

# **STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2022-2023**

## **NORTHWEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

### Northwest Elementary School Expectations

- P ...Be Prepared**
- A ...Be Accepting and Respectful**
- W ...Be Willing to Learn**
- S ...Be Safe**

### Office Hours During School Year:

7:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### School Daily Schedule (subject to change)

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
7:30	Students allowed to enter school building from bus & carpool
7:50	<b>Tardy Bell &amp; Morning Announcements</b>
7:50 - 8:10	Morning Meeting (Positivity Project)
8:10 - 2:30	<b>Instructional Day</b>
2:30	End of school day - dismissal begins

### **We Need you! PLEASE, Get Involved!**

Did you know that your child will do better in school if you are his or her biggest supporter? Get involved at Northwest! Here are some ways you can be here and involved in your child's education:

- Be a part of our Parent Council! Contact the school principal or assistant principal if you are interested.
- Attend school events like Open Houses, Family Nights, Awards Assemblies!
- Please contact your child's teacher for ways that you can support your child's class if you would like to volunteer on a virtual basis.
- Engage with your child and establish structures for success when he or she is working to learn remotely.
- READ with your child every night! If you aren't able to read with your child, set up the expectation and support for him or her to read each night. Children who read every day have much higher chances of success in their education and in life!

## **Home-School Partnership**

At Northwest Elementary, we believe that the home-school partnership can be one of the most powerful indicators of student success. In order to support your child's learning and academic success, as a parent of a student at Northwest Elementary:

- We ask that you will work with your child each night to be sure schoolwork is completed and nightly reading is completed, preferably together.
- We ask that you sign-up for Class Dojo, SeeSaw (K-2nd grade), Canvas (3rd-5th grade) and follow our school Facebook page to keep in communication with your child's teacher and school staff.
- We ask you to limit TV time and see that your child gets a good night's sleep every night.
- We ask that you set firm limits and strong expectations for your child in the area of behavior and expect high levels of performance in academics.
- We ask that you will work with us for the best interest of your child, even though you may not always agree with our recommendations.
- We ask that you let your children know that school work and education are a top priority.
- We ask that you will put your child's education above all other activities like sports, music lessons, etc. We recognize that for us to get to the next level with students, we must all raise our expectations.

## **Capturing Kids' Hearts**

We are thrilled to announce that Northwest Elementary is a Capturing Kids' Hearts school, starting this school year! The staff at Northwest have all received training and will receive ongoing support to implement this relationships-focused system. Through Capturing Kids' Hearts, our focus is on positive student relationships, building trust between school staff and students, and improving school culture. Each classroom community defines what we call a "social contract" at the beginning of the school year and agrees that this is how the members (teacher and students) will treat each other and work together each day. For students (or teachers) who show that they might need reminders of this agreement, school staff will ask four questions:

- 1) What are you doing?
- 2) What are you supposed to be doing?
- 3) Are you doing it?
- 4) What are you going to do about it?
- 5) What will happen if you break our social contract again?

Once a teacher or staff member asks these questions as a reminder, if a student breaks the social contract again, a consequence will be assigned. Each grade-level team of teachers and department have set common consequences for their students. Examples of consequences may include loss of a Class Dojo point, parent contact, reflective lunch, etc.

Capturing Kids' Hearts also includes character lessons that our school counselors are utilizing for a weekly guidance lesson with each homeroom class.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher communications are encouraged at all times; however, at the end of the first, second and third grading periods, parents are expected to make contact with the teachers via a parent/teacher conference. The dates of these meetings will follow the conclusion of the first, second and third nine weeks and the final schedule will be made by the teacher. We will offer in-person parent-teacher conference opportunities during the 2022-2023 school year. However, if Zoom video conferencing is preferred or more convenient for you, please let your child's teacher know.

### **School-wide Title I Events:**

Title I events are federally funded parent-student programs that are designed to support parent involvement in student academic success. Please watch for notices on the school's website, in the Weekly Communicator Folder and in the weekly school phone calls, Class Dojo posts and Facebook announcements for Title I Event dates.

