

North Stonington



Learning Today

Leading Tomorrow

Elementary School

North Stonington Elementary School
Student/Parent Handbook
2024-2025

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! We are so excited to be getting ready for another great year at NSES. I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer and has had a chance to do some fun things with family. This year we will be implementing year 2 of our Into Reading program. Many of our classes will also be piloting a new math program called Bridges. Additionally, we will be working on an overhaul of our current report cards in order to provide more student specific information to families and enhance our data collection methods for tiered support. Finally, we will be creating for more volunteer opportunities for the upcoming year.

The North Stonington Elementary School Student/Parent Handbook was developed to provide you with pertinent information about policies and procedures so we will all work together to provide a safe, caring environment for every child. ***Please read the handbook with your child to help them understand that safety and respect of others makes our school a special place for all to learn.*** The information in this book will help you understand how we work to create a safe, respectful environment for learning as well as details about your child's school day and how you can help them to be successful. **This handbook was created under all Board of Education Policies. All Board of Education Policies can be referenced online at <https://www.northstonington.k12.ct.us/boe-policies>**

To promote a positive school culture, we all must understand bullying. I ask you to review the bullying policy and what bullying looks like in this document with your child and please notify the principal if you suspect bullying actions.

The entire faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote the development of your child through a positive school experience. We strongly believe that the education of our students is a partnership between home and school. Please take an active role in your child's education. I am confident that with your sustained support and open communication between the home and school, your child will be successful and excited to come to school all year long! If you have any concerns, **please contact me at 860-535-2805. It is important to deal with issues immediately, so please do not hesitate to call.**

Yours very truly,

Robert Cillino

NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

North Stonington, Connecticut

Record of Parent Annual Notice

Dear Parent:

It is important that you and your child read and review the contents of this handbook. It contains notices of rights that you and your child have under law. Please sign and return this page to indicate that you have read and reviewed the handbook with your child.

I understand and consent to the responsibilities in the District's student behavior policies as outlined in this handbook. I also understand and agree that my child, (children) _____, shall be held accountable for the behavior and consequences outlined in the discipline policy at school and at school-sponsored and school-related activities, including school-sponsored travel, and for any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. I understand that any student who violates the rules established by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference is subject to suspension from participation as describe in those rules. I further understand that any student who violates the school's rules of behavior shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including referral for criminal prosecution for violations of law.

Regarding student records, I understand that certain information about my child is considered directory information. Directory information includes: a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended. Directory information may be released by the District to anyone who requests it unless I object in writing to the release of any or all of this information within ten school days of the time this handbook was issued to my child. I have marked through those types of directory information listed above that I wish the District to withhold.

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

North Stonington Elementary School

Mission Statement

In collaboration with families and the community, NSES strives to foster an academically motivated environment that empowers all students to surpass their boundaries and achieve their utmost potential. Our mission is to cultivate a lifelong passion for learning while nurturing the development of responsible, motivated, and engaged individuals who actively contribute to society.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

PROBLEM SOLVING

COLLABORATION

COMMUNICATION

LITERACY

SOCIAL/CIVIC EXPECTATIONS

DEMONSTRATES RESPECT

DEMONSTRATES RESPONSIBILITY

DEMONSTRATES RESILIENCE



At North Stonington Elementary School, we are respectful, responsible, and resilient. Learning Today and Leading Tomorrow!

Faculty and Staff Members

Administration

Superintendent – Mr. Troy Hopkins

Principal – Mr. Rob Cillino

Secretary - Ms. Kelly Gonzalez

Student Services

Director - Ms. April Christiansen

Administrative Assistant – Mrs. Ryan Beattie

BCBA – Mrs. Ali Sloane

Faculty

Preschool	Ms. Hannah Doiron	Mrs. Ryan Yon	
Kindergarten	Ms. Courtney Lauer	Mrs. Carla Gorman	Mrs. Sheri Tardiff
Grade 1	Mrs. Renee Bennett	Mrs. Stephanie Goodwin	Mrs. Rebecca Redway
Grade 2	Mrs. Brenda Clark	Mrs. Kasey Mirando	Mrs. Kara Rose
Grade 3	Mrs. Marilyn Kiddy	Mrs. Leah Stewart	Ms. Brenna Sullivan
Grade 4	Mr. Tom Brownell	Ms. Courtney Caswell	Mrs. Jane Servidio
Grade 5	Mrs. Andrea Bessette	Mrs. Kellie Edwards	Ms. Emily McCord
Grade 6	Mrs. Carly Barozi	Mr. Michael Costanza	Ms. Abigail Merchant
			Mrs. Michele Piper
Reading Specialists	Ms. Jackie Barry	Mrs. Heidi Mehringer-Macina	Mrs. Rebecca Schilke
Math Specialists	Mrs. Terry Gabriel	Mrs. Deanna Scanapieco	
Art	Ms. Lauren Anderson		
Library	Mrs. Kerry Schacht		
Music	Ms. Carolyn Ellis	Instrumental Music:	Alex Sanders
Physical Education	Mrs. Megan Perkins		
Computer Lab	Mrs. Joan Quinn		
Special Education	Mrs. Lauri Chabot-Noonan	Mrs. Sarah Hammerman	Mrs. Alexa Jonas
	Mrs. Lisa McDonald	Ms. Nicole Scovish	
Speech & Language	Mrs. Diana Anderson	Ms. Sarah Petersen	
Occupational Therapist	Mrs. Rebekah West		
School Psychologist	Mrs. Melanie Rainville		
School Counselor	Mrs. Nina Reardon		
<u>School Health</u>			
Nurse	Ms. Ali Souza		
Health Aide	Mrs. Stephanie Forbes		
<u>Paraprofessionals</u>			
Office Aide	Mrs. Olivia Hill		
Cafeteria Aide	Mrs. Cindy Coombe		
Per Diem Sub	Ms. Kaitlyn Baker	Mr. Chaz Fairbrother	Ms. Lilly Pastrana
	Mrs. Andrea Sadowski		
Special Education	Mrs. Linda Beattie	Mrs. Cynthia Benfield	Mrs. Brittany Campbell
	Mrs. Bitsy Carlson	Mrs. Denise Collard	
	Mrs. Courtney Gumbiner	Mrs. Brandy Herron	Mrs. Crissy Holdridge
	Mrs. Laura Osborn	Mrs. Nicole Sheehan	
	Mrs. Megan Snelgrove	Mrs. Nadine Banker	Mrs. Danielle Steele
	Mrs. Amber Steinhart	Mrs. Beth Thompson	
	Mrs. Jessica Ward		
<u>Custodians</u>			
Maintenance Supervisor	Mr. Randy Rumrill		
Maintenance	Mr. Allen Buck		
Custodial Staff	Mr. Jim Palmer	Mr. Andrew Zuraw	Mr. Jose Figueroa

General Information

Absences for illness or other reasons/Attendance Policy

Board Policy and State Law require us to follow very specific guidelines on attendance. Please report your child's absence to the school office as early as possible. The office voice-mail system is available at any time so you may call at any time. The office opens at 7:45 A.M. (860-535-2805) If verbal or written contact is not made with the parent/guardian stating the reason for the absence, it will be considered **an unexcused absence**. If a child is absent and the parent does not call, the school will call home or place of employment to verify that the child is absent.

