

# **NORTHSHORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK 2020-2021**

**Due to unique circumstances regarding opening of school during Covid-19, certain practices outlined in this handbook may be adjusted this year - please refer to the NES reopening handbook for current practices.**

## **A. WELCOME**

We are very excited to begin another year in a school where every child can learn and feel valued. We would like to welcome you to Northshore Elementary School. Our school is part of the Knox County School System, a system known across the state and nation for its academic standards and excellent curriculum. We currently have approximately 1,060 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth.

We are thankful for the support of our community and parents. Our administration, faculty and staff are committed to providing the best education for all of our children.

## **B. SCHOOL ENTRANCE**

Requirements for school entrance are as follows:

1. Children must be five years of age by August 15th in order to be eligible for Kindergarten.
2. Children must be six years of age by August 15th in order to be eligible for First Grade and must have completed an accredited Kindergarten.
3. The Tennessee Certification of Immunization (including dates for all shots) must be provided before the first day of school. A physical exam must also be completed within the past year (12 month period) prior to entering school.
4. A document verifying date of birth must be shown at the time of registration (official birth certificate or passport).
5. Proof of residency in school zone.

For more information regarding Kindergarten entry, please visit the Northshore Elementary or Knox County Schools' website.

### **C. SCHOOL HOURS**

The school day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. for all grades. School doors remain locked until 7:05 a.m. No students will be admitted prior to that time.

Students stay in the designated areas until 7:35 a.m., then report to their classrooms. Any child that arrives at school after 7:45 a.m. should report to the office with a parent for a tardy slip. Your child must have a tardy slip in order to enter the classroom. Please do **NOT** drop your child off in our parking lot or on Thunderhead Road. Drop-offs are only to occur in the designated areas (the car line around the back of the school building or in the front of the school once school bus arrival is completed). All children enter through the gym doors prior to 7:45 a.m.

### **D. VISITORS \***

Parents, volunteers and other citizens are always welcome in our school. However, we must insist on the following policies for the safety of our children. All visitors must report to the school office before making a visit. Visitors must sign in, present identification, and state the reason for the visit. All visitors should obtain and wear a visitors badge from the office, making students and staff aware that procedure has been followed. All visitors bringing items for students must be sure the items are labeled with the student's name and teacher. Staff members and PTA will provide a schedule of volunteers to the office each day. Please ensure you are on the volunteer schedule. This policy is to be followed at all times.

**Photographs:** For the safety of all students, please do not upload student photos from school events to the internet. This includes social networks. This, of course, does not apply to photos of your own children.

All volunteers and visitors must follow the Knox County Volunteers Policy IFCD (revised 8/12) and Knox County Procedure IFCD (revised 10/13). In accordance with this procedure, in order to volunteer in the Knox County Schools, an individual must:

- Sign a confidentiality agreement to protect the rights of students and parents (located in office or online)

- Sign in and out each time they visit a school
  - Be punctual and prepared, and notify the appropriate school contact in the event of an absence or delay
  - Appear clean, neat and appropriately attired
  - Wear an identification tag at all times while on school grounds
  - Work with students in area designated by school staff
- Only provide food or drink to a student if authorized by the student's teacher or principal. In order to volunteer at a Level 1 or 2 clearance level, you must sign the confidentiality agreement and the task must take place under the supervision of a Knox County Schools employee and involves little or no student contact for Level 1 or the task takes place under the supervision of a certified employee in a classroom or other group setting for Level 2. In order to volunteer at a Level 3 or 4, a background check must be submitted (can be sent to the office or the child's teacher and it is processed by Knox County). Level 3 involves a task that has direct contact with students under limited supervision by school staff unsupervised without driving students such as a field trip or working in small groups not under the supervision of an employee (in hallway area). Level 4 involves unsupervised contact with students on or off campus that is supervised with driving students. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or the office.

## **E. TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is provided for children who live one mile or more from the school. This is the policy of the Knox County Board of Education. The Coordinator of Transportation arranges routes and stops. The coordinator can be contacted at 594-1550.

Buses will begin to run at approximately 6:45 a.m. Please check the newspapers or Knox County Schools website the week before school begins to find out the bus schedules.

**Any time a student changes his/her regular way of going home, a note concerning the change must be sent to the teacher.**

Any student who wishes to ride home on a different bus must also have a note from the parents and be approved by the front office.

## **F. DISMISSAL**

The regular dismissal time is 2:45 p.m. On half days all students will be dismissed at 11:15 a.m.

