

New Prague Area Schools

K-5

PARENT HANDBOOK

August 2011

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide for
New Prague Area Schools students and their
parents/guardians. It is not an all-inclusive list of rules,
but rather an outline of expectations and procedures
which contribute to the operation of the school.
Parents/guardians and students are responsible for
knowing the information contained within.

For more information,
please contact your school.

Welcome to New Prague Area Schools!

The staff at New Prague Area Schools welcomes you to another school year. We believe that a partnership between school and home provides maximum educational opportunities for children. Quality education can best be achieved when we work together.

This parent handbook is an attempt to convey to you some of the expectations and procedures that we will follow this school year. You will be receiving some additional information containing other policies that pertain to your child. We suggest that you keep these for reference purposes should a question arise. Supplemental information such as the school calendar and the names of the teachers employed at New Prague Area Schools will be available in fall. In addition, monthly newsletters and various memos should help keep you informed. Should questions arise, please feel free to contact the school for additional information.

All policies can be found on the ISD 721 New Prague Area Schools website: www.np.k12.mn.us

From time to time, issues arise that I may need to be made aware of. If I am not available at the time of your call, please leave me a voicemail. I will make every attempt to return all phone calls in a timely manner.

We are looking forward to working with your child during the school year. The entire staff and I hope that your child will have a satisfying and rewarding year at our school.

NEW PRAGUE AREA SCHOOLS MISSION, VISION, VALUES & PRIORITIES

Mission:

To engage and support everyone in high levels of learning.

Vision:

To be a premier school district that models excellence and embraces the challenges of the 21st century.

Values:

- Allocate time and support to best practice research and implementation
- Respect diverse thinking
- Model appropriate, positive interactions
- Think globally
- Learn and apply supportive, interactive technologies

Priorities:

- High Academic Achievement
- Fiscal Integrity
- Effective, Engaging Communication

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ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, DRUG-FREE ENVIRONMENT

District 721 has instituted an alcohol, tobacco and drug-free environment. No students, parents/guardians, staff, or visitors will be allowed to use tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drugs in the buildings, on the school grounds, or in school vehicles. Everyone's cooperation is appreciated. Please refer to Policies #417 and #419 for additional information on the school's website.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

Refer to Appendix "A" for more information on Attendance Procedure.

Regular attendance is necessary for students' academic success. It also promotes a positive work ethic for employment skills and future success.

To excuse an absence due to illness, the parent/guardian must call the school office (not the classroom teacher) prior to 9:10 a.m. on the day of the illness. The voicemail attendance hotline is available 24 hours per day. Failure to do so may result in an unexcused absence. This policy has been instituted for the safety of the child.

Excessive absence from classes during the school year:

- Three (3) unexcused absences – Referral to the principal; letter sent to parent/guardian.
- Five (5) unexcused absences – Letter to parent/guardian outlining procedure for referral to county services.
- Seven (7) unexcused absences – Letter to parent/guardian; possible report of educational neglect made to the County Department of Human Services.
- Illness totaling ten (10) days per year may require a report from a doctor. All students falling behind in the classroom due to absences may be referred to the Student/Teacher Assistance Team.

Tardy: A student is marked tardy if not seated and ready for class at the start of the day. To be admitted into class, an office pass will be required. Exceptions will be handled by the school office. Excessive tardiness during the school year will result in the following consequences:

- Three (3) incidents – Referral to the principal; letter sent to parent/guardian.
- Excessive tardiness may result in a referral to county services.

AUDIO-VISUAL PROGRAM

The audio-visual program is an important part of the child's school life. Many videos are available for use by the classroom teacher. These aids help your child by stimulating and satisfying his curiosity, by clarifying his ideas, and by enriching his experience.

BULLYING

A safe environment is needed for students to learn, to attain high academic standards, and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. Please refer to Policy #514 on the school's website for additional information. The policy also includes any cyber devices such as computers and phones. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property at school-related functions.

CALLS TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

We encourage you to call your child's teacher whenever it is necessary. All staff members have individual voicemail extensions which are accessible 24 hours per day. Teachers will make every

attempt to return calls on the day received, unless they are absent. Please refrain from calling teachers at home, after school hours, or on weekends regarding school related-issues. The best time to call staff is from 8 - 9 a.m. and 3:45 - 4 p.m. Calls regarding student absences should be made to the attendance line, not only to the teacher.

CLASS SCHEDULES

New Prague Area Schools students are exposed to all academic areas of learning required by the State of Minnesota. All classes are allotted specific portions of time which are also recommended by the state. To insure that all students get their share of instruction in each area, class schedules are set up using a rotating daily schedule (Day 1 through Day 5). Upon return after a snow day, class schedules will pick up the 'Day' missed and move others accordingly. An annual school calendar will be distributed to all alternate day kindergarten students indicating their scheduled days.

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

Professional staff members are responsible for forming appropriate instructional groups which reflect concern for the needs of students. Our goal is to form balanced groups that will enable every child to achieve the educational goals of the school. Parents/guardians may choose to provide information to assist the school in this process. Examples include:

- Learning styles (such as interests at home, preference for specific kinds of activities, and interactions with other children, etc.).
- Type of learning environment that is most helpful (less structured, more structured, etc.).
- Unique personality traits of the child (highly sensitive, talkative, quiet, etc.).
- Specific needs (hearing, vision, speech, etc.)
- Any other relevant information.
- Specific names of staff should not be listed.

The school will attempt to honor this request in the best interest of your child and within the educational program philosophy of the district. The school cannot, however, guarantee the honoring of specific parent/guardian requests.

Input forms are available to all parents/guardians during the spring of the year to allow a scheduled process in making out class lists. Parents/guardians having specific questions should contact the building principal.

“CODE RED”

Schools across America are responding to what appears to be a trend of violence that has happened in school systems. Although these events are rare and not likely to happen in New Prague, we have made a commitment to make every possible attempt to keep our children safe. A “code red” situation will exist if it becomes necessary to secure a building during the school day due to a potentially dangerous situation. Students will practice this drill just as they do any other emergency situation. The entire plan may be reviewed by contacting the school office.

COLD WEATHER PROCEDURES

During the cold winter months, make a special effort to observe your child carefully before sending him/her off to school. Check to be sure that clothing is adequate, i.e., boots, mittens, head covering, a winter weight coat, and snow pants. Be sure that he/she is dressed for an unexpected emergency such as a stalled bus, a lengthy wait at the bus stop, or an extreme change in the weather. Zero degree windchill has been used as a guideline for sending students outside at noon. Colder temperatures dictate that students spend their recess time indoors.

COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET

The use of computer technology is a privilege, not a right. Students who use the school computers responsibly and adhere to the rules will maintain their computer privileges. Students who do not follow the rules will lose their computer privileges. It is essential that students maximize this learning opportunity while developing the skills necessary for evaluating the quality of information, as well as navigating the vast quantity of information now available. Students should acknowledge the additional academic responsibilities that come with using the Internet.

If a parent has objections about the use of our networks, servers and Internet, or seeks an alternate assignment that does not access our networks, servers or Internet, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school district and state their objection.

For more information, see Policy #524 on the district's website.

DATA PRIVACY/CUMULATIVE RECORDS

Upon registration at New Prague Area Schools, each child accumulates a record file in the school office. This file contains test scores, report cards, attendance records, etc. Parents/guardians wishing to review this file may do so by contacting the school office to set up an appointment. For additional information, please refer to Policy #515 on the school's website.

Student Directory Information: The following information has been designated as directory information. If you do not want all or some of the following information on your child released, you must contact the school office in writing by September 15 of the current school year, and inform them of the information that is to remain confidential.

Public information that may be released includes: student name, address, telephone numbers (not un-listed), participation in activities and sports, height and weight of member of team, does student attend (yes/no), awards received, name and phone number of parents/guardians. **Public information that MAY NOT be released includes:** religion, race, color, social position, date and place of birth, nationality, social security number, and dates of attendance.

The following is educational data which is accessible to parent/guardian (need signed release of parent/guardian for any outside agency): cumulative file, special education folder, health file, discipline information, emergency card, and photos.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

In the Responsive Classroom approach, how teachers talk to children is a critical tool for classroom management. Discipline consists of proactive and reactive components. Teacher language is a proactive intervention. We can use our language to help children develop self-control and construct positive relationships. How we talk can build up or knock down; encourage or demoralize. It is so easy to take our words for granted and forget that they are a powerful tool; a way that we "encourage" and "empower" children's best efforts to take care of themselves, one another, and their environment.

Effective teacher language takes awareness and practice. In the Responsive Classroom approach, the goal is to use language to encourage and empower children. We encourage children when we notice and acknowledge their attempts to meet expectations. We empower children when we express faith in their ability to follow through, recover controls, and make constructive choices.

Some of the general characteristics of encouraging and empowering language include the following:

- Be specific and direct. ("We will start when I see everyone's eyes on Jason.")
- Speak to the child(ren) rather than about the child(ren). ("Leila, I noticed you stayed in your seat while I talked to Derek. Thanks for your cooperation.")
- Stress the deed not the doer. Describe actions and deeds rather than making judgments. ("I notice a lot of paper on the floor. We can't leave the room until it is clean.")
- Give children the opportunity to follow through with appropriate behavior. ("Show me how you can say that with your friendly words.")
- Frame a positive action and choice. ("You can walk slowly and quietly with your partner or you can walk next to me.")

Teachers using a Responsive Classroom approach employ three simple structures to support encouraging and empowering language. We call those structures "The Three R's" to reinforce, to remind, to redirect.

For more information, refer to Appendix A - Behavior Expectations and Consequences for Severe Behavior.

DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

When picking up your child during school hours, parents/guardians are asked to come to the office and sign out your child. It is requested that parents/guardians, or authorized people, pick up students at the office only. Teachers have been instructed not to release children directly from the classroom without permission from the office. This regulation is for the safety of your child.

Request for early pick up prior to 3:30 p.m.

Educational research shows that the best times for learning are the first hour of the school day and the last minutes of the school day. Students remember best what they have learned if they review just before going home. Requests to call students from class during the ending of the school day interrupt this important time for your child as well as the rest of the class.

It is appreciated when parents/guardians pick up students only at the regular dismissal time. Pick-ups prior to 3:30 p.m. will result in a half-day absence. Refer to Attendance Policy #503 on the school's website.

Dismissal Procedure

Elementary schools dismiss students at 3:45 p.m. Parents/guardians may pick up their child in front of the office at 3:40 p.m. For those that have concerns and would like the school to monitor the dismissal of their child closer, they may choose to have the child(ren) meet them in the office and sign them out at that location.

DOCTOR AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Send a note to school the day of the appointment (or as soon as known) indicating the time you want to pick up your child from the office. We encourage parents to schedule medical appointments before or after school if possible.

DRESS CODE

There is a special concern about student dress and grooming as it influences the health and safety of students, as well as its affect on the learning process. The school expects students to dress in a clean, safe, and school-appropriate manner. Clothing which is disruptive or displays improper language or graphics will not be allowed. Excessively revealing clothing including backless, low cut tops, exposed shoulders or abdomen are not acceptable. Skirts and shorts should not be of a length

that may be considered inappropriate or offensive. Appropriate footwear must be worn for physical education classes and on the playground. Flipflops are discouraged. Heelies (shoes with wheels) are not allowed at school. Students will not be allowed to wear any chains, spikes, or any gang-related articles or dress. Dressing in this manner is disruptive to the educational process and New Prague Area Schools reserves the right to send students home for inappropriate dress. All state regulations must be followed. During the school day, caps, hats or sunglasses are not to be worn by students. Teachers need to report inappropriate dress to building administration or send students to the office.

There are times that special events such as Track and Field Day, Hat Day, skiing unit in physical education, etc. requires special attention to dress. Every effort will be made to notify the parents/guardians that the event is to take place by having the notification on the monthly calendar, newsletter, and/or communications from the teacher. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide the correct attire and to provide the necessary protection such as sunscreen for their child. Additional information can be found in Policy #504.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cellular phones, electronic games, MP3 players, iPods, and other such devices are not allowed at school. These items will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day, or at the end of the year. The school does not assume any liability for any such items that are lost, damaged, or sold. Cell phones brought to and from school for safety and communication purposes must be done so with parent permission and left in the student's backpack and locker throughout the school day. Cell phones brought out and used during the school day will be confiscated and held in the office until parents can be contacted to pick up the device. Laser pointers, generally used by teachers for instructional purposes, are considered a weapon and should not ever come to school.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Schools may be closed by the Superintendent of Schools in the event of extreme weather conditions or emergency circumstances. Parents/guardians should remain alert to weather conditions throughout the day when early dismissal may be possible. These closings will be announced by stations normally used for weather announcements.