### **SCHOOL ENTRY**

- ALL visitors **must** check in at the school front office before entering any areas of the school campus.
- Please be prepared to show picture identification prior to being allowed to enter the main portion of the school building or in order to check your child out of school.
- Parents/Visitors will need to be buzzed in to gain entry to our school during regular school hours. This feature ensures that we can have a safer environment. Although this is an enhanced safety feature it may slow down office procedures, especially at the end of the day. **Parents arriving after 2:00 to pick up will be asked to wait until the 2:30 dismissal bell.**

### **Attendance and Tardies**

**Absences: Students must attend school everyday. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory and is required by North Carolina Law.** It is the expectation that parents/guardians/families do their very best to be sure that their child(ren) comes to school, ready to learn, each day of our school calendar year. Attendance and engagement in learning is mandatory for all students. This applies to *all* students enrolled in a North Carolina Public School. **Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and engage in learning daily. By NC Law, the school principal may proceed with truancy court for students who accrue more than 10 unexcused absences during the 2022-2023 school year.**

Excused Absences: When a student must miss school or is not able to engage in remote learning, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the student's teacher on the day the student returns after an absence. Absences due to extended illnesses or chronic absences may also require a statement from a physician. See PCS Board of Education policy for a list of reasons an absence may be excused.

In the case of excused absences and out of school suspensions, the student will be permitted to make up his or her work. The student/parent is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

Tardies: **Students are tardy after 7:50** and must be signed in at the main office when late to school. Students who are tardy **must** be accompanied into the school's secure front entrance by a responsible adult (over 18 years of age). **If your child has 10 or more unexcused tardies and/or absences for the school year, please expect to hear from our school social worker and/or school staff member.**

Early Dismissal: **It is important for students to remain at school all day.** When possible, please make any medical or other appointments in the afternoons, after school. Instructional time for each student is too valuable to miss. Habitual offenders may be referred to PCS School Social Worker.

**If your child has a doctor's appointment and must be checked out early, please send your homeroom teacher a note that day.**

**If a situation arises in which you must pick your child up early, please do so prior to 2:00 pm. Parents should be timely for pick-up.** The school assumes no responsibility/liability for the supervision of unattended students prior to 7:30 a.m. or after 2:30 pm unless directly involved in a school-sponsored function. Please make arrangements for your plans to coincide with these hours.

### **Telephone Messages and Changes in Transportation**

School office phones are for office use only. Students will not be allowed to use the office/classroom phones for personal calls except in an emergency and with staff permission. Make sure your child knows which mode of transportation to take home each day after school.

**Changes in afternoon transportation will not be made without a written note from parents/guardians. Transportation change requests will NOT be accepted over the phone. You may also send your child's teacher an email or another form of electronic message, as long as we are able to verify that the message is from you. To ensure the change is acted upon, all written transportation changes must be in writing and received in the office by 11:30 AM of the affected date.**

## **CHANGE IN SCHOOL ROUTINE/SCHEDULE**

### **Emergency Contact**

An emergency contact name (the person to contact in case the parent/guardian cannot be reached in an emergency) must be in every student's file. This information is requested at the time of registration and updated each August. **If a child's emergency contact changes during the year, the school office should be notified immediately.**

### **Change of Address/Telephone Number**

Parents/Guardians are requested to keep the school informed of any changes of address, telephone numbers, or email. This information is necessary in case of an emergency. Unpublished telephone numbers will be kept confidential.

### **Pitt Parent Link**

Pitt Parent Link, an automated notification service, will be used to inform you (by telephone, email, in-app messaging) of a wide variety of school related messages - including attendance notifications, delays and early dismissals. To ensure that all messages are received correctly, make sure your contact phone numbers are accurate and updated when changes have been made. If you would like to sign-up to receive in-app messages, please visit [pitt.parentlink.net](http://pitt.parentlink.net) and sign up.