Request for early dismissal must be made in writing or in person by the parent or guardian. We will not be able to take phone calls concerning dismissal after 2:15 p.m. unless it is an extreme emergency. We must have time to notify the classroom teacher of the change. **All students must be signed out in the office before leaving.** Students who walk home or are transported in cars are dismissed from school after the buses have departed. If your child has not been picked up by 3:05 p.m., you will need to come into the office to sign him/her out. Please observe the “**NO PARKING**” areas and campus signage around the school. **There are no early dismissals between 2:15 p.m. and 2:45 p.m.**

Parents must have the official Northshore dismissal sign placed in their car window to pick up students in the car line. Persons without the sign must park and show I.D. in the school office.

**Walkers will be released and taken to bus entrance off campus (by the marquee sign).** If you would like your child to walk home without your presence, you will need to provide written documentation to the classroom teacher.

## **G. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

In order to be counted present on any and all accounting attendance records, students in grades K-12 shall attend school for a time period of three (3) hours and thirty (30) minutes per school day. Students who attend less than three (3) hours and thirty (30) minutes per school day shall be recorded and reported as absent on any and all attendance records.

Knox County Schools excuses absences for sickness, death in the immediate family, recognized religious holidays and genuine family emergencies. Knox County does not excuse absences caused by early or extended vacations or weekend trips. Excuses for student absences must be made in writing. All notes should be dated, signed and turned into the classroom teacher within 5 days of the student's return to school. Up to 10 absences per school year may be excused with the parent/guardian note that falls in one

of the excused absence categories. After 10, a doctor's excuse will be required for any additional absences. A phone call or email without a note will not be accepted as an excused absence.

Attendance is very important as children lose out on a great deal of instruction and class work during the period of absence. This is particularly important for children in the early grades as new concepts are presented on a daily basis. Experience has shown us that regular attendance improves achievement.

Parent/guardian of a student with excessive (more than 5) absences may appeal the absences. Whenever possible, attendance issues should be resolved at the school level. Parents/guardians who wish to appeal a student's excessive (more than 5) absences, shall communicate their appeal to the school principal. At the appeal, the principal will provide the parent/guardian written notice of the unexcused absences and the parent/guardian will have the opportunity to be heard. The burden of proof rests on the student or the parent/guardian. (See Policy J-120 for additional information)

**TRUANCY:** Excessive absenteeism is a violation of state law and calls for stern action by the school district. Parents are held responsible for keeping their children in school.

**SICKNESS:** If students are absent due to illness, they will be given extra time to makeup missed work when they return to school (one day for every day absent). Please do NOT call the school office to get their assignments unless your child is out for multiple days.

**TARDINESS:** Tardiness is as serious as absenteeism. Continued tardiness can disrupt class and cheat children out of a smooth, productive and organized morning. Please make every effort to have your child at school on time.

**FIELD TRIPS \* :** It is our school policy that any time a class takes a field trip and bus transportation is provided, **all students should ride the bus.**

## **H. TEXTBOOKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Textbooks are provided by the taxpayers of Tennessee. All students are fully responsible for the care of any textbooks that are issued to them. Loss or destruction of these books will require reimbursement to the school system. In some subject areas, textbooks may not be issued to each student because the school may use several different titles rather than the same textbook for all students in the same grade. Some textbooks can be accessed online at [www.eduplace.com](http://www.eduplace.com) and [www.pearsonsuccessnet.com](http://www.pearsonsuccessnet.com).

A fee for art supplies and other student consumable goods will be requested at the beginning of the school year. A letter will be sent home the first day of school concerning this fee and requested school supplies for each grade level.

## **I. SCHOOL CLINIC AND MEDICATION**

Northshore Elementary School is fortunate to have a school clinic that is available to all students daily. This service is provided through volunteer efforts and financial support of the Northshore PTA. The Red Cross trains volunteers. Please call the office or the PTA if you would like to volunteer.

As a general policy, medicines are not administered to children at school. However, in special circumstances, long-term medication required during school hours can be dispensed by the school staff. The following procedures must be followed for over-the-counter and prescription medication:

- The physician must fill out and the parent must sign a medical form for each medication. A new form must be completed when there is a change in time or dosage. (Forms available in office or physician's office.)
- Medication in the original prescription bottle or in the unopened over-the-counter container must be brought to the school by a parent or guardian and submitted to the office. The student must **NEVER** bring it in.
- School staff and Parent will then verify the quantity in the bottle.
- Medication will be kept in a safe and locked area. The school will notify the parent when the medication is almost gone.

## **J. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

The emergency card kept on file in the clinic and in our Student Information Systems database is our link to you in case of an emergency. The cards and a computer generated profile sheet are issued to students the first school day and should be returned the next day. It is vital that we always have correct phone numbers for parents, both at home and work. Please help us by providing several emergency contact numbers and by keeping them up to date. We regard all phone numbers and addresses as private. Anyone not listed on the emergency cards will not be permitted to pick up the student.