Official announcements will be made over the following radio and television stations:

Radio:

WCCO (830 AM) of Minneapolis-St. Paul
KCHK (1350 AM & 95.5 FM) of New Prague & Northfield

Television:

KARE 11-Channel 11 (also has a link on the district website)
WCCO-Channel 4
KSTP-Channel 5
KMSP-Channel 9
KEYC-Channel 12 of Mankato

School Weather/Emergency Hotline: 952-758-1780

District Website: www.np.k12.mn.us

Sign up for notifications at <http://www.np.k12.mn.us>; choose 'Email and SMS Notifications System' under 'Hot Links.'

When adverse conditions exist, the busses may come late. Please do not call the school unless necessary. Any questions or concerns can be referred to the bus garage at 952-758-1480. Kids' Company (school-age childcare) and after-school activities will be cancelled.

EVACUATION DRILLS – Fire/Emergency/Weather

It is required by law to conduct fire drills during the school year. When the fire alarm sounds, each class should follow the directions outlined by the teacher. The purpose of fire drills is to learn how to vacate the building in a quick and orderly manner in case of an emergency. Specific procedures will be followed for weather drills and emergencies.

FAMILY VACATIONS

Should we or shouldn't we take a week or two of vacation while school is in session? This is a question that must be seriously considered. A vacation can be educationally profitable. However, please consider the following if you are thinking of taking your child on vacation during the school year:

- Classroom presentations are a major part of your child's instructional program. You are the only one who can decide whether your child can afford to miss all that transpires during an absence.
- Since many assignments may follow a reading presentation, it is not possible to furnish all materials in advance, or do so accurately.
- Teacher direction, help, and guidance are an integral part of the total program, especially in reading and math. Obviously your child would not have this resource available to them while absent from the classroom.
- While on vacation, most children do not feel comfortable doing school work, nor do they devote full attention to the reading/writing tasks you require of them.
- Missed instructional time may affect the student's grades and attitude.

If you find it necessary to plan a vacation during the school year, parents/guardians need to send a written note to the teacher and the office for prior approval. When students miss school due to vacation, it is left to the teacher's discretion if the make-up work is assigned prior to vacation or after returning. Work assigned prior to leaving on a vacation will not exceed five days. Due date should be agreed upon at the time of assignment. Generally, all work is expected to be made up five days after return. **Parents/guardians are encouraged to plan family vacations during scheduled school breaks.**

FIELD TRIPS

Class trips are valuable because they provide concrete learning experiences, pupil planning in real-life situations, and opportunities for training in courtesy; practice safety and good citizenship; and help stimulate children's interest in the community. You will be notified when your child's class is planning a trip.

Due to budget restrictions, cost of transportation and admission fees for field trips will be assessed to the students. If this policy is a financial burden to a family, arrangements can be made by contacting the classroom teacher or the building principal.

Parent/guardian permission for field trips is requested on the back side of emergency cards.

Many times parent/guardian volunteers are needed to assist with supervision during field trips. **Parents who volunteer to supervise need to know that no infants or younger siblings will be allowed to attend.** This is necessary because full attention to supervision is needed for the duration of the trip. Additional information can be found in Policy #610 on the school's website.

GIFTS TO SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

The school district recognizes that parents and others may wish to show appreciation to school employees. It is the policy of the school district, however, to discourage gift giving to employees, and to encourage donors instead to write letters and notes of appreciation, or to give small tokens of gratitude as memorabilia. Additional information can be found in Policies #421 & #706 found on the school's website.

HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE POLICY

It is the policy of Independent School District 721 to maintain a working and learning environment that is free from religious, racial, or sexual harassment, and violence. The school district prohibits any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment, and violence.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of the school district to harass a student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel through conduct or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion and race as defined by this policy. (For purposes of this policy, school personnel include school board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.)

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of the school district to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict religious, racial, or sexual harassment, and violence upon any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel.

District 721 will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial, or sexual harassment, and violence, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy. A complete updated copy of Policy #413 is available on the school's website. Any suspected abuse of this policy should be reported to the building principal or superintendent.

HEALTH SERVICES

Guarding the Health of your Children

- A. Check your child every morning before he/she leaves for school to be sure that he/she is well. If your child has a fever, diarrhea, or has been vomiting, please keep him/her home from school for 24 hours incident free before returning to school. Also, a student must be on an antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school.
- B. Teach your child to tell you promptly when he/she is not feeling well. This is particularly important if the child has a headache, sore throat, eye problems, skin rash, or if he/she shows signs of a cold, he/she should be kept home. This will prevent the spreading of germs to other students/staff.
- C. See that your child gets regular and adequate amounts of fresh air, exercise, sleep, and a well-balanced diet to help prevent illnesses.
- D. Teach your child to cover their mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing by using their sleeve or a tissue.
- E. Teach your child the importance of proper hand washing. This includes hand washing after using the bathroom and before/after eating.
- F. Insure that your child is properly dressed for the weather each day.

Each New Prague Area School employs a licensed health assistant who is supervised by the health services director. Although the primary responsibility for students' health rests with the parents/guardians, the school assists students to protect and improve their own health, and helps to develop competence in dealing with health problems they may face during the school year and in the future.

Purposes:

- A. To appraise the current health status of students.
- B. To determine if students should remain in school or receive additional attention.
- C. To help prevent and control communicable diseases.
- D. To provide temporary emergency service for injury or sudden illness.

Please notify health services if your child has any health condition, is on medication, or has severe allergies to food, latex, or bees, so a health plan can be created.

When a child becomes ill during the school day, parents/guardians will be contacted so he/she can be picked up. If parents/guardians are unreachable, information furnished on the emergency card will be used. It is helpful to health services if two or three emergency telephone numbers are listed. If the family physician, parent/guardian, or emergency contacts cannot be reached in an emergency situation, "911" will be called, or the student will be transported to the nearest hospital.

Instances when we contact parents/guardians:

- A. Temperature on or greater than 100 degrees
- B. Vomiting
- C. Severe persistent coughing
- D. Upset stomach with flushed cheeks, headache, without fever
- E. Diarrhea
- F. Severe sore throat (potential strep) with fever
- G. Open wounds
- H. Pink eye with drainage or severe irritation to student
- I. Head lice
- J. Recurring headache
- K. Possible medication reaction
- L. Rash with persistent itching
- M. Known allergies and reactions to "triggers"
- N. Bee sting allergies
- O. Asthma attacks
- P. Diabetic reactions
- Q. Seizures
- R. Rest, return to class; returns to health services, still not well; or after two visits to health services in one day
- S. Other situations per health services staff discretion

Instances when we do **not** notify parents/guardians:

- A. Minor playground injuries - scratches, scrapes, and monkey bar blisters
- B. Small slivers
- C. Band-aid application or changes
- D. Temperatures under 100 degrees without other symptoms
- E. Minor aches (stomach, throat), pains, and rashes which are not recurring
- F. Insect and bee stings without known allergies (receive first aid and observation for 20 min.)
- G. Change of clothing due to toileting accident, unless health assistant notices a pattern and questions infection

Please remember to update emergency numbers for Health Services.