### **Early Release Days and Teacher Workdays**

PCS will have staff development days and optional teacher workdays this year. Please refer to the PCS School Calendar for **Teacher Workdays (No School)**.

### **School Delays**

In the event school is delayed, the same procedure as "School Closing" will be followed. Students are not to report to school before the announced opening time. Bus schedules will run according to time delays. **\*Breakfast will be served on days when there is either a one or two hour delay.**

## **School Closing**

In the event of extremely bad weather, school system officials will address the opening or closing schools.  
**IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY ANNOUNCEMENT, SCHOOL WILL OPEN ON SCHEDULE.**

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

### **Buses**

**Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right.** It is absolutely necessary that students abide by bus safety rules and obey the driver. Your child will be asked to sit in an assigned seat and remain in that seat until given permission from the bus driver to get up from his or her assigned seat. Misbehavior on the bus may result in temporary or permanent bus suspension. **It is against state law for any unauthorized person (student or adult) to board a bus.** Communication with bus drivers should be handled through the school administration.

In the event of bus discipline infractions, each individual case is investigated and consequences are given based on individual student need.

### **Parking and Traffic Patterns on Campus**

Please use **extreme** caution when driving on our campus. In the mornings, persons bringing students to school should be aware of traffic patterns in the drop off lane. Parents/Guardians who drop-off students each morning will enter the front driveway, follow the traffic flow, drop off in the drop off lane and continue following the traffic pattern. **PLEASE WAIT UNTIL THE CARS IN FRONT OF YOU HAVE UNLOADED BEFORE DRIVING OFF. Drive all the way forward in the carpool lane before allowing your child to exit your car. Do not park along the sidewalk area or leave your vehicle unattended.** If you need to enter the building, please park in parking spaces that will not create traffic jams. **Do not drop children off in the parking lot and ask or expect them to walk across the lane of carpool traffic as this presents a potentially serious safety issue for your child.**

Buses will load and unload in the rear bus area. Please do not park in the bus area or attempt to pick up your child in this area as this poses a safety issue for children.

### **Student Dismissal from School**

All students that are not riding the bus will need to be picked up at the front of the school building.

**Students will NOT be released to any adult who is not on the authorized pick-up list provided by their parents/guardians at any time, for any reason.\*\* Parents/guardians will be asked to provide a picture ID when picking up a student during the school day.**

### **Fire, Tornado and other Emergency Drills**

Emergency drills are held monthly. Instructions are posted in each classroom indicating how to leave the building and where to report. Students must be serious during the drills and become familiar with the procedures. Teachers will teach and review safety procedures throughout the school year.

## **DRESS CODE**

See PITT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION Policy Code: 4316 for additional information. All NWE students and families will receive a copy of the Pitt County Schools Dress Code policy during the first week of school and/or upon registration at Northwest.

## ACADEMICS

### Homework

1. Homework may be assigned to students by any of his or her teachers. When assigned it is expected to be completed and submitted on the next school day or on the day requested. Each grade level will set consequences for not turning in work/homework. Examples include, but are not limited to, exclusion from extra activities, and others.
2. Students having problems completing an assignment must show evidence of an “effort” to complete the assignment. Further explanation will be offered if an assignment was not understood.
3. Parents will be notified if homework is not done continuously (at least three consecutive times).
4. Homework may be included as part of a student’s marking period grade for each subject; however, it is not to exceed 20% of a student’s grade per marking period.

See PCS Board Policy 3135 for more information.