**SCHOOL CLOSING:** Decisions to close school because of inclement weather or disaster are made by personnel at the Central Office of the Knox County School System...not by individual schools. Please do not call the school office to find out if school is closed or dismissed early. Local television, radio stations and the Knox County website, and social media will broadcast school closings or early dismissal.

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL DISMISSAL:** When school is dismissed early, school buses will operate their regular runs, although routes on secondary roads may be affected by hazardous road conditions. In order to avoid last-minute confusion, the school requests that all parents complete an “Emergency School Dismissal” form indicating how you wish your child to be dismissed in such a situation. The school will provide forms.

## **K. SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

Well-balanced lunches, including milk, are offered at Northshore Elementary School. Extra milk, food and other items as determined by the Food Services department may be purchased for an additional charge.

Free and reduced-priced lunches are available to students who qualify for them. You may obtain this information by completing the online form located at [knoxschools.org](http://knoxschools.org) under Parent Services or by requesting the form from the office or your child’s teacher.

In accordance with Knox County policy, the school cafeteria is not allowed to charge lunches. Children will be discouraged from forming the habit of repeatedly calling home for lunch money. Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:10 a.m. - 7:35 a.m.

## **L. PARTIES AND OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

Although we spend the majority of our time on instruction, there are times when we pause for celebrations. We will have two parties each year. Other celebrations or special treats will be left up to the professional judgment of the teacher. Birthdays are very special. Each child will receive a birthday memento from the office and have his or her name announced on the announcements. If you wish to send in a special treat for your child or their class, please check with the classroom teacher several days prior to your child’s birthday. Please do not send treats to be eaten in the cafeteria.

A **great idea for birthdays** is to call the cafeteria or notify your students’ teacher and arrange to pay for ice cream for the class. The students really enjoy this special treat.

However, birthday cakes and cupcakes will not be allowed for these events. We also have so many students with food allergies and ice cream would allow choice for students who are allergic to certain items (there is a nice variety). Attached is an approved snack list that has been provided for by the county. The information will be available in the office and from your classroom teacher as well.

Please do not send invitations for private celebrations to school for your child's teacher to distribute unless there is an invitation for every student in the class. This can cause many hurt feelings.

Please do not bring or send balloons to school unless your child will be a car rider on that day. Balloons are not allowed on the school bus.

#### **M. TELEPHONE CALLS TO THE SCHOOL**

Please do not ask our office personnel to relay messages to children except in case of emergency. We will not call children to the telephone except for real emergencies, and then only to talk with parents or guardians.

Children should not form the habit of repeatedly calling home to ask parents to deliver lunch money, forgotten assignments, etc. Teachers cannot be called to the telephone to talk to parents while their classes are in session. If you wish to speak with a teacher by phone, please place your request through the school office or email the teacher directly. All staff emails can be located on our website. Teachers will return your call when they are not responsible for the supervision and instruction of students.

#### **Use by students in grades Pre-K-5**

Students may possess PCDs while on school property. However, the PCD must be in the off mode and must be kept in a backpack, purse or similar personal carry-all and may not be used unless the principal or the principal's designee grants a student permission to do so. The principal or the principal's designee may specifically grant permission for a student to use a PCD during class time for specific academic purpose or at other times for other purposes that the principal deems appropriate.

#### **N. PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES / OBSERVATIONS \***

Northshore Elementary Teachers consider parent conferences a key element in communicating with parents. If you wish to arrange a conference with your child's

teacher, please call the school office or email the teacher directly. The teacher will contact you to establish a mutually convenient date and time for the conference.

All visitors and volunteers must report first to the school office (see Section D) and visits shall NOT be used for unscheduled parent-teacher conferences.

Parents are welcome to volunteer in the classroom and in our school. There are a wide variety of opportunities through our PTA, Library, and individual classroom/teacher preference. Parents are also able to request and schedule a classroom observation. In order to maintain the safety and security of our students in the building and limit any distractions to classroom instruction, we ask that the Volunteers and Classroom Observations meet the following guidelines:

1. Any visitor in our building must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's badge before entering the building.
2. Volunteers and Observations need to be requested and scheduled in advance.
3. Volunteers working inside the classroom with teacher supervision must have signed the confidentiality agreement.
4. Volunteers working with groups of students outside of the direct supervision of the teacher (field trips with small groups, working in the hallway with students, etc.) must have a completed an approved background check to have clearance to work with students.
5. Classroom Observations (since they are conducted under the supervision of the teacher) require the confidentiality agreement signed.
6. Classroom Observations may be conducted after submitting a request to the teacher and/or principal and are limited to once a semester.
7. Classroom Observations should be no longer than 30 minutes in order to limit classroom distractions to the instruction of our students.
8. For the protection of the other students' privacy and confidentiality in the classroom, we ask that recordings not be made.
9. If you take pictures during any event in the classroom or at school of students other than your own child, please do not post them to any social media site without permission from all the other parent/guardians of the students in the picture. Please be mindful of names on papers, bulletin boards, and students in background of your pictures as well. We want our parents to be able to share the fun and exciting things that are going on at Northshore Elementary School, but we also want to be respectful of the privacy and confidentiality of other students in our building.