Medication Policy

Prescribed medication, as well as over-the-counter medication, can only be administered when all three criteria exist: 1) written order of a licensed physician; 2) written authorization of a parent/guardian when brought to school; 3) in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacist or physician. All medications, including cough drops, must be in the original container and are to be stored in the health room of the school. Medication will be administered by the health assistant or his/her delegate, under the direction of the health services director. Please contact the health services director for correct medication forms and/or to answer any questions you may have.

- A. New medication administration forms with appropriate signatures must be received at the beginning of each school year, and whenever the dosage or time of administration of the medication is changed.
- B. Mixed dosages in a single container will not be accepted for administration.
- C. Medication will be taken by the child at the designated time supervised by authorized personnel.
- D. It is usually possible to manage medication at home (medication prescribed three times per day can be given before school, after school, and at bedtime).
- E. Parents are expected to notify the school when the medication is discontinued. If the medication is resumed, a new medication administration form must be received.
- F. No over-the-counter medication will be administered to children unless the above provisions are followed.

For more information see Policy #516 on the district's website.

Lingering Illness (Homebound Instruction)

If, at any time, a situation arises when your child will not be able to attend school for an extended period of time, please notify health services as soon as possible. Arrangements may be made to continue your child's education by other means.

Communicable Disease

It is the policy of the school board that students with communicable diseases not be excluded from attending school in their regular classroom as long as their attendance does not create a substantial risk of the transmission of the illness to children or employees of the school district. A copy of the policy, Student and Employees with Aids and Certain Other Communicable Diseases and Infectious Conditions #420 and DNR/DNI #518, can be found in the Policy Manual on the school's website.

Immunization Requirements

All students who enter a public, private, or parochial school within the state of Minnesota must submit a statement from a physician, a public clinic, or a parent/guardian indicating that the following was given:

- A. Month, day, and year of 5 doses of vaccine for diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DPT).
- B. Month, day, and year of 4 doses of vaccine for polio.
- C. Two doses of vaccine for measles, mumps, and rubella.
- D. Month, day, and year of two doses of Varicella or history of chicken pox disease.
- E. Month, day, and year of series of three doses of Hepatitis B.

Children enrolled in homeschools MUST submit documentation of their immunizations to the Community Education Office by October 1 of each year in order that the annual report required may be compiled and submitted to the Commissioner of Education.

These requirements can be waived only if a properly signed medical or *conscientious exemption form* is filed with the school. STUDENTS WITHOUT PROPER IMMUNIZATION RECORDS ON FILE WILL

NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER SCHOOL. Please contact the health assistant or health services director to obtain proper forms and/or to answer any questions you may have.

Health Services Available at New Prague Area Schools

Screening guidelines are as follows:

- A. Vision screening is done for grades 1, 3, 4, and 5 students. Screening for color blindness is done for grade 1 male students. Additional screening will be done for students if referred.
- B. Hearing screening is done for grades K, 1, 2, 3, and 5 students and those referred by parents/guardians or teachers.
- C. Scoliosis screening is done for grade 5 female students.

HOME-COOKED FOOD AND TREATS TO SCHOOL

According to school board policy, all baked goods served in public schools must be prepared in the building or commercially baked. This policy was established to maintain health standards as they relate to communicable diseases.

HOMEWORK

There will be reasonable amounts of homework assigned to help teach students. Homework teaches responsibility in addition to reinforcing skills taught in school. Make-up work, special projects, or additional practice on specific skills will be necessary periodically. Teachers will need a minimum of one day in order to fill a request for homework if a student is absent or has plans to be absent. If questions should arise, contact your child's teacher(s).

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Children are furnished with all the necessary textbooks and workbooks. Personal items such as notebooks, pencils, crayons, pens, etc., are to be brought to school by the individual child. A list provided by each classroom teacher will inform students of required materials. Lists are available in the school's office or on the website.

KIDS' COMPANY – SCHOOL-AGE CHILDCARE

Kids' Company is available to children in grades K-5. The program begins the first day of school and runs throughout the school year (except for a few late start/early dismissal days). Kids' Company provides affordable childcare (\$4.50/child per hour, rounded to the nearest ½ hour) and includes nutritious snacks, large- and small-group play, creative play toys, board games, art and craft projects, and access to computers. Experienced staff provide supervision, activities, and a safe and FUN program.

Kids' Company, at Falcon Ridge, Eagle View, and Raven Stream will run from 6:30 to 9 a.m. and from 3:40 to 6 p.m. for children in grades K-5. Programs will begin the first day of school in the fall. **More information can be obtained by calling 952-758-1735.**

Kids' Company also runs a summer program. Booklets and registration materials for the summer program are available mid-March.

Kids' Company booklets and registration materials are available at the elementary school offices and at Family & Community Services, 420 Central Avenue North, New Prague.

KINDERGARTEN EARLY ENTRANCE PROCEDURE

The following policies and procedures shall govern early admission to the kindergarten program at New Prague Area Schools:

- A. Only children who reach the age of five between September 1 and October 1 of the subsequent school year will be considered for enrollment.
- B. Parents/guardians residing in School District 721 who feel their child should enter kindergarten before age five must notify the school in writing **by May 1** of the previous school year. This notification should state in detail why they feel their child should be considered for early admission.
- C. A \$250 non-refundable fee PAYABLE IN ADVANCE is required to cover expenses of the testing procedure.
- D. After the letter has been received and the parents/guardians have given the school permission for testing, the child will be evaluated by the school psychologist. The assessment will consist of the appropriate instruments for measuring individual ability and achievement level and observation of child's behavior while being assessed (typical for age and maturity). Additional data may be collected through parent/guardian interview or interview with child's pre-school teacher or daycare provider. The test will be administered at one of the New Prague Area Schools. Retesting will not take place no matter what the results may be.
- E. When testing is completed, a team conference will be scheduled. The team will consist of the building principal, school psychologist, parents/guardians, and any other representative or professional the school deems necessary.
- F. On the basis of the assessment data and other pertinent information, a decision will be made for or against early admission.

