaction of matter and energy. Students will explore laboratory techniques, problem solving applications, and the manipulation of chemical quantities. Concepts such as the periodic table and atomic structure will be discovered through the use of visuals and the idea that science can provide explanations about nature will be explained.

Environmental Science- The student will explore human influences on the environment, both positive and negative, as well as tools to work with the environment and keep it healthy and productive. The relationship between living things and the environment will be studied. Other basic units of study in this course will include: plants, animals, ecology, and the change of populations through time.

Physics – This course is based on a conceptual approach to physics. Through a historic and hands-on philosophy, students learn the basic and essential mechanisms and rules of nature as they apply to our everyday lives. Typically, the course begins with traditional Newtonian physics, with the second half of the course dedicated to 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century topics such as electromagnetic induction and energy conversion efficiency.

## **English**

The skills of oral language, reading/literature, writing, and research will be emphasized to help the student master basic skills and proceed to the next level of instruction. Curriculum will contain instruction and activities outlined by the Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. Emphasis will be on grade and age appropriate instruction with remediation of skills when necessary.

English 9/ English 9 Concepts- This course is focused on students studying world literature and mythology, critiquing poetry, and analyzing the use of diction and identifying types of figurative language. Students will learn how to plan an oral presentation while researching information to present. They will evaluate the clarity and accuracy of the information found in text.

English 10/ English 10 Concepts- Students will participate in small group learning activities to interpret writings and further develop communication skills. Students will identify and use grammatically correct language for various topics, audiences, and purposes. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the different characteristics between poetry, drama, short stories, nonfiction, and legends.

English 11/ English 11 Concepts- Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature of the United States through discussion. Writing instruction will focus on evaluating informative and persuasive presentations, analyzing informational materials, and defining poetry vocabulary. In preparation for the SAT, students will expand their vocabulary and grammar.

English 12/ English 12 Concepts- Students will demonstrate their understanding of British literature through a chronological approach. Vocabulary study as well as correct language usage will be stressed. This course will encourage students to analyze printed and electronic resources, develop a research paper, and generate both expository and persuasive writings. At the end of this course students will organize and perform a formal presentation.

## **History & Social Science**

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All social science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

World History I/ World History I Concepts- This course focuses on the exploration of human civilization through the Renaissance. Students will study the curriculum in a chronological and geographic manner to gain a perspective on the development of relationships globally. Maps, texts, charts, and diagrams will be used to explore and compare geography, philosophy, religion, and contributions of past societies to our own.

World History II/ World History II Concepts- Expanding on concepts learned in World History I, this course follows the exploration of human civilization from the Renaissance era through the present day. Students will study the curriculum in a chronological and geographic manner to gain a perspective on the development of relationships globally. Study will emphasize geography, political change and theory, and the impact of past conflicts on events in the modern world. Students will also build on their history analysis skills by examining cause and effect, comparing and contrasting various nations and political systems, and exploring reasons for change throughout time.

U.S. History/ U.S. History Concepts- Students in this course will examine the exploration and colonization of the United States past from the late 1770s. Students will demonstrate knowledge of past wars, social movements, arguments, and institutions that have shaped our country from its founding. Instruction will examine trends and patterns that have shaped modern America and will challenge students to analyze the nation's past.

Government- This course is designed to give an understanding of American political and constitutional principles. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the influence of important documents such as the Magna Carta, the English Petition of Rights, and the English Bill of Rights. Students take a deeper look on the origins of the American Government and how the Constitution was framed. The concepts of a democracy and the different political philosophies will be examined. At the end of the course, students will demonstrate skills on how to be a responsible citizen.

## **Physical Education & Health**

Students will further develop skills that promote lifetime personal fitness and sports skills. Students will experience recreational and team sports activities. The health component of these courses will further expand upon nutrition, diseases, mental health, substance abuse, body systems, personal health, personal fitness, first aid, and preventative measures that promote lifelong health & fitness.

P.E. & Health 9—Students will participate in team sports to include basketball,

volleyball, kickball, and soccer. Health content will include consumer health, first aid, alcohol and other drugs and disease prevention.

P.E. & Health 10—Students will participate in fitness activities, team and individual sports and conditioning. Health content will summarize all topic areas covered from middle school through high school with the goal of promoting lifetime habits that support physical and mental health.

## **Social Skills**

The upper school social development program emphasizes performance and fluency levels of social skills development. Through whole-group, direct instruction, small-group practice & role play and structured conversation with peers, students work on refining their individual social function. Emphasis is placed on personal responsibility, the importance of effective communication, coping skills, and self-advocacy. Transition topics are also included.