### Textbooks

Textbooks and other resources are furnished free of charge; however, each student assigned a textbook/classroom materials will be held responsible for proper care during the period of assignment. Normal wear and tear is anticipated. **The student to whom the textbooks/materials were issued must pay for all lost, damaged or defaced items.**

### Technology

Students at Northwest have access to a wide range of technology devices to support their learning, as well as access to high-speed Internet. This year, Pitt County Schools will be providing a device to each student for the purposes of remote and face-to-face learning. In order for students to check out or utilize **any** technology devices or access the Internet at school, parents and students must sign and submit a Student Device Agreement form. A copy of this form will be sent home during the first week of school. Until this form is completed and returned, your child will not be able to utilize or access any technology devices at school. In addition, an optional technology fee of \$10/device year will be charged. While the technology fee is not required, if any damage occurs to the device, the parent will be responsible for paying the full cost of the device, charger and case if the technology fee is not paid. All elementary students in PCS are day-users only for technology devices for the 2022-2023 school year. Student devices are not to be brought home unless given permission by the school media coordinator or principal.

### Outstanding Fees

Parents will be notified of fees owed to the school for textbooks, technology, library books, cafeteria fees or other applicable charges at the conclusion of the school year or upon withdrawal from Northwest.

### Media Center

The media center provides each K-5 student with access to a set of current titles. Students are encouraged to check out library books throughout the year. Students are required to pay for lost or damaged materials.

### Physical Education

All students must wear sneakers/tennis shoes during physical education class.

To excuse students from physical activity for an extended period of time, a medical statement signed by a

doctor must be sent to the school. A note must be received from the parent to excuse a student for an abbreviated period of time (three or less classes).

### Field Trips

**STUDENTS MUST HAVE PARENTAL PERMISSION, IN WRITING, BEFORE THEY ARE ALLOWED TO GO ON ANY SCHOOL FIELD TRIP.** Any school trip, no matter how near/ far, is under the policies and behavior standards established by the school and the Board of Education. Students must conduct themselves in an acceptable manner to participate in such activities.

### Protection of Instructional/Learning Time

We value instructional time because it is very important to your child's success, so we do what we can to limit any disruptions to the school day.

- If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please make an appointment to meet with him/her during planning time, before/after school, through email, video conference or over the phone.
- All items to be sent to the classroom should be dropped off at the office to be delivered to the classroom. **Parents will not be allowed to visit the classrooms during the instructional day unless otherwise arranged through the teacher or the school principal/assistant principal.**
- Also in an effort to protect instructional time, our front office staff will take and deliver any messages for your child or your child's teacher. Phone calls will not be put through to the classroom during instructional time for any reason. You may leave a voicemail for your child's teacher and he or she will return your call at their earliest non-instructional break. If you have an emergency, contact the front office and our staff will ensure that you are assisted.

### Grade Reporting Policy

The school operates on a 9-week grading period. Report cards are sent home at the end of each nine week period.

Interim progress reports are scheduled to be delivered to parents at the mid-term of every reporting period.

### Requirements for Promotion

**The North Carolina Student Accountability Standards require all students to perform at grade level in reading and mathematics.** Each local school district has the right to add their requirements to the Standards adopted by the State. If retention is recommended by the teacher, the principal will convene hearings to hear evidence about the student's academic and social progress during the last month of school. The retention/promotion decision is made by the principal.

**PLEASE REFER TO THE DISTRICT HANDBOOK FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY ON REPORT CARD GRADES REQUIRED TO QUALIFY FOR PROMOTION. PLEASE REFER TO THE DISTRICT HANDBOOK FOR THE SPECIAL STATE READ TO ACHIEVE 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE PROMOTION AND SUMMER SCHOOL POLICY.**

## HEALTH

### Child Nutrition

Research indicates that nutritious, well-balanced meals improve student performance. This year, breakfast and lunch will be provided at no cost to all students at Northwest Elementary. If school is delayed one hour or two hours, breakfast **will be** served.

Cafeteria menus are sent home monthly with students and found on the district's website.