The assessment criteria would be:

- Social skills and maturity.
 - Ability to problem-solve and process new information.
 - Determination of valid motivation of parent/guardian request.
 - Individually administered, standardized intelligence test score within the high average to superior range, with strong emphasis on verbal skills as the Verbal IQ is considered a predictor of success in school.
 - Informal test on school readiness.
- G. If a child is accepted for early admission, and after a certain amount of teacher-pupil contact, the kindergarten teacher determines that the child is not yet ready, the principal will notify the parents/guardians and the child will be dropped from the roll.
 - H. Parents/guardians must realize that the assessments are used only as a guide and do not necessarily give a true indication of readiness. Readiness can only be determined by the kindergarten teacher after there has been a certain amount of teacher-pupil contact.

LOCKERS

Students are assigned lockers. **These are not to be exchanged with other students.** The school is not liable for losses. One should use discretion in depositing items of great value in lockers. No students should enter another student's locker without prior permission.

The state-mandated locker search policy is as follows:

"School lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason, at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a

student's personal possessions, the school authorities must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials." Policy #502 has been updated and available on the school's website.

LOST AND FOUND

Each year mittens, sweaters, jackets, caps, boots, eye glasses, jewelry, etc., are turned into "Lost and Found" and are never claimed. We urge that all pieces of clothing be marked with your child's name. Permanent ink or tape securely sewn on are the best methods. Lost articles may be picked up in/near the school office in the "Lost and Found." Lost jewelry and valuables are kept with one of the office staff. Please check the "Lost and Found" in/near the office frequently.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Tasty and nutritious lunches are served each day for students and staff. Food service plans each lunch as an "offer" versus "serve" school lunch pattern meal which consists of five food groups daily: protein (meat or cheese), vegetable, fruit, bread (or bread alternative), and milk. A student may have all five items, but must select three of the five. Students may choose to bring a bag lunch. Milk is available for students having cold lunch when their account is positive.

Noon lunches are available to each child. Each student will be assigned a unique PIN (Personal Identification Number). Each family will have one account. As each child in the family goes through the lunch line, her/his PIN is entered and the account is charged for whatever selections the student has made that day. The computer lunch system is a prepayment program, not a credit system. Families are asked to deposit at least \$20 per student. Larger deposits are encouraged.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to mail their lunch money rather than send it with students. **Do not send cash.** Send checks with your family name imprinted or included on a separate sheet of paper. Lunch prices are set in August. Contact the office or check the website for current prices. Prices are subject to change during the school year.

- A. The school lunch is a prepaid program. In accordance with school policy, NO CHARGING OF MEALS WILL BE ALLOWED.
- B. When the family lunch account is negative, students will receive verbal notification and the back of their hand may be stamped.
- C. An automatic calling system will notify families when their account reaches a \$20 balance per family. Money should be sent at that time to prevent the loss of lunch privileges.
- D. When a student reaches a \$0 balance, the student will be notified. If a student forgets to bring in money, a peanut butter sandwich, fruit, and milk may be provided. This service will not continue for more than three consecutive days unless approved by the principal.
- E. Money deposited in a family's account must be received in the school office before 9:30 a.m.
- F. There will be a one-day turn-around to allow the money to get into the account.
- G. Written reports of all family account activity can be obtained by calling 758-1320 and leaving your request on voice mail. Receipts are provided upon request and can be emailed to you.
- H. You can also pay online by accessing the school website.

The menus are planned and prepared by well-qualified personnel to provide a balanced meal. If a child brings a bag lunch, it should also be well-balanced. No soda is allowed. Milk is available for those children bringing bag lunches or for those who would like more than one carton. A menu will be sent home before the beginning of the month. It can be found at the end of the newsletter or found on the school website.

Free & Reduced Lunch

Free and reduced lunch prices are available through the hot lunch program at New Prague Area Schools. Eligibility for this assistance is required through an application which includes individual family income information. Each family is mailed a copy of the income criteria and application in August. Copies may also be obtained upon request from the school offices. Free and reduced lunches are scanned the same way the regular price lunches are scanned, but the accounts are debited differently. If you feel you may qualify for free or reduced meals, please complete the appropriate forms.

Snack List

In conjunction with milk breaks, students may eat healthy snacks brought from home. Healthy snacks are defined as fruits, vegetables, crackers, cheese, etc. Items with high sugar or salt content should be discouraged.

These guidelines are part of the school health curriculum to familiarize students to healthy snack foods vs. junk foods. The cooperation of each family and classroom is appreciated.

ACCEPTABLE SNACK LIST:

Popcorn	Cheese and Crackers	Banana or Date Bread
Sandwich	Unsweetened Cereal	Fruit
Vegetables	Cheese Sticks	Juice (Pure Fruit Juice – Not 10%)
Beef Jerky	Crackers	Graham Crackers
Cold Meats	Muffins	Pretzels
Raisins		

UNACCEPTABLE SNACK LIST:

Fun Fruits	Fruit Rollups	Cookies/Pudding
Cake	Potato Chips	Cheese Balls (Munchies in general)
10% Fruit Juice (Example: Hi-C)		Rice Krispie Bars
Marshmallows		Chocolate Covered or Chocolate Chip Granola Bars
Twinkies or any kind of Snack Cake		Kool-Aid or Pop
Peanuts (Due to allergies)		

MESSAGES/DELIVERIES

ONLY urgent phone messages from parents/guardians will be delivered to students. Also, school has informed local businesses which deal in flowers, gifts, cards, and food, that deliveries for students will not be accepted. It is our request they assist us in this matter. With increased allergies to latex and food, etc., we are to make every effort to minimize the outside influences on our students' health. Your cooperation in supporting this procedure is appreciated.

MILK PROGRAM

Children in grades K-5 are provided a snack break each day. Milk for snack can be purchased from the school by paying a fee. A completed form must be included.

NEWSLETTER

School newsletters will be sent to parents/guardians monthly. Our intent is to keep you as well informed as possible as to what is taking place at school. One copy is sent to each home via the youngest or only child in the school or is available on the school's website.

NEWSPAPER

The New Prague Times is the official school newspaper which carries all school-related items of interest.

NOON HOUR

All students are required to go outside for at least fifteen minutes after lunch. **If a child is too ill to go outdoors, it would be best to keep him/her at home.** There are rare exceptions to this situation. A written request from the parents/guardians is necessary if a child is to stay indoors. A doctor's note is required for students who need to stay inside for more than three consecutive days.

All students will stay in during inclement weather. Inclement weather shall be defined as follows: raining, wet ground, or a windchill factor of zero or below.

OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open from 7:30 a.m. through 4:15 p.m. daily. Any parent/guardian needing information or assistance with school-related matters may receive help by calling the office.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The Parent Advisory Committee works directly with the principal and staff to:

- Provide advisory input into our school's operation.
- Help analyze the effectiveness of our school.
- Determine how we can do a better job in educating students.
- Assist in completing surveys and other special projects.

The committee consists of interested parents/guardians from families whose children attend New Prague Area Schools. Members will be selected to represent a cross section of groups (i.e., high potential, special education) and geographic areas of our school district, as well as other parents/guardians who have indicated an interest in serving on the committee. All grade levels will be represented. All meetings will be open meetings. Information is sent home at the beginning of the year requesting volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a member, please sign up or notify the school office.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES AND REPORT CARDS

Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled for all students in grades K–5 twice during the school year. Either parents/guardians or teachers can schedule additional conferences as the need arises. If parents/guardians feel they would like a conference with a teacher, contact him or her. You may also send a note to suggest a convenient time for both parties. Report cards will be sent home after the end of each trimester.

PETS IN SCHOOL

No pets will be allowed in school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXCUSES

All students must participate in the physical education program unless:

- A. A note from the parent/guardian is submitted to the teacher and/or nurse stating reason, number of days, and the name of the physician if the child is presently receiving medical care.
- B. A physician's statement will be required for excuses for more than two phy. ed. days missed. After serious illness or injury such as a fracture, it is necessary for the school to know the type and duration of any limitations and/or medical recommendations to ensure proper follow-up of the child's health.

PICTURES

Individual pictures are taken each year. Class composites are furnished for every student. Notification will be sent home with students in the fall. Pictures are usually scheduled in October, with retakes in November.

PLACEMENT POLICIES

All phases of a child's development are considered in deciding grade placement: the child's achievement, age in years and months, emotional maturity, social development in comparison with others in the group, and his/her ability to learn. Ordinarily, a child will be happier and learn more if placed with children of about the same physical, social, and mental maturity.

All children do not mature at the same rate, and growth cannot be hurried. Some children need more time to mature and profit by remaining in the same grade for an additional year. This adjustment can be made when the teacher, principal, and parent/guardian together think it is advisable.

RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

The school district follows the "General Records Retention Schedule for School Districts" of the State of Minnesota for retaining and destroying records. A copy of this schedule is available from the district office for review.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT AND INAPPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE

Minnesota Statutes 626.556 provides that a professional or the professional's delegate who is engaged in the practice of education is required to report suspected neglect, physical abuse, and/or sexual abuse of minors when that person knows or has reason to believe that abuse is occurring or has occurred within the past three years. An oral report must be made immediately, and in no event longer than 24 hours after the reporter has reason to believe that abuse has occurred. A written report is required within 72 hours. The written report must include: the identity of the child, any person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect if the person is known, the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect, and the name and address of the reporter. Refer to Policy #414 on the school's website.

REVIEW OF STUDENT RECORDS

Under FERPA, parents/guardians and eligible students have the following rights:

- A. The right to review and inspect the student's education records;
- B. The right to seek amendment of the student's records that are believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
- C. The right to consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information except to the extent that consent is not required by law; and
- D. The right to file a complaint with the Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

For additional information, refer to Policy #515 on the school's website.

SCHOOL CONFERENCE AND ACTIVITIES LEAVE

181.9412 Subd. 1. **Definition.** For purposes of this section, "employee" does not include the requirement of section 181.940, subdivision 2, clause (1).

Subd. 1 a. **Foster child.** For the purpose of this section, "child" includes a foster child.

Subd. 2. **Leave of 16 hours.** An employer must grant an employee leave of up to a total of 16 hours during any 12-month period to attend school conferences or school-related activities related to the employee's child, provided the conferences or school-related activities cannot be scheduled during nonwork hours. If the employee's child receives child care services as defined in section 119B.011,

subdivision 7, or attends a prekindergarten regular or special education program, the employee may use the leave time provided in this section to attend a conference or activity related to the employee's child, or to observe and monitor the services or program, provided the conference, activity, or observation cannot be scheduled during nonwork hours. When the leave cannot be scheduled during nonwork hours and the need for the leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide reasonable prior notice of the leave and make a reasonable effort to schedule the leave so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the employer.

Subd. 3. **No pay required; substitute of paid leave.** Nothing in this section requires that the leave be paid; except that an employee may substitute any accrued paid vacation leave or other appropriate paid leave for any part of the leave under this section.

SCHOOL HOURS

Elementary schools will be in session from 9:10 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. daily (times may vary by building due to transportation). All busses will leave the school at approximately 3:50 p.m. **Students having their own transportation should not arrive at the school prior to 8:55 a.m. on school days.**

SCHOOL PARTIES

Students in grades K-5 are permitted three parties per year where students may bring treats to school to serve to other students. Students in grades K-5 have been permitted to bring birthday treats or trinkets on a voluntary basis.

Parent/guardian cooperation in complying with the school policy regarding home-cooked food and treats is appreciated.

SCHOOL SAFETY — WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

Tragic events on school sites have focused attention on school safety. While the vast majority of schools are safe, school leaders work continually to make them safer. The school is extremely aware of the possibility that violence may erupt. Our curriculum is in place to teach children how to solve conflicts without violence. We all have emergency plans for a crisis.

The following are some suggestions for families in combating violence:

- **Start teaching children early.** It's never too early for parents to teach their children respect, responsibility, and right from wrong.
- **Respect school rules.** Families should know and reinforce school rules, such as proper dress requirements. Families should be consistent about rules and discipline at home and school.
- **Don't allow children to have dangerous weapons.** Children should never be permitted to have access to firearms or other dangerous weapons without adult supervision. Parents/guardians should also check with parents/guardians of their children's friends to determine if there are accessible weapons in their homes. Under no circumstances should parents/guardians permit weapons of any kind, including toy guns, to be taken to school.
- **Direct children toward wholesome out-of-school activities.** Children who are involved in clubs, music, sports, and religious and community activities are less likely to become distracted into violent activities.
- **Know your children's teachers, friends, and their parents/guardians.** It's important to know your children's teachers and friends, but also the parents/guardians of their friends. Attending school programs and events together is a good way to build these relationships. Make sure your children feel "connected" with their friends and staff at school.
- **Eliminate or limit violence in children's everyday life.** Many video games, TV programs, and movies condone, even encourage, violence. Parents/guardians should monitor these activities, as well as their music, and clothing that send violent messages.

- **Accept responsibility.** Always know where your children are and what they are doing, especially in the critical period between the end of the school day and your return home. Parents/guardians must learn how to say “no” to their children and expect to have them accept it. Youngsters must understand that when they don’t get their way or are disappointed, they cannot react violently.