## **Electives & Enrichment**

Students are provided with exposure to art, music and technology in lower, middle and upper school programs. Additional elective courses are offered for upper school students to meet diploma requirements.

Art - Students participate in hands-on production of a variety of art forms to include drawing and painting, sculpture, pottery, silk screening, set-design, and craft activities adapted to developmental level. Students explore the role of art in world cultures and contemporary life. Art appreciation is emphasized. Thematic activities emphasize student art including a yearly theme, the Winter Show, and the Talent Show.

Technology - This foundation course introduces the use of relevant and emerging technologies, tools, and applications to prepare students for current workplace practices and everyday life. Students will demonstrate information processing using a variety of hardware and software and Internet-based tools to produce and integrate data in various formats. This course is designed for students wishing to progress through more advanced business and information technology coursework.

Spanish (virtual course) - Students are able to learn Spanish beginning in the 9th grade. Students are initially introduced to Spanish language and culture with primary emphasis on listening and speaking. As skill develops, reading and writing in Spanish are introduced and a greater emphasis is placed on grammar. Students work independently online with a virtual instructor and are supported in the classroom by a Northstar teacher.

Music/ Chorus - Weekly participation in music activities is provided to all lower school students. Beginning in middle school, students are offered the opportunity to participate in the school chorus. The group performs at school

programs such as the Talent Show and the Winter Show.

Intro to Coding & Robotics – The objective of this course is to introduce the student to basic programming as well as problem solving strategies. Students will work hands-on in teams to design, build, program and document their progress. Topics may include motor control, gear ratios, friction, program loops, logic, and decision-making. Our ability to function and progress in the modern age is dependent on electronics and robotics technologies. This course provides a depth and breadth of the basic skills required in today's automated manufacturing environment. Students will explore careers, build circuits, and use principles of physics to analyze basic electronic and robotic components.

Computer Science Foundations – This is an introductory course designed to engage students in computational thinking and practice. The course focuses on both computer science and content and computation practice. We use the Exploring Computer Science curriculum which consists of 6 units: Human Computer Interaction, Problem Solving, Web Design, Programming, Computer and Data Analysis, and Robotics. Throughout these units, students will discuss the ethical and social issues in computer and careers in computer. Topics such as responsibility of software users and developers, intellectual property rights, software failures, piracy of software, and open-source development will be explored. Students will also identify and describe careers in computing and careers that employ computing.

Independent Living – This course helps to equip students with life skills. Students will learn to create and maintain healthy relationships, practice personal nutrition, health and wellness, and develop a life management plan through relevant life applications. Independent living addresses self-management, hygiene and grooming, goal setting, leisure, community participation, planning (meals, social and work appointments, multi-step tasks and projects), travel and mobility, and household maintenance.

Family Life – Family Life is offered annually in same-sex groups with the objective of teaching students how to make healthy choices for their futures. This includes, but is not limited to, instruction in family living and community relationships; the value of family relationships; human sexuality; human reproduction; characteristics of abusive relationships; and mental health education and awareness. *Parents and/or guardians have the opportunity to opt students out of receiving Family Life instruction.*

### **Career Center Course Descriptions:**

#### **Hospitality**

**Course Description:** This course covers 4 main roles of the hospitality industry. This includes the roles of a Front Desk Representative, Guest Room Attendant, Kitchen Cook, and a Restaurant/Banquet Server. Students will learn an overview of the necessary skills for pre-, during and post- shift requirements for each section to

prepare them to enter into successful employment in the hospitality industry. All lessons will be taught via a combination of hands-on experience in the classroom and at weekly worksite internships.

## **Business Technology**

**Course Description:** This course is designed for students to develop the basic skills necessary for working in an administrative support role such as typing, filing, scheduling, and organizing materials. Students will explore word processing, spreadsheets, database, telecommunications, desktop publishing, and financial records management. This course is the equivalent to 2 36-hour courses: Computer Information Systems, and Entrepreneurship Education. Units will be individualized to challenge students who already have strong basic skills in place. Job shadowing will be ongoing throughout the year and will support classroom content. Software and Operating Systems to be explored include but are not limited to: Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Typing Agent, and Google Chrome. Students will gain a solid foundation for how computers function in the workplace. Students who make optimal progress will be eligible to sit for a Microsoft Certification test.