Students may bring lunch from home, but will be encouraged to participate in the Community Eligibility Program (no-cost meals). Parents/Guardians are encouraged to send healthy lunches that may include vegetables and fresh fruit. Food (in easy-open packages/containers that do not need refrigeration) and drinks in non-glass containers are highly recommended. **Please avoid sending high-sugar beverages such as sodas, energy drinks, etc.**

**Balloons and other celebratory decorations will not be permitted in the building at any time.**

Students may purchase a la carte items at their own cost by adding money to their individual lunch accounts. Please send a note to your child's teacher indicating the amount enclosed and for what you are paying. Checks should be made payable to **Northwest Elementary Cafeteria.**

### **Food Allergies**

If your child has a food allergy, please let either your child's teacher or the school nurse know. School staff will provide the document needed to place in your child's information.

### **Immunizations/Illnesses**

The North Carolina Immunization Law requires that all students be immunized. Students in grades K-12 **must** show evidence of all immunizations. Please note that you are given a 30-day grace period to update vaccines. After that time, your child will no longer be able to return to school until compliance is reached. Parents/Guardians will be contacted if students become too ill to properly function in the classroom. Please make sure students have recovered from any illness before returning to school. Students must be fever-free for twenty-four hours before returning to school. Additional requirements for handling student illnesses are outlined in the Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit.

### **Medications**

Authorized school personnel cannot administer medication to students unless we have received a medication form properly completed and signed by the doctor.

You may obtain a copy of a medication form from the school nurse or school secretary. Take the form to your child's doctor and have him/her complete this form by listing the medication(s) needed, dosage and number of times per day the medication is to be administered. The physician must complete and sign this form for **prescription and over-the-counter drugs.** Prescription medicines must be brought to school in a pharmacy-labeled bottle that contains instructions on how and when the medication is to be given. Over-the-counter drugs must be received in the original container and will be administered according to the doctor's written instructions.

Any medications delivered to school should be brought in by an adult or they will not be accepted. **Please do not send medications with your child in the book bag, purse, etc.** For the safety of your child, there will be no exceptions to these medication policies.

### **Miscellaneous**



### Lost and Found

All personal belongings of students should be labeled with the student name. This is especially important in jackets, sweaters, lunch boxes and book bags. Lost and found, located in the front office, should be checked regularly. At the end of each semester, unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

### Radios/Music devices with Speakers/Toys/Trading Cards

Any unauthorized **electronic device, toy, cell phone, etc.**, brought to school may be confiscated by staff members and returned to the student/parent at the staff member's discretion. For some grade levels, students may be given permission to utilize their own personal technology device for learning purposes. This will be communicated by your child's teacher and these devices must only be used for the purpose(s) planned by the classroom teacher and/or school staff. The items will **only** be returned to a parent if they are removed from a student.

### Expectations of Students at Northwest Elementary

Northwest Elementary School believes all students can and will learn. It is our responsibility to provide a safe, orderly and effective learning environment for all children. Our Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) Plan utilizes strategies that make children feel capable, connected, and contributing.

Appropriate behavior and expectations will be taught, modeled and addressed in a fair, firm and consistent manner. When necessary, consequences will be reasonable, relevant and in alignment with PCS Discipline Policy. Please see the PCS District Handbook for more information about this policy, levels of offense and associated consequences.

The PBIS team at Northwest has developed the PAWS expectations and pledge, along with our PAWS Matrix to support students with knowing, understanding and displaying behaviors that are aligned with school rules and expectations.

Parents are encouraged to review the Code of Conduct with their children. It is especially effective when this vocabulary is used at home, which reinforces appropriate behavior at school.

### FAMILY EVENTS FOR THE 22-23 SCHOOL YEAR (MAY CHANGE AS NEEDED)

Date	Event	Audience
Thursday, August 25th	Back to School Night	All Families 4:00-6:30 p.m.
Monday, August 29th	First Day of School	
Monday, September 5th	Labor Day/No School	
Monday, September 12th	Candy Man Fundraiser Kickoff	All Students
Monday, September 12th	Lunch with Grandparents	All Students & Families