Truancy

Connecticut law requires that the North Stonington Public Schools provide you with this written notice of your obligations under Connecticut General Statute [10-184](#). Truant is defined as: *a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and **has four or more unexcused absences in a 30-day period or ten or more unexcused absences in a school year.***

Both CT law and BOE policy require the school to notify parents if their child is approaching these benchmarks, require a parental meeting if indeed truant, as well as the school to coordinate services and to refer the child to community agencies.

In order for an absence to **be excused**, the following guidelines have been set by the State Board of Education.

- The **first nine absences** in a year will be considered excused if a parent/guardian approves the absence and submits appropriate documentation.
- CT Law also allows for **two mental health days** for students during the course of the year. **THESE CANNOT BE TAKEN CONSECUTIVELY.**
- **Thereafter, for an absence to be considered excused it must fall under one of the following:**
 - Student illness – **verified by note from a medical professional**
 - Student observance of a religious holiday
 - Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family
 - Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required)
 - Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district that the student does not attend
 - Extraordinary education opportunities pre-approved by district administration and in accordance w/ CSDE guidance
- It is important to note that the law also allows for students who have a parent or guardian who is an active duty service member and is either on leave or being deployed to be provided additional excused absences for these visits.



Please consider that vacations during school year take away from student learning. However, if you are planning a family vacation, prior notice of absence should be sent to the main office so the school does not call. **Please note teachers are not able to prepare work for all subject areas during family vacations because lessons are prepared daily based on student need and understanding of concepts.**

CT State Board of Education Attendance Policy

Due to this policy, students dismissed prior to 11:50 A.M. or who arrive after 11:50 A.M. must be considered absent for the day.

Please avoid early dismissals as much as possible. While they do not count against attendance if after 11:50, they do have a significant impact on learning due to missed instructional time.

Animals

Students are not allowed to bring live animals to school. If the animal is part of a special project or presentation, please call the office and speak with administration about accommodating the request.

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Arrival: Drop off procedures in the morning are as follows:

- **The only entrance** to the elementary school will be through the Wheeler entrance at the MS/HS.
 - **Parents who are dropping students off** will drive in front of the MS/HS, turn left and proceed the **short** way around the lot up to the sidewalk on the gym side of the school and drop students there. Please pull up as far as possible and have the students get out on the sidewalk side for safety and as quickly as possible to prevent back-up of cars in the street. You will continue around the circle to exit.
 - **Pre-K parents and anyone who wants to help their child out of the car, you must park your car for drop off. You will proceed the long way around the loop and you can park there. Walk your child in and then return to your car to exit as the car in front of you leaves.**
- We will have extra supervision in the morning to help students get out of the car only on the sidewalk side for the children's safety.
- After 8:45 A.M., students brought to school by car are considered tardy and need to come to the main office window by parent. After checked in by office staff, the child will receive a late slip and proceed to their classroom.

We strongly encourage all families to take advantage of the available school busses for transportation.

Dismissal Procedures in the afternoon are as follows:

- **In the afternoon: All students will walk with their classroom teacher to be dismissed at 3:10 P.M. to the bus lines. Students will wait in line to embark the bus.**
- **For Parent pick-up** in the afternoon, we will follow the same procedure as last year
 - **If your child will be Parent Pick-up daily, please send information to the office prior to the first day of school. All dismissal information needs to go through the office.**
 - **If you need to add your child to the parent pick-up list for the day only, you have to notify the office via email by no later than 12:00 (10:00 for early dismissal days). This will provide the office enough time to notify everyone who needs to know. We**

understand emergencies arise, but please stick to this timing as it can be difficult to ensure everyone will be made aware.

- Parent Pick-Up students will be dismissed to the gym to wait for a teacher to dismiss them to the adult's car who is picking them up.
- **We will be utilizing our Curb Smart placard system again this year. Once you receive your placard, please have it visible in the car for parent pick up.**
- **Parents/guardians should be prepared to provide their picture ID to the adult who is bringing the child/children to the car.**
- **Since there will be many children walking between the cars, no one is allowed to pull away until directed to by staff.**

Banned Items/Electronic Devices ☹

In order to create the best environment for learning that is safe and respectful, we ask you to be sure your child does not bring certain items to school that will distract from the learning process or active play during recess. These items include but are not limited to:

- Toys that distract from learning
- Cell Phones or cameras including Smart Watches- Students are not allowed to make calls, take pictures or videos of other students
- Electronic devices including hand-held video-games and listening devices unless the bus driver allows these items on the bus.
- Anything that might resemble a weapon, including toys
- Laser Pointers

Many of the toys cause a safety issue and/or problems when traded and these items do not encourage physical activity during recess. Electronic devices that become lost or broken can lead to problems at school. *If students are allowed to use electronic items on the bus, the device must be turned off and kept in the backpack while in school.*

At NSES, cell phones are not allowed. If a parent wants their child to have a cell phone, the phone must be off and away while the child is at school. Students are not allowed to call/text anyone over the course of the day. Students are allowed to call home through classroom or office phones with adult permission.

Behavior Issues

We encourage and expect good citizenship and appropriate social behavior at all times. All children and adults are expected to show respect to their peers and to all adults in the building. We will continue to use some of the PBIS elements but will also be implementing **Restorative Practices** district wide. It is pertinent that we help our students learn from their inappropriate behavior choices. Inappropriate behavior infringes upon the rights of other students and disrupts the learning process and classroom environment. We strive to match behaviors with appropriate consequences as well as a discussion and a restorative action. Teachers have the authority to remove a pupil from class when the student deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process within the classroom. Parents will be notified of removal within 24 hours.