## **O. REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued every nine weeks. They should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to school immediately. Interim progress reports will be sent to parents mid-way through each nine-week period.

Report cards may be supplemented by parent-teacher conferences or by other written reports to parents. Classroom Teachers will regularly send home samples of each child's work to be signed by the parents or guardians and returned to school.

## **P. PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)**

The Northshore PTA provides a vast amount of support and assistance to the school and community. Our PTA gives to our schools through administration of our school clinic and countless other activities. We encourage you to join and to play an active role in our PTA.

## **Q. ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Accident insurance will be made available to all students through Knox County Schools. Contact the office for more information.

## **R. LOST AND FOUND**

We maintain a lost and found at school. We will be donating these items to charity on a regular basis. Please come by when an item is lost and be sure to label all items (lunch boxes, jackets etc.) with your child's name and teacher's name

## **S. STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Most discipline matters will be handled among teachers, students, and parents. However, when a student's behavior affects other students and disrupts learning in the classroom or prevents the teacher from teaching, the teacher and/or the principal will take appropriate action.

## **T. NOTES REQUIRED FROM PARENTS**

The school requires notes from parents for the following: - absences/illness – walker-request for early dismissal - permission for field trips- prolonged absence from school - any changes to dismissal - allergic reactions (milk, food, insect) - specific medical treatment or special health needs - change of emergency information.

## **U. ELECTRONICS**

All phones and other electronic equipment brought to school by students must be turned **OFF** and out of sight during school hours. The school cannot be responsible for electronic items that are broken, damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen. This includes, but is not limited to, iPads, tablets, phones, smart watches, etc.

## **V. KNOX COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DRESS CODE**

The standards for elementary school dress reflect "common sense" and a concern for each child's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. There is a strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. Apparel or appearance which tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation must be avoided. To help create the best learning environment for elementary students, the following standards for student dress must be observed in all Knox County Elementary Schools:

1. Pants must not sag below the waist and must be at a safe length.
2. Head apparel, except for religious or medical reasons, must not be worn inside the school building.
3. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor or outdoor physical activity.
4. Clothing or accessories may not create disruption or display vulgar language or images and must not advertise products which students may not legally purchase.
5. For students in Grades 3-5, "short shorts", mini-skirts, and skin-tight outer materials without proper coverage are inappropriate attire.
6. For students in Grades 3-5, shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and shoulders, and shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff visible. Skin-tight outer materials are prohibited without appropriate coverage.

The school administration reserves the right to determine whether the student's attire and appearance are within the acceptable limits. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the principal/designee shall prevail. The principal may allow exceptions for school-wide programs or special classroom activities. The teachers and the principal will administer appropriate consequences for policy infractions.

## **W. UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY**

Under the Tennessee State Board of Education Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-11(g), or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting Brian Hartsell at 865-594-1502.

## **X. PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Knox County School System affirms that it will comply with Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, Title IV and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Age Discrimination Act in Employment Act of 1967.

*No person shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, sex, genetics, religion, age, disability or veteran status, be excluded from participation in, be denied, the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or be subjected to discrimination in employment opportunities or benefits.*

Anyone who believes that Knox County School System has discriminated against them or another individual may file a complaint. Knox County Schools has designated the following people to handle such grievances to comply with the law. Student complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability under the IDEIA should be directed to Melissa Massie, Director of Special Education, Room 909 of the Andrew Johnson Building, telephone number (865) 594-1540. All other complaints of discrimination on the basis of

disability, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, genetics or veteran status should call Title VI, Title IX and ADA and OCR Coordinator, Room 1612B of the Andrew Johnson Building, telephone (865)-594-1686 and/or Title VI Coordinator Tennessee Department of Education and/or The Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 2048, 04-3010, Atlanta, Georgia, 30301-2048.

## **Y. BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT**

Knox County Schools prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and cyber-bullying. A safe and courteous environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate students in a safe and orderly environment. "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance. Please see Board Policy J-211 for additional information. Please notify an administrator or our school counselor if you have concerns of bullying with your child.

\* Please refer to the NES reopening handbook for alterations to this procedure for SY2020-2021.