## **Construction and Maintenance**

### **Course Description:**

Construction and Maintenance introduces students to skills in residential and commercial construction. This course serves as an introduction to the skills necessary to pursue a career in construction or maintenance fields. Emphasis is given to safety as students build their competence on discrete tasks. Specialized trades (Electrical, Plumbing, and Masonry) are explored in a survey format. A combination of the courses Building Trades I and Building Management I are equivalent to two 36-week courses. Students wishing to complete a specialization may take additional courses appropriate to their career pathways.

## **Materials Handling**

### **Course Description:**

This course is designed for students who grapple with multiple learning challenges and barriers to employment. Students will develop skills necessary for stocking goods, managing materials, maintaining a hospitable workplace, using a teamwork approach, and providing good customer service. Students will learn how to present themselves professionally and use good communication skills. Job shadowing experiences are an integral part of the educational experience.

## **Veterinary Assisting**

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to skills in the areas of working as a veterinary assistant. Students learn animal science and the care of animals, including the fundamentals of companion animal species and breeds, behavior and training, body systems, nutrition, and safety. Students develop basic skills and techniques for assisting the veterinarian/technician in the following areas: handling

companion animals and other small mammals, grooming animals/caring for coats, feeding small mammals, and maintaining equipment and facilities.

## Addendum A

### Contingency Plan

Northstar has a contingency plan that is outlined in the Crisis Plan Handbook in case of emergencies requiring CPR or Emergency First Aid or emergencies involving injury, illness, fire, violent or threatening behavior or illegal activities. In order to keep our students safe, each Northstar employee reads and is familiar with the Crisis Plan Handbook which is a written emergency preparedness and response plan. Employees must follow the steps outlined in case of an emergency. In cases where 911 must be called, the call should be placed by Northstar staff. The Northstar on call system allows Northstar to connect with parents in a timely and efficient manner. Northstar has adopted The "I Love U Guys" Foundation's Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Students and staff will be training, practicing, and drilling the protocol. Detailed information about the SRP codes is available below.

| Emergency Situation                                | Contingency Plan   |
|--|--|
| Severe Injury/Severe illness                       | Administer first aid by trained staff, call 911, contact parent/guardian(s). Call code Hold if necessary   |
| Fire/Explosion                                     | Evacuate to safe place, first aid, call 911, execute dismissal plan  |
| Severe Weather- Earthquake                         | Staff remind students to stay in the room, drop and crouch under desks/tables. Use strong objects such as textbooks to protect heads if immediately accessible, do not delay taking cover. |
| Severe Weather-Tornado/Severe Thunderstorms        | Staff should move students to designated safe area. Call code Shelter  |
| Severe Weather- Floods                             | Evacuate students and staff to designated safe area. Have students & staff position away from metal objects and/or electrical equipment.   |
| Abducted/Eloping Student                           | Immediately after it has been determined that a student has been abducted or eloped off campus, call 911.  |
| Hazardous Materials                                | The Head of School is immediately notified or other administrative personnel if the Head is not available. Code Shelter will be announced. Go to an uncontaminated area.                   |
| Intruder or Unauthorized person on campus          | Notify the Head of School/Administration to follow Crisis Plan Protocol.   |
| Active Shooter/Intruder/Hostage/Riot/Weapon Threat | Determine location of intruder. Use Floor Plans To Assist First Responders. Document description of intruder (See Witness Description Form 5.0)  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Bomb Threat  | Listen carefully to the caller to gain as much information as possible. If the call appears to be credible, ask the staff and admin to survey their instruction area and nearby restrooms carefully. |
| Loss of Utilities  | Notify Head of School/ Facilities Coordinator  |
| Off-Campus Serious Medical Emergencies   | Assess students to determine severity of illness or injury. Call 911 and Northstar. Do not transport a student experiencing a medical emergency in a school vehicle.                                 |
| Staff/Student Loss of Life   | The Head of School will be immediately notified in the event of the loss of life of a student or staff member.   |
| Acts of Terrorism  | The Head of School is immediately notified that an incident has occurred and that the Crisis Plan is in effect. Northstar Admin will call 911 to notify emergency services.                          |
| Transportation Incidents   | Stop the vehicle immediately and check to see if anyone including yourself, your students, or anyone in another vehicle is injured. If able, move to a safe location such as the side of the road.   |
| School dismissal not at regular time/school closing  | Connect-Ed, E-mail, website, social media  |
| Illegal Activities   | Notify administration, administration will take appropriate action, police and parents notified  |
| Emergency Situation – communication with off campus class in the event of a facility-level emergency on campus | Building administrator will communicate with off-campus faculty and provide direction for class (i.e. shelter in place, return to campus, or return to alternative site).                            |



# STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Our school has adopted The "I Love U Guys" Foundation's Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Students and staff will be training, practicing, and drilling the protocol.