Students who are removed more than twice in one week or more than six times in one year will have an informal hearing with the building principal and parents.

Unacceptable behaviors that may lead to a Major Discipline Referral:

- Aggressive behavior in school or on school grounds – Example: bullying, fighting, play fighting, pushing, punching, unsafe conduct, tackling, teasing, making threats including threatening gestures, etc. (i.e. Pretending to shoot gun with use of fingers or threatening a peer.)
- Use of objectionable language or gestures – Example: threats, swearing, profanity, obscenity.
- Disrespectful behavior toward people or property – Example: rudeness, stealing, defacement of property, or harassment of any kind including sexual harassment or inappropriate touching of others
- Any racial comments
- Causing safety issues by bringing dangerous objects to school, pulling the fire alarm, etc. Authorities will be notified.
- Leaving the school building or property without permission

Parents are notified by phone if a child receives a major office referral, the consequences for the behavior choice and will receive a copy of the Office Discipline Referral (ODR) by mail.

Parents are notified by email of a minor office referral.

At NSES we use a progressive discipline model. Should any of the unacceptable behaviors occur, the following consequences will be followed:

First Offense	The principal will discuss the matter with the student. The consequence for the misbehavior may include: the writing of an apology letter, alternate recess, lunch detention, or in-school suspension from school for one or more days. Parents will be notified in writing and by telephone.
Second Offense	The principal will notify parents. The consequences for this misbehavior may include lunch detention or in-school suspension, and/or any consequences from the First Offense deemed appropriate.
Third Offense	A conference will be held with parents, teacher, and principal to discuss the third offense and previous consequences. A plan of action will be developed to address the student's behavior. The consequences for this misbehavior will be determined at that time and will include an in-school suspension.

Note: Some severe infractions and/or the inability for a student to remain safe and under control during in-school suspension will result in immediate out-of-school suspension.

Note: Any weapons or dangerous instruments brought to school, even accidentally, results in automatic referral for expulsion.

Birthdays

We ask that if students will be bringing in treats to share for their birthday, please be sure they are individually wrapped from the store. We do encourage healthy snacks as per BOE Policy.

Students are not allowed to distribute invitations for parties at school.

Building Entry

Students should not enter the building after dismissal. It is the student's responsibility to have books and all other materials with them so they do not have to come back to school at night. If your child does need to come back for a forgotten item, please call the office before entering the building since the doors to the building and to the classroom will be locked.

Bullying Policy

North Stonington Elementary School Bullying Procedure:

Bullying behavior by any student in the North Stonington Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

1. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
2. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process.

Zero Tolerance: We understand that no child will feel totally safe if bullying is taking place. We need to raise our level of concern so that all incidents of bullying are addressed immediately.

Consequences: All written or verbal reports of bullying will be investigated by the principal.

First incident: Teacher/principal will speak to the student to note awareness and discuss the incident and consequences.
Teacher or reporting staff member will complete a Major Office Disciplinary Referral and a **Bullying Incident Report**. Parents will sign the report and return it to school. Appropriate consequences will apply.

Second incident: Principal will speak to the student to note awareness and discuss the incident and consequences. Appropriate consequences will apply. A Major Office Disciplinary Referral and a **Bullying Incident Report will be completed**. Student will be assigned sensitivity training with our school social worker and principal. Parents will meet with school counselor and principal.

Third incident: Principal will speak to the student to note awareness and discuss the incident. Parents will meet with teacher, school counselor, and principal. Appropriate consequences will apply which could be an out-of-school suspension. Student will be referred to our SAT (Student Assistance Team), or PPT/504 as appropriate.

Please be aware that if you call the school the first time your child shares an act of mean or bullying behavior, it can be stopped immediately!

Reporting system includes all school employees and bus drivers

- We recognize that at times children will make wrong behavior choices that may include bullying and we will continue to educate those children who need social intervention.
- Children must understand that reporting bullying or mean behavior towards themselves or others is a social responsibility that benefits the entire school community.
- Anonymous reports of bullying can be done on our district website:
<https://www.northstonington.k12.ct.us/copy-of-staff-quick-links>



Bus Procedures

M & J Bus Company – 860-535-8051/860-535-8058

Pick Up/Drop Off

- **Students will only be allowed to ride their assigned bus to and from school. If before school or after school care has been arranged and a different bus is needed than the bus assigned based on address of record, this can be requested by the parent/caregiver and the student will be assigned to that bus. Students are not permitted to ride a different bus on a one-off basis.**
- Buses will drop off students at 8:25. School staff will be present to direct students to the blacktop through the gate in the front of the school or into the school building.
- Buses will unload at the school from the front to the back.
Students will load buses in the afternoon by bus number.

Please call the school for permanent bus changes.

Please Review These Rules with Your Children

Bus Rules and Regulations

1. For morning school bus pick up, each student shall be at the pickup point (end of driveway, designated street corner or other specified place) **at least five minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time.**
2. Students waiting at their bus stops should stand at a safe distance from the road.
3. Students shall not move toward the bus until it has come to a complete stop and the entrance door has been opened.

When a student must cross the road to get on the bus, he/she must wait for the bus to stop and look for the driver's signal. The student should still check in both directions before crossing and must walk at least 10 feet in front of the bus, so the driver can clearly keep them in sight.

4. Students shall enter the bus and move as quickly as possible to their assigned seat placing their backpack in front of them to ensure they are sitting correctly and safely on the seat.
5. While on the bus, students must remain in their assigned seat at all times facing front.
6. Students are not to tamper with any equipment on the bus.
7. Throwing of objects, unsafe behavior, or verbal abuse of the driver or other students is not acceptable and will result in a discipline report.
8. Consumption of food (including chewing gum and candy) and beverages of any kind are not allowed on the bus due to choking hazards.
9. Students must exit only at their own bus stop or daycare.
10. Students are liable for expenses arising from damages or the defacing of school bus equipment.
11. Failure to observe bus rules will result in disciplinary action.

Suspension from Bus Transportation

The decision to remove or deny transportation to a student shall be made by the administration. The following guidelines shall be observed in such cases:

Bus drivers shall report, in writing, all violations to their bus supervisor who will report such violations, in writing, to the administrator responsible for the student(s).