(Printed as a service from National Association of Elementary School Principals.)

SECURITY

Due to an increased need to adopt tighter security standards, the following will be in effect:

- All parents/visitors/volunteers must report to the office before going to the classroom.
- A sign-in sheet will be in the office for parents/visitors/volunteers to sign in/out and to state the reason for being in the building.
- Parents/visitors/volunteers must wear badges at all times when in the building. These are available in the office.
- The staff will approach people without badges, ask if they could be of assistance, and direct them to the office.
- Parents/guardians will report to the office and the student will be called to the office. **No student will be released directly to the parent/guardian from the classroom.**
- Staff should not cover up any glass with posters that would prevent seeing into the classroom.

SLEEP AND REST

It is necessary for a pupil to get at least eight hours of sleep each night in order to do good work at school. Tiredness is not a legitimate reason for a child to miss school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education services are provided to students identified as having a disability in accordance with local, state, and federal standards. Certified teachers are employed by District 721 to provide direct and/or indirect service to students and support classroom teachers. Related and itinerant teachers are also available for occupational therapy, physical therapy, developmental adapted physical education, and other support needs.

Minnesota uses a categorical qualifying model to identify students who may need special services. Categories include speech and language, specific learning disabilities, autism, developmental delay, traumatic brain injury, emotional/behavior disorders, physically handicapped, vision impaired, hearing impaired, and other health disabilities.

Most educational and behavioral referrals are made by classroom teachers. Typically, about ten percent of school-aged children receive special services. Parents/guardians play a key role in determining whether their child should be assessed or receive special education services. PLC teams meet regularly in each building to review referral information from parents and classroom teachers. They are also members of the team that develop the student’s annual Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is reviewed and adjusted on a regular basis.

Early Childhood Special Education can begin at birth for children who qualify for this program. A home-based model is used for infants and a center-based model is used for children from three to five years of age. Children are typically referred to this program by parents/guardians, physicians, county health nurses, friends, or other agencies.

Should you have any questions or concerns about your child’s exceptional needs, please contact a teacher, building principal, school psychologist, or the director of special education.

SPECIAL CLASS INSTRUCTION

Autism

Programs for students with disabilities on the autism spectrum utilize a multidisciplinary team approach to assist each student with socialization, communication, and behavior. Students are served in a variety of settings dependent on their individual needs. Parental/guardian involvement in this process ensures continuity between home and school in the delivery of special education services.

Emotional/Behavioral Disorder

A certified EBD teacher is on staff to assist students who have been diagnosed as having emotional or behavioral disorders that interfere with their learning. Support is given within this program to students having behavior problems which interfere with their own or other students' academic/social/emotional growth. Parents/guardians are always included in this process to insure continuity between home and school.

Learning Disabilities (LD)

The program for Learning Disabilities (LD) is established to help students who may have difficulties with certain academic areas such as reading and mathematics. Some attention is also given to spelling, handwriting, and language development. The major responsibility of the program is the instruction of students who have the ability to be performing at grade level or above, but have not met this level of achievement. After an assessment has been made of how a child learns best, instruction and materials are tailored to fit his/her particular learning style. Major emphasis will be placed on providing varying multi-sensory approaches to learning. The request for assignment to the program may be initiated by the parents/guardians, classroom teacher, LD teachers, or principal. The final recommendation for programming will come from the child study team.

Lifeskills

The Lifeskills program is designed to help students who need unique instruction in a variety of areas. Specialized instruction may include: math, reading, daily living skills, physical assistance, functional academics, or any other skill needed to allow the student to develop independence and be as successful as possible in the general education environment. In order to meet the student's needs, a variety of materials, supports, and instructional methods are utilized. The placement and program planning is done by the student's IEP team.

Psychologist

The role of the school psychologist is quite varied and usually includes:

- Assessments and reassessments to determine eligibility for special education programs
- Consultation with school personnel regarding interventions and needs of students
- Individual and group counseling (short-term)
- Crisis intervention
- Consultation with parents and families to explore resources
- In-service training

Remedial Reading/Math

New Prague Area Schools provides remedial reading and math to qualified students. These specialists are also a resource to teachers and help interpret test results. Students who qualify for remediation will work in small groups and be tested throughout the year to chart progress. They use our current reading and math series, along with enhancements, to help attain our building goal of 85% proficiency on the MCA tests.

Section 504

Section 504 is a federal law which prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability by any program receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities including activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working;
- Has a record of such an impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such an impairment.

The New Prague School District recognizes its responsibility under Section 504 to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school district.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate and, if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, provide access to appropriate educational services. If the parents/guardians of a potentially handicapped student disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has a right to file a grievance according to the school district's Non-discrimination Grievance Procedure and ultimately to have a hearing before an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) also specifies rights related to education records. The Act gives the parents/guardians the right to: 1) inspect and review his/her child's educational records; 2) make copies of these records; 3) receive a list of all individuals having access to those records; 4) ask for an explanation of any item in the records; 5) ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights; and 6) a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

Social Worker

School social workers are the link between home, school, and community. As members of the educational team, school social workers promote and support students' academic and social success by providing specialized services. They help students to increase academic success, improve interpersonal relationships, cope with difficult and crisis situations, develop self-esteem and self discipline. They also work with students on problem solving, conflict resolution, and decision making skills. School social workers work with students in both general education and special education settings. They are a resource to educators and families throughout the school setting.

Speech and Language Pathology Services

New Prague Area Schools employ Speech and Language Pathologists to diagnose and work with children who have significant difficulties with communication which affect a child's ability to participate fully in learning.

Speech and language services are typically provided in articulation (pronouncing speech sounds), language (understanding, production and use of oral language), voice (e.g., quality, pitch, loudness), fluency (stuttering). Speech and Language Pathologists also provide related services for students with other disorders such as: autism spectrum disorders, hearing impairments, seizure disorders, and cognitive impairments.

The Speech and Language Pathologists are knowledgeable about communication and general child development. They are trained to evaluate children with special speech and language tests, diagnose, develop and carry out plans to remediate impairments.

Student/Teacher Assistance Team (S.T.A.T.)

The S.T.A.T. provides a structural organized approach within the school to offer assistance to students. Classroom modifications, support group participation, testing/evaluation, as well as the options of outside agencies, are reviewed. For more information, contact your classroom teacher or the building principal.