### COMMON LANGUAGE

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is based on an all-hazards approach as opposed to individual scenarios. Like the Incident Command System (ICS), SRP utilizes clear common language while allowing for flexibility in protocol.

The premise is simple - there are five specific actions that can be performed during an incident. When communicating these, the action is labeled with a "Term of Art" and is then followed by a "Directive." Execution of the action is performed by active participants, including students, staff, teachers and first responders. The SRP is based on the following actions: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter.

## HOLD

### "In Your Classroom or Area"

**Students** are trained to:

- Clear the hallways and remain in their area or room until the "All Clear" is announced
- Do business as usual

**Adults and staff** are trained to:

- Close and lock the door
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



## SECURE

### "Get Inside. Lock outside doors"

**Students** are trained to:

- Return to inside of building
- Do business as usual

**Adults and staff** are trained to:

- Bring everyone indoors
- Lock the outside doors
- Increase situational awareness
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



## LOCKDOWN

### "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"

**Students** are trained to:

- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door

**Adults and staff** are trained to:

- Recover students from hallway if possible
- Lock the classroom door
- Turn out the lights
- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door
- Prepare to evade or defend



## EVACUATE

### "To a Location"

**Students** are trained to:

- Leave stuff behind if required to
- Follow instructions

**Adults and staff** are trained to:

- Bring roll sheet and Go Bag (unless instructed not to bring anything with them, dependent on reason for evacuation.)
- Lead students to Evacuation location
- Account for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.



## SHELTER

### "State Hazard and Safety Strategy"

**Hazards** might include:

- Tornado
- Hazmat
- Earthquake
- Tsunami

**Safety Strategies** might include:

- Evacuate to shelter area
- Seal the room
- Drop, cover and hold
- Get to high ground

**Students** are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies

**Adults and staff** are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies
- Accounting for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.





# STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

## PARENT GUIDANCE

In the event of a live incident, parents may have questions about their role.

## SECURE

**“Get Inside. Lock outside doors”**



Secure is called when there is something dangerous outside of the building. Students and staff are brought into the building and the outside doors will be locked. The school might display the Building is Secured poster on entry doors or nearby windows. Inside, it will be business as usual.

### SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A SECURE EVENT?

Probably not. Every effort is made to conduct classes as normal during a secure event. Additionally, parents may be asked to stay outside during a Secure event.

### WHAT IF PARENTS NEED TO PICK UP THEIR STUDENT?

Depending on the situation, it may not be safe to release the student. As the situation evolves, Secure might change to a Monitored Entry and/or Controlled Release.

### WILL PARENTS BE NOTIFIED WHEN A SCHOOL GOES INTO SECURE?

When a secure event is brief or the hazard is non-violent, like a wild animal on the playground, there may not be a need to notify parents while the Secure is in place.

With longer or more dangerous events, the school should notify parents that the school has increased their security.

## LOCKDOWN

**“Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”**



A Lockdown is called when there is something dangerous inside of the building. Students and staff are trained to enter or remain in a room that can be locked, and maintain silence.

A Lockdown is only initiated when there is an active threat inside or very close to the building.

### SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A LOCKDOWN?

The natural inclination for parents is to go to the school during a Lockdown. Understandable, but perhaps problematic. If there is a threat inside the building, law enforcement will be responding. It is unlikely that parents will be granted access to the building or even the campus. If parents are already in the school, they will be instructed to Lockdown as well.

### SHOULD PARENTS TEXT THEIR STUDENTS?

The school recognizes the importance of communication between parents and students during a Lockdown event. Parents should be aware though, during the initial period of a Lockdown, it may not be safe for students to text their parents. As the situation resolves, students may be asked to update their parents on a regular basis.

In some cases, students may be evacuated and transported off-site for a student-parent reunification.

### WHAT ABOUT UNANNOUNCED DRILLS?

The school may conduct unscheduled drills, however it is highly discouraged to conduct one without announcing that it as a drill. That's called an unannounced drill and can cause undue concern and stress.

Parents should recognize that the school will always inform students that it is a drill during the initial announcement.

It's important to differentiate between a **drill** and an exercise. A drill is used to create the “Muscle Memory” associated with a practiced action. There is no simulation of an event; this is simply performing the action. An exercise simulates an actual event to test the capacity of personnel and equipment.

### CAN PARENTS OBSERVE OR PARTICIPATE IN THE DRILLS?

The school welcomes parents who wish to observe or participate in drills.