In the event of a serious problem or repeated violation of bus regulations, the administrator may:

1. Immediately suspend the student(s) from riding the bus with notification to parent(s)/guardian(s), by telephone, of the decision.
2. Confirm the decision to suspend in a letter to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
3. Conduct a hearing prior to allowing the student(s) back on the school bus.
 - a. Persons invited to the hearing should include the parent(s)/guardian(s), bus officials, bus driver and the student(s) involved.
4. Inform the Superintendent of Schools and/or Board of Education that a long-term suspension has been implemented.

Cancellation of School/Delayed Openings/Early Closings

In the event that school has to be cancelled or a delayed opening is necessary due to inclement weather or other emergencies, families will be notified by a Power Announcement call from the Superintendent.

Please be sure to list the appropriate phone number on your child's emergency card for receiving this call. Announcements will also be found on the North Stonington School District website and local radio and television stations generally no later than 6:30 A.M.

DELAYED OPENINGS

Delayed openings will always be scheduled as a Two Hour Delay:

2-Hour Delay

Morning Preschool
North Stonington Elementary School

NO AM PRESCHOOL
10:30 A.M - 3:10 P.M.

EARLY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In an emergency, early dismissals are the most difficult because many parents have to make alternate arrangements for childcare. Weather conditions might necessitate early dismissals prior to 1:00 P.M. A Power Announcement call will be made for all early dismissals. The times of the early dismissals will be posted on our website, announced on the local radio and television stations, and if parents have signed up for the service, an email and Remind text will be sent with the early closing information.

Please discuss with your children what they are to do in the event school closes early.

It will not be possible to personally call parents if school is dismissed early. Therefore, parents should:

1. Be sure children are able to get into the house when they arrive at home:
2. Make arrangements with a neighbor to receive children if needed:
3. Be sure the phone number for the Power Announcement and Remind is up to date.

Class Placement

The process of assigning students to teachers and classes is very complicated and many factors are considered, including the following:

Students' learning styles	Classroom performance	Developmental levels
Emotional development	Peer relations	Gender balancing
Teacher recommendation	Parent input	Social development
Class make-up		

Using the above criteria, class lists of heterogeneous (mixed-ability) groups are developed by classroom teachers in conjunction with special education teachers, our reading and math teachers, the school psychologist, the school counselor, the unified arts teachers and the principal. Students are made aware of their class placement for the upcoming year on the last day of school during our "Step Up" activity.

Disaster Instructions

Security is one of our primary concerns and the doors of the building are locked while students are in the building for the safety of all. In the event of a disaster or emergency, we will be taking some additional precautions to help ensure that our children are safe. There is a variety of contingency plans that we may employ. One may include going into a **lock-down** situation where the children and their teacher will stay in the locked classroom. Parents will be notified in the event of an emergency event through use of our Power Announcement system. Depending on the emergency the children will either be released to their families or if possible, the children would be taken home on their regular bus. It is important for all children to know your family's plan if no one else is at home. For example, should they go to a neighbor's house, or do they have a key to get into your house? **It is crucial that we have updated emergency contact information and phone numbers.**

Communication

North Stonington Elementary School uses a variety of means to communicate information to parents including email to the address you provide, REMIND text (Please provide your cell phone number), hard copies of notices (Please check your child's backpack daily), Power Announcements phone calls, bi-monthly newsletters, as well as email and phone calls from the teachers.

To ensure all students are safe in school and going home, please send communications to the office. Please do not give *notification of bus changes to the bus drivers*. *Notices must be sent to the office to ensure the children are placed on the correct bus.* **Please call the school for permanent bus changes.**

Dress Code

Students must dress in relation to their age and in a manner that shows pride in themselves and their school. The administration reserves the right to decide what may be unacceptable dress based on the following:

- **Clothing must provide adequate coverage**
- **Tops should cover armpit to armpit and cover torsos**
- **Pants should fit and not be low-riding**
- **Hoods and Hats are at teacher discretion but are not allowed during test taking**
- **Words or pictures on clothing should not promote violence, hate, obscene language, and alcohol or drug products.**
- **Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times**

Any dress code violations will be addressed away from peers by administration along with the school counselor or school nurse.

Parents or guardians of students who dress inappropriately will be contacted, and in some cases be required to bring in a change of clothes before their child will be allowed to attend class.

Early Pick-up

If it is necessary to pick up your child/children early, please observe the following procedures:

- Send a note to school stating the time you will be picking up your child.
- Come to the school entrance window to sign out your child. Your child will be called down to the office for dismissal at that time. To avoid losing valuable classroom time, students will not be called until you arrive.
- Please remember: Students dismissed prior to 11:50 A.M. or who arrive after 11:50 A.M. will be considered absent for the day due to the CT State Board of Education definition of attendance for public school districts: *A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day.*

For the safety of all students, parents or guardians are not allowed to go directly to the classroom. No child will be allowed to leave the building during the day unless accompanied by a parent, guardian or other designee.

Field Trips

The field trips are usually culminating activities for a unit of study and are an integral part of our regular curriculum. Teachers work to keep the cost of the trips to a minimum, however at times students will need to pay a fee. **However, no child will be denied participation on a field trip because of difficulty to pay. Please inform the classroom teacher or principal if a need arises.** We appreciate the support of the NSPTO in supplementing funds for the field trips for each grade level.

For safety reasons and because it is a special day for your child in the specific grade level, younger or older siblings are not permitted to accompany parent chaperones on field trips.

FERPA – See end of handbook for annual notice.

Health Services

The nurse will have office hours throughout the school day. Students will not be released for medical purposes until the nurse, health aide, or administrative staff has spoken with the parents or guardians. The nursing staff is not responsible for transportation home in the event of a dismissal for health reasons.

Regarding Head Injuries: If your child sustains a head injury during the day, our school nurse will evaluate and contact home. If the school nurse deems appropriate, parents will have the option to pick up their child for a med evaluation or have them remain in school. For other cases, the parents will be notified and will need to pick up their child for a medical evaluation.

Screenings performed by the school nurse:

Hearing Screenings: Done annually in grades kindergarten, first grade, and grades 3 through 5.

Vision Screenings: Done annually in grades kindergarten, first grade, and grades 3 through 5.

Scoliosis Screenings: Done annually in grade five. An information/exemption form will be mailed home. If you do NOT want your child screened, please return the exemption form to the school nurse by April 1st.

Health Appraisal Requirements

We recognize that some families may not have the opportunity to receive exams for their children due to the current health situations. Please contact our nurse, Ali Souza at (860)535-2805 or email: souzaa@northstonington.k12.ct.us or the principal, Rob Cillino.