Title One

Title One is a federally funded first grade academic intervention program that is designed to give students additional support in the areas of reading and math. The focus of the program is to provide individualized instruction so that students meet grade level expectations by the end of the school year.

SPECIALISTS

Art

Students will use different mediums through art class to cultivate self expression, imagination, and creativity, as well as critical self thinking and problem-solving skills. The development of the skills used in art will help make students better learners and helps build their self-esteem. In a world in which ideas and information are often delivered visually, children need to learn how to analyze and judge the meaning of images and how to use them to communicate their own ideas.

Media

The media center is an inviting area for students and staff to explore, question, and learn. Computers, study areas, and tables are available for use. Media center materials primarily focus on an elementary curriculum and contain quality literature selections to supplement many reading interests.

The media specialist's goal is to foster a love of reading in students and inspire life-long learners in becoming independent information users. Students are involved in weekly media lessons with the media specialist. Literacy skill lessons are designed to build upon each other and directly connect into the core classroom curriculum. Lessons entail storytelling in a variety of formats and introduce computer programs and their applications. Students learn how to access, identify, interpret, and communicate quality information. Students leave elementary school skilled in searching the online catalog and in researching a topic using a variety of print and online reference tools. Students are also exposed to books by numerous authors and illustrators, as well as learning literature genres.

Music/Band

Music experiences at New Prague Area Schools promote student participation through the media of listening, singing, moving, creating, reading, writing, and playing instruments. Our goals are music literacy, performance skills, enjoyment, and the development of the whole child within a quality classroom community.

Band is offered during the fifth grade year. Participation in weekly lessons, and full band, enhances students' music experiences.

Physical Education

Our physical education program is designed to teach children the life-long benefits of physical activity. This includes: skill development through individual and team activities, self-esteem building, and lessons in sportsmanship.

Reading

The reading specialist is a resource person to teachers and the reading curriculum leader in each school. The specialist does testing and retesting of students for placement in reading groups, aids in the establishment and flexibility of instructional groups, and helps interpret test results.

The specialist is responsible for the material center for our reading program. It is set up to provide instructional/supplemental materials for our teachers to accomplish and maintain the concept of mastery (80%) in the reading program.

Technology

Technology is a vital component of our curriculum. Students learn to use a variety of educational software, along with word processing, keyboarding, and basic research skills. In addition to learning how to conduct research, students use technology to communicate their understanding of the information. Examples are graphing data with Excel and presenting research with PowerPoint. Students will gain the skills and knowledge needed to live in our digital world.

STUDENT REGISTRATION

Students enrolled at New Prague Area Schools are automatically registered in the spring of the year for the following school year. Students new to the New Prague school district should register at the district office as early in the summer months as possible.

TENNIS SHOES

All students are required to have a pair of tennis shoes in school at all times. This will guarantee your child's participation in our physical education program.

TEXTBOOK & INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The school board recognizes that selection of textbooks and instructional materials is a vital component of the school district's curriculum. District 721 has a Curriculum Adoption Process. This process allows for input from staff, administration, the curriculum director, and advisory committees. The school board also recognizes that it has the authority to make final decisions on selections of all textbooks and instructional materials. A student/parent/guardian may request alternative materials when the adopted materials are incompatible with their values or beliefs. Final decisions are made by the school board. Please refer to Policy #606 on the school's website for further clarification.

TRANSPORTATION

Only students enrolled at District 721 meeting state and local requirements are permitted to ride school buses. Buses are for transportation from one's home or daycare or pre-approved location to school and back or other approved school functions only. No riding will be permitted for the purposes of meetings, birthday parties, visiting friends or relatives, etc. Students staying at other locations during parent/guardian absence must be provided with transportation by means other than New Prague School buses and their routes. For extreme situations only, the transportation director may grant an exception to this procedure. Bus drivers cannot honor requests. Students must bring a parent/guardian note to the office by 9:30 a.m. if they are requesting a change of bus or drop off point. Parents/guardians wishing to pick their children up after school are requested to notify the school office by 2 p.m. so necessary arrangements can be made. This course of action will assist

New Prague Schools in maintaining consistency, secure safety, and assist students and bus drivers with their daily schedules. Please refer to the handbook distributed by the transportation department for more detailed policies.

VISITS TO SCHOOL

Student visitors (i.e., friends, relatives) are encouraged to get prior approval from the classroom teacher before visiting a classroom. All visitors are requested to sign in and out in the office area. While in the building, **all** guests are required to wear a visitor badge.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a very important part in providing those little “extras” for students throughout the school year. Opportunities for volunteers range from one time/one-hour needs to a more regular commitment of up to one hour per week. Volunteer assistance can include: book fairs, helping students with academic work, helping with field trips/parties, supervising students, assisting with special programs, and many other opportunities. A Volunteer Opportunities Booklet will be sent home in the fall. Parents/guardians and/or members of the community interested in volunteering should contact the Family Involvement Coordinator in your child’s school.

WEAPONS POLICY

New Prague Area Schools has updated School Weapons Policy #501 in an attempt to assure a safe school environment for students, staff, and the public. Students must not possess, use, or distribute any object designed as a weapon, or through its use is capable of threatening or producing harm to themselves or others. Included in this policy would be knives, guns, clubs, objects modified to serve as a weapon, or items having the appearance of a weapon such as toy guns, rubber knives, etc. Common school supplies such as scissors, pencils, etc., will be considered weapons if they are used to intimidate or inflict bodily harm. The “Zero Tolerance” position calls for stringent consequences. It is very important that your child be well informed about the danger of bringing any item, real or toy, to school.

WEBSITE

www.np.k12.mn.us is the address of our district and specific building websites. School information regarding newsletter, menus, activities, calendar, teacher information, and school closing information is updated on a regular basis. District policies can also be viewed on this website.

WITHDRAWALS

The school office should be informed one week in advance if you intend to move from the school district. This will allow the time necessary to prepare transfer information. Any information that you could provide about the city and school that your child will be attending would be appreciated.

APPENDIX

Behavior Expectations/Consequences for Severe Behavior	A-G
Attendance Procedures	H-K

All policies can be found on the ISD 721 New Prague Area Schools website:
www.np.k12.mn.us

NEW PRAGUE STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR SEVERE BEHAVIOR

Overview

The consequences for misbehavior described in this section are designed to be fair, firm, and consistent for all students in District 721. They apply to District 721 students in any school or other district building, on district property, in district vehicles, and at school or district events.

Because it is not possible to list every misbehavior that occurs, misbehaviors not included will be responded to as necessary by staff. This is based on the assumption that minor misbehaviors are dealt with by bus drivers, chaperones, classroom