Date	Event	Audience
Monday, September 26th	Candy Man Fundraiser Last Day	All Students
Tuesday, September 27th	Candy Man Fundraiser orders and money due	All Students
Thursday, September 29th	Title I Curriculum Night	All Families 5:30-7:00 pm
Friday, September 30th	National Custodial Appreciation Day	
Monday, October 3rd	Pastries with the Principal  Motivational Monday	All Parents/Guardians  All Families
Wednesday, October 12th	Fall Picture Day	All Students
Thursday, October 13th	Early Release for Students	All Students
Friday, October 14th	Teacher Workday - No School for Students	All Students
Monday, October 24th - Friday, October 28th	Red Ribbon Week	All Students
Thursday, October 27th	Candy Man Main Event STEM Night + Fall Festival	All Families 5:00-7:00 pm
Tuesday, November 1st	End of First Nine Weeks	
Thursday, November 10th	Muffins and Math Title I Event  Early Release Day	All Families  All Students
Friday, November 11th	Veteran's Day - No School	All Students
Wednesday, November 16th	Fall Picture Make-ups	Students absent for Fall Pictures

Date	Event	Audience
Friday, November 18th	First Nine Weeks Awards Day	All Students & Families
Wednesday, November 23rd - Friday, November 25th	Thanksgiving Break/No School	All Students
Thursday, December 8th	3rd Grade Winter Concert	All Families 6:00 - 7:00
Monday - Friday, December 12th - 16th	Polar Express Week	All Students
December 21st	Early Release Day	All Students
December 22nd - January 2nd, 2023	Winter Break/No School	
Tuesday, January 3rd	Teacher Workday - No School for Students	All Students
Wednesday, January 4th	School starts back	All Students
Monday, January 16th	MLK Holiday/No School	
Friday, January 20th	End of Second Nine Weeks	
Monday, January 23rd	Teacher Workday - No School for Students	All Students
Friday, February 3rd	Second Nine Weeks Awards Day	All Students & Families
Monday, February 6th	Pastries with the Principal Motivational Monday School Counselor Appreciation Day	All Parents All Students and Parents
Monday, February 13th	Teacher Workday - No School for Students	All Students

Date	Event	Audience
Thursday, February 16th	Valentine's Dance/Title 1 Workshop Academic Vocabulary	All Families 5:30-7:00 pm
Thursday, February 23rd	Early Release Day	All Students
Monday, February 27th - Friday, March 3rd	Read Across America Week	All Students
Thursday, March 2nd	Book Tasting Title I Event	All Families 9:00 - 10:00
Monday, March 13th - Friday, March 17th	Spring Break	All Students and Staff
Wednesday, March 22nd	Spring Picture Day	All Students & Staff
Thursday, March 23rd	Early Release Day	All Students
Thursday, March 30th	First Grade Spring Concert	First Grade Students & Families
Monday, April 3rd	Pastries with the Principal Motivational Monday	All Parents All Students and Parents
Tuesday, April 4th	End of 3rd Nine Weeks	
Friday, April 7th	Holiday - No School	All Students & Staff
Monday, April 10th	Teacher Workday - No School for Students	All Students
Thursday, April 13th	Early Release Day	All Students
Friday, April 14th	Third Nine Weeks Awards Day	All Families
Thursday, April 20th	Art Show + STEM Night + Pizza Bingo	All Families
Wednesday, April 26th	Administrative Professionals Day	

Date	Event	Audience
Monday, May 1st - Friday, May 5th	Teacher Appreciation Week	
Wednesday, May 3rd	Early Release Day	All Students
Friday, May 5th	Nurse's Appreciation Day	
Thursday, May 11th	Sizzlin' Summer Ideas Title I Workshop	All Parents
Sunday, May 14th	Mother's Day	
Tuesday, May 23rd	NWE Talent Show	All Families
Monday, May 29th	Memorial Day Holiday - No School	All Students and Staff
Thursday, June 8th	Kindergarten - 4th Grade Awards Day	All Kindergarten - Fourth Grade Students & Families
Friday, June 9th	Last Day of School 5th Grade Celebration Three Hour Early Release	
Sunday, June 18th	Father's Day	