Physical Exams: The Connecticut State Law requires that each student receive a State Assessed Physical Exam (requirement by Connecticut School Health Law section 10-206c) four (4) times during a child's school years; Preschool, Kindergarten, Grade 7, and Grade 10. This requirement allows for the promotion of optimum health among school students and is a screening tool for early identification and treatment of health problems.

Requirements to enter Kindergarten: A blue State Assessed Physical Exam form must be completed for registration requirement. The form must include the child's height, weight, blood pressure, pulse, HCT/HGB, Urinalysis, Gross Dental, Postural evaluation, vision and hearing screenings, and chronic disease assessment. Also needed is documentation of immunizations that includes:

- DtaP: At least 4 doses. The last dose must be given on or after 4th birthday.
- Polio: At least 3 doses. The last dose must be given on or after 4th birthday.
- MMR: 2 doses separated by at least 28 days. 1st dose on or after 1st birthday.
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses. Last dose on or after 24 weeks of age.
- Varicella: 2 doses separated by at least 3 months. 1st dose on or after 1st birthday or verification of disease.
- Hib: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday for children less than 5 years old.
- Pneumococcal: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday for children less than 5 years old.
- Hepatitis A: 2 doses given six calendar months apart. 1st dose on or after 1st birthday.

If the requirements are not met, exclusion of your child from school will occur.

For further immunization requirements, please visit the State of Connecticut website at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/deps/student/health/SchoolImmunizations.pdf>

Working together for a healthy school environment we ask parents:

Health Practices and Protocols

- Any student who comes to school with symptoms of illness such as coughing (uncontrollable), earaches, fever (temperature of 100 degrees or over), nausea, rash, red or discharging eyes, or sore throat will be sent home.
- *For the health of the child and fellow students, students should not return to school until they have been free of fever without the use of fever reducing medication, vomiting, or diarrhea for at least 24 hours.*
- If a child is ill and requires exclusion from school, parents will be notified. If a parent is unable to pick the child up from school, it is the parent's responsibility to make other arrangements for the care of the child. If a parent cannot be reached by telephone an individual designated by the family, as noted on the emergency card in the school office, will be asked to assume responsibility until the parents can be reached. Students who are ill should be taken home immediately.
- It is important to notify the nurse's office if your child has any contagious disease, to help prevent it from spreading further. Please also notify the nurse for strep throat, ringworm, and head lice.

Services: The school nurse is always willing to help families meet the individual physical or psychological problems of their child. Through them, state agencies may provide assistance for special medical, dental, psychiatric, or visual help for the individual with a serious problem.

Medications - Administering to Students:

The Connecticut State Law and Regulations (Public Act #723) requires a physician's written order and written authorization of the parent/guardian for each medication ordered including any medications required for insect bites. Forms for physician's orders and parent/guardian authorization are available in the main office or nurse's office. **TYLENOL, COUGH DROPS, OR OTHER OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED WITHOUT WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION FROM A PHYSICIAN AND PARENT/GUARDIAN.**

All medications must be delivered by a parent/guardian in a dispensed from a pharmacy labeled container with the name of the child, name and strength of medicine, physician's name, the date of the original prescription, and directions. Not more than a 45-day supply should be delivered to school. Prescribed medications should not be administered during school hours if it is possible to achieve the desired effects by home administration during other than school hours. We suggest, if you take your sick child to your physician, that you take an authorization form for medication along, in the event the physician prescribes medication to be given at school. This form must be updated annually. **ALL medications need to be picked up by a parent/ guardian at end of the school year. Any remaining medications will be destroyed if arrangements have not been made to pick up meds.**

For the safety of all, students are not allowed to bring the following items to school or carried in backpack.

- **Cough Drops** – Only allowed if a doctors' order form is provided.
- **Any over the counter or prescription medication** – The nurse must have doctors' order to administer medication to students.

Asthma, Respiratory Problems, Allergies (Bees/Insects, etc.) *

Students with these ailments should have the following information in their medical folders in the nurse's office:

1. Orders, provided by parents, from the physician for treatment of acute attacks.
2. Orders, from parents/physicians, in case of extreme emergencies and parents/guardians are not available, as to the preferred course of action for student.
3. Students should have an inhaler, Epipen or other medication in the nurse's office at school at all times.

***Documentation must be provided by the doctor with any of these conditions.**

New Students to North Stonington Elementary School:

All new students must have their health records reviewed by the school nurse before entering North Stonington Schools. A physical that is less than one-year old, as well as all state mandated immunizations are required for all in state/out of state/exchange students before entering. Connecticut State Physical Forms are available in the nurse's office and the main office.



Homework

Homework is an extension of the school day that serves to provide valuable practice for concepts taught. Equally important, homework helps children develop a sense of responsibility. As a parent/guardian, you are asked to guide children to complete their homework. This also provides you an opportunity to gain an insight on how well your child is grasping the material covered during class time.

Teachers are reminded that homework should have an educational purpose and serve as practice, not new learning of content and that it is not necessary to provide homework every night. Some homework can be in the form of games and activities you do with your child. We strongly encourage participation in these type activities as it reinforces concepts and makes learning fun for your child. Other homework will be typical written work as well as online work depending on the grade and subject.

Please contact the classroom teacher if your child is spending more than 10 times the grade level. (For example – Grade 3 should typically have about 3 x 10 minutes = 30 minutes of homework not including the night time reading.)

To develop the love of reading and development of skills, all children are expected to read independently or with a parent every night.

What Parents Can Do to Help

- Instill an attitude that every child can be successful with effort.
- Be excited about what your child is learning.
- Read to or with your child every night.
- Limit the watching of TV and playing of video games.
- Stay in touch with your child's teacher.
- Have fun playing board games or guessing games with your children.

Lost and Found

The lost and found is located at the main door entrance. Items found there are typically articles of clothing and lunch totes. Smaller items such as jewelry may be retrieved from the main office. Last school year over 40 sweatshirts/jackets and other unclaimed items were left behind. **Please label all coats, sweaters, raincoats, boots, lunch boxes, hats, gloves, etc. with the student's name so they can be returned to your child. The Lost and Found will be emptied several times during the year. Families will be notified a week in advance so that they can come and search through during non-school hours. Items remaining will be donated for families in need.**



Lunch Program



Lunch is available to students, including milk. Milk may be purchased for students who bring their own lunches. Lunches may be paid for by the day, week or month. When paying by check, please make it payable to NS Lunch Program. Families can also make payments online at **mySchoolBucks.com**. When registering an account, you will be asked for your child's student ID number. Please call the school office if you need this information.

North Stonington P.T.O.

All parents, teachers and administrators in the North Stonington School System are automatically members of the N.S.P.T.O. There are no formal registration requirements or dues.

The Goal of the N.S.P.T.O:

1. To open the lines of communication between parents, teachers, students, administrators, the Board of Education and residents.
2. To work within the current system to improve the quality of education for the entire community.

To achieve the goals, the N.S.P.T.O., needs your help. By becoming active member, you will demonstrate your commitment to the education of our children, and you will be an informed, contributing partner in education.

WHO'S WHO IN THE N.S.P.T.O.

President - Missy Decesaris

Vice President - TBD

Treasurer – Christopher Books

Secretary – Danielle Steele

Staff Liaison: Leah Stewart

NSPTO Events for 2024 – 2025 School Year

Meetings: PTO meetings are normally held the third Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:00 in NSES Cafeteria

9/16/24 – Raise Craze Fundraiser begins

10/7/24 - Butter braids fundraiser begins

10/25/24 - Fall Fest

11/12/24 - Butter braids pick up

12/2/24 - 12/6/24 - Holiday Sale

12/7/24 - PTO Family Bingo night @ Central Office

2/14/24 – PTO Valentine Dance

3/14/25 – Tile Fun Night

March/April - Basket Raffle (date tbd)

Fridays in March – Lucky Loot

Spring Date TBD – Raise Craze Day

6/6/25 – Summer Sendoff Game Night

What Parents Can Do to Help

- Attend the PTO meetings on the third Tuesday of each month
- Become informed about the work of the PTO
- Support the fundraisers by volunteering

Open House

Our Open House is scheduled to be September 5th from 6:00 to 7:00.

Parent Pickup

Children who are being picked up at the end of the day need to come to school with a note stating they will be Parent Pickup. If your child will be picked up daily, please send a note stating that to the office. The procedures are as follows:

- **For Parent pick-up** in the afternoon, you will be asked to go to the left driveway into the parking lot since the buses will be parking next to the school. You will again exit through the same drive. **Please be aware the driveway pick-up space may backup.**
 - **If your child will be Parent Pick-up daily, please send information to the office prior to the first day of school. All dismissal information needs to go through the office.**
 - Parent Pick-Up students will be dismissed to the gym to wait for the teacher to dismiss them to the adult's car who is picking them up.
 - Afternoon **Parent Pick Up will be the same as last year.** – Parents will wait in their car and students will be brought to them. You will be provided a placard with your child's number to be displayed for teachers so they can deliver your child to the car.
 - **Parents/guardians are asked to provide their picture to the adult who is bringing the child/children to the care.**

Playground Safety Rules



At the start of the school year, the students will review all rules for a safe, respectful, and fun recess. Teachers and paraprofessionals will be on duty during recess time. Children should be aware of the following regulations designed to increase safety while allowing them to have safe fun during their recess break.

1. Children should refrain from rough play and tackling others.
 2. Students must remain within the boundaries of the schoolyard. Permission to go inside must be given by a teacher or an aide.
 3. At the conclusion of the recess period, children are responsible for putting the equipment away, lining up quietly and waiting to be dismissed to their classroom or the cafeteria.
- Recess is a time to encourage physical activity and students should not bring videogames, iPads, trading cards, etc., out for recess.

Photographs/Videos

Throughout the school year, there may be occasions when your child's photograph or video image may be taken for our school newsletter, website, or local newspapers. For your child's safety and protection, we ask that you complete and return the permission slip included in the packet of paperwork received during registration or on the first day of school indicating any restrictions for photos.

Reporting to Parents

Parent/Teacher Conferences

It is essential that regular, ongoing communication be maintained between the school and the parents/guardians of our students. Conferences to discuss student progress and/or concerns can be scheduled at any time during the school year by simply calling the teacher and scheduling an appointment. Scheduled conferences will be held in November and April. All conference days are 1:00 dismissal for students.

2024-2025 Trimesters and Parent/Teacher Conferences

	Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3
Grades Close	Nov. 26, 2024	March 6, 2025	May 30, 2025*
Report Cards Issued	Dec. 10, 2024	March 17, 2025	Last day of school
Parent Teacher Conferences	Nov. 7 th and 8 th	April 3 rd and 4 th	

*Date is first day lost if there is a snow day. It could be changed if there are no weather/snow days.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued 3 times annually. This year, NSES will be changing from our past report cards to a standards based report card. It is our hope that this type of report card will provide families a more in-depth understanding of their child's performance in academic and social/civic areas. An informational meeting will be scheduled in the fall to review the new report cards and discuss the grading process. Please reach out to administration with any questions or concerns.

Retention

At times students do not progress as expected during a school year. The primary factors in the consideration of retention are: academic achievement in all subject areas, levels of basic skill mastery, and developmental and emotional readiness for the succeeding grade. Decisions to retain a child are made through a team decision including parents, teachers and the administration.

School/Classroom Information

At times notes are sent home with the students about important upcoming events, PTO information, schedules for conferences and much more. Please check your child's backpack daily for notes from the teacher or school so you can stay informed of up-coming school events and activities.

School Email

To email our staff members, type in the last name followed by the first initial@nostoschools.org (e.g. cillinor@nostoschools.org).

Regular School Hours

Regular School Day

Grades K - 5 8:25 A.M. to 3:10 P.M.

Preschool

A.M. Session 8:30 A.M. to 11:15 A.M.

P.M. Session 12:10 P.M. to 3:10 P.M.

Early Dismissal Schedule

Grades K - 5 8:25 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

Preschool Early Dismissal Schedule

A.M. Session 8:30 A.M. to 10:15 A.M.

P.M. Session 11:10 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

School Insurance

School insurance is available to parents. Depending on the plan you choose, coverage may include only school time activities or for a higher cost, twenty-four hour coverage is available. Insurance forms are sent home on the first day of school or during registration. Forms are also available in the office any time during the year.

School Newsletter

A school newsletter is published bi-monthly. This is an important way to stay informed of upcoming school events and activities. In order to save on cost and go green, parents can choose to sign up to receive the newsletter by email. A form will be sent home for you to choose the email format.

School Spirit Days



Each month, usually on the last Friday of the month, students and staff are invited to participate in our monthly School Spirit Day. Themes are voted on by the students and notices will be sent home with necessary information. This activity is intended to create a sense of spirit, fun, and pride within our school community. Dress codes are strictly enforced and students are reminded to adhere to them. If exceptions are made students and parents/guardians will be informed.

Standardized Testing

Students in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 will take the Smarter Balanced Assessment during this spring as required by the State. Questions should be directed to your child's teacher or the principal related to this assessment.

The fifth grade students will take the Next Gen Science Test during the spring as well.

Tardiness

Tardiness disrupts the learning process for an individual student, as well as the learning environment in the classroom. **Instruction begins at the start of the day!**

Attendance is taken each day at 8:45, so any child getting into their room after that time is considered tardy.

In an effort to ensure that all of our students progress academically without disruptions, we have developed the following procedures to support families.

The Procedure for tardiness:

After 4 unexcused tardies within a trimester:

A letter will be sent to the parents/guardians to let them know we are concerned. The school will offer any help, if needed, to avoid future tardies.

After 4 additional unexcused tardies:

The teacher will meet with the school principal to discuss the impact of the accumulated tardies on the child's academic progress. If necessary, the school social worker may be involved.

If after the school social worker speaks with the parent/guardian, and the child continues to be tardy the social worker or principal may meet with the parent/guardian to discuss the need for the school to contact any local or state agencies.

Telephone Use

Students are allowed to use the office and classroom phones for emergencies only. Calls home due to illness will be made by our nurse.

If it is necessary to leave a message for a child, contact the school office and the teacher will be notified. In the event of an emergency, students will be called to the office. Due to the age of the students, they are not allowed to carry cell phones.

Unified Art Subjects

	<u>Art</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>P.E.</u>	<u>Library</u>	<u>Computer Lab</u>
Grades K-5	45	45	45	45	45 (Minutes per Week)
Pre-K	25	25	25	25	25

The Unified Arts program includes art, music, physical education, technology, and library for students in grades PreK-5. . Please remember to send your child with sneakers on the day they have PE so they will be able to participate.

Telecommunications/Internet: Acceptable Use Policy

The Board of Education has adopted an Acceptable Use Policy for Technology. This BOE Policy is printed below for your review and the Use Agreement will be sent home to all parents/guardians to read and sign.

Instruction

Network/Internet Acceptable Use

Internet Use

The Internet is a global electronic information infrastructure. It is a network of networks used by educators, business, government, the military, organizations and private individuals. In schools and libraries, the Internet can be used to educate, inform, communicate, and entertain. As a learning resource, the Internet is similar to books, magazines, video, CD-ROM, and other information sources.

Internet access is now available in all classrooms, computer labs, and educational areas throughout North Stonington's Schools. The Board of Education believes this access offers vast, diverse, and unique educational resources. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, collaboration, and communication.

While various groups may use these resources, enrolled students, faculty, parents, and community members shall have priority. Whoever uses the North Stonington Public Schools Wide Area Network System shall behave ethically and comply with the policies and administrative regulations issued by the Superintendent of Schools.

The Board of Education shall determine usage priority. All groups and individuals shall have scheduled access times. For students, faculty, and staff, such times are routinely covered by class schedules. The school Principal or designee shall oversee the use of these resources, including the scheduling of user access. For non-school personnel, usage logs (date/times/system/etc.) shall be maintained and kept on file at the school site. Usage fees may be established by the Board of Education.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the withdrawal of Internet privileges.

North Stonington Schools

The North Stonington School Board of Education recognizes the need to go forward into the twenty-first century embracing the challenge of future technology. Our students must be equipped with the anticipated technical skills to compete in tomorrow's world of information and technology. The North Stonington School District is responsible to the staff, students and community in the following areas:

1. Developing a use policy for network/Internet access.
2. Providing opportunities for training to effectively and appropriately use information technology.
3. Ensuring that users understand that if they misuse the network/Internet they will lose their privilege.
4. Discussing with users, issues of privacy, copyright infringement, e-mail etiquette, computer viruses, and intended use of the Internet resources.
5. The responsibility for developing, implementing, and maintaining security procedures to ensure the integrity of individual and institutional files, including the utilization of filters where appropriate.
6. Treating electronically stored information as confidential. All personal files are confidential and will be treated accordingly. The North Stonington School District shall not examine or disclose the contents without the owner's permission unless required by legal authority or local, state or federal law.
7. Placing effective technology measures that will ensure the safety and security of its students while they are using electronic communications. These measures shall include content-filtering software, email content and monitoring software, and virus protection software.

The Superintendent of Schools will appoint one or more administrators to serve as the "Internet Administrator(s)" who will be responsible for implementing this policy, establishing procedures, conducting training, and supervising access privileges.

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

CIPA became law on April 20, 2001. The North Stonington School District has the necessary infrastructure and technology to ensure the protection of its students during their use of electronic communication media. The district uses *Barracuda* to filter Internet content not deemed suitable for a K-12 environment. This policy also provides other restrictions/safeguards:

1. Access by students to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web is forbidden. Teachers and aides are responsible to closely supervise their students during their use of the Internet.
2. Students are not allowed to participate in chat rooms. Student email accounts will be implemented only after there is suitable software to monitor its use by school administrators and designated personnel.
3. "Hacking" and other unlawful activities are strictly forbidden by any member of the North Stonington School District.
4. Disclosure, use, or dissemination of any personal information concerning North Stonington's students is unauthorized except where authorized by Board of Education policy or state law.
5. Stringent measures will be maintained to restrict students' access to harmful materials, which may be encountered on the Internet.

Student Use

Students may use the Internet to participate in distance learning activities and to locate material to meet their educational and personal information needs. School library media specialists and teachers have a professional responsibility to work together to help students develop the intellectual skills needed to

discriminate among information sources, to identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use information to meet their educational goals.

With worldwide access to computers and people also comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. On a global network, it is impossible to control all materials, and a user may discover controversial information. The North Stonington Public School District believes that the educational value of information and the interaction available on this worldwide network both outweigh the risks that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the school district. One of the district's goals is to support students in the responsible use of this vast reservoir of information.

Student Privileges

Students are advised that correspondence via the Internet is not authorized unless approved by the administration or other proper authority. Use of the Internet will be monitored by the administration to ensure that its use is in support of the school district's goals.

Students have the privilege to access the Internet to facilitate educational growth in technology, information gathering skills, and communication skills.

Student Responsibilities

The use of a student account must be in support of their education in the North Stonington Schools and consistent with the educational objectives of the North Stonington School District.

Since the computer systems, including equipment and operating systems, are the property of the North Stonington Public School District, students should have no expectation that their use of the North Stonington Public School District's computer systems, including Internet access and email, is guaranteed to be private. As such, the user does not have an expectation of privacy in his/her use of such systems and the North Stonington Public School District retains the right to monitor the use of such systems to ensure compliance with school policies and use.

While exercising their privileges to use the Internet as an educational resource, they shall also monitor and accept the responsibility for all material received.

Student users:

1. Have the responsibilities of keeping all pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network from entering the school via the Internet, and to report all violations.
2. Shall not knowingly receive electronic mail containing pornographic material, inappropriate information, or text-encoded files that are potentially dangerous to the integrity of the hardware on school premises.
3. Shall report all inappropriate materials (solicited or unsolicited) to the supervising staff member.
4. Student users are not to use the network for wasteful or frivolous purposes such as playing network games.
5. Should realize that all files and programs on the network belong to someone.
6. May not erase, modify, rename, or make unusable anyone else's files or programs.

Student users may not:

1. Intentionally introduces a computer virus.
2. Deliberately use the computer to annoy or harass others. For example, making accessible any obscene, abusive, or threatening messages is not allowed.
3. Intentionally damage the system, damage information not belonging to user, misuse system sources, or allow others to misuse system sources.
4. Attempt to access information on the Internet that would be considered to be inappropriate for educational use.
5. Use the network for financial or commercial gain.
6. Make any purchases over the Internet.
7. Shall not knowingly submit or received materials containing abusive, harassing, threatening, intimidating, vulgar or obscene materials or any materials that are objectionable in the school environment and that do not further the educational mission or goals of the school system.

Misuse of Privileges and Consequences

Student users are held responsible for their actions and activity, as outlined in the Responsibilities section above. Unacceptable use of the network will result in the suspension of all their privileges. Reinstatement of privileges will be made at the discretion of the administrative staff.

Violations of this policy may result in revocation of access to and privileges relating to the Internet or any electronic information retrieval systems. Violations of this policy by a student may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. The use of the computer system to facilitate a violation of any other policy of the North Stonington Public Schools may also lead to disciplinary action.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

Policy adopted: June 6, 2007

NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

North Stonington, Connecticut

Volunteers

North Stonington Elementary School welcomes our volunteers and encourages parents and guardians to be actively involved! We appreciate the efforts of our volunteers who give whole-heartedly to our children. The volunteer policy will insure the health, safety and welfare of our children. The North Stonington district policy states, "Anyone who volunteers in a North Stonington Public School or attends an event outside of school with students will need to fill out a volunteer form." A Volunteer Disclosure Statement and Application must be completed in order to volunteer in the North Stonington School District. These forms will only need to be filled out once for the duration of your son or daughter's education in the district.

Volunteers are broken into two categories:

1. Any volunteer who is in contact with a student while a staff member is present need only fill out the volunteer application form. A copy of your driver's license must also be included.
2. Anyone who at any time is alone with a student either at school or an outside event (i.e. field trip) will need to fill out the forms and be fingerprinted. Fingerprint cards are available at Central Office. Since it can take a few weeks for the fingerprints to process, it is recommended you

complete the fingerprinting as soon as possible, especially if you are interested in chaperoning on field trips. Instructions will be included with the fingerprint cards that will explain the procedure. Volunteers will have to be fingerprinted only once during the course of his/her child's education in North Stonington.

This year we would like to increase the volunteer opportunities for families. If you would be interested in any permanent volunteer times or duties please reach out to Rob. We would love to have more parents and guardians helping at lunch/recess.

*All visitors to the school will also need to have their licenses scanned into our **Raptor State Identification System** when signing into the office. Again, this process needs to be completed only once. Once scanned, your information is saved into the database and a visitor sticker will be printed for your use each time you sign in.*

Board of Education Policies

The North Stonington Board of Education Policies can now be viewed online on our school website, www.northstonington.k12.ct.us.

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal/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.

Parents or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal or appropriate school official, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them 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 consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in 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. A school official is a person employed by the

district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); a parent of student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.

Contractors, consultants, volunteers, and other parties to whom a school has outsourced services or functions are considered "school officials" who may have access to student records, without consent, subject to following conditions:

- The party is under the direct control of the school.
- The party is subject to the same conditions governing the use and redisclosure of education records applicable to other school officials.
- The contractor must ensure that only individuals with legitimate educational interests, as determined by the district or school, obtain access to the education records. The contractor may not redisclose personally identifiable information without consent unless the District or school has authorized the redisclosure under a FERPA exception and the district or school records the subsequent disclosure.

Upon request, the District will disclose a student's education record without consent to officials of another school district or charter school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. (Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue

SW Washington DC 20202-4605

Note: In addition, a school may want to include its directory notice as required by FERPA regulations with its annual notification of rights under FERPA. Such a notice is provided in item #5. Be sure that which is listed as "Directory Information" in this notification agrees with what the district has designated as "Directory Information."

5. The District has determined that the following information regarding the District's students is not harmful or an invasion of privacy, and therefore will release this information without first obtaining parental consent. If a parent, guardian, person acting as a student's parent in the absence of a parent or guardian, or the student (if 18 or older), does not want the District to release the information listed below, they must notify the District in writing within two weeks of receiving this notice of the information they do not want released.

The following information may be released without obtaining parental consent:

Student's name, parent's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, date and place of birth, grade level, major field of study, enrollment status (full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports including audiovisual or photographic records of the openly visible, activities thereof (e.g. artistic performances sporting contests, assemblies, service projects, awards ceremonies, etc.), weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, most recent previous school attended and photographs of regular school activities that do not disclose specific academic information about the child and/or would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy.

6. Pursuant to federal law, military recruiters and institutions of higher learning may request and receive the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all high school students, unless their parents or guardians notify the school not to release this information. Please notify the District in writing if you do not want this information released.

7. Pursuant to a court issued "ex parte" order, personally identifiable information in the student's records may be released to the Attorney General of the United States or his/her designee in response an "ex parte" order issued in connection with the investigation or persecution of terrorism crimes.

8. Schools may release information received under a community notification program concerning a student who is required to register as a sex offender in the State, with consent.

North Stonington Elementary School

Learning Today - Leading Tomorrow

Wishing all of our students and families the very
best 2024-2025 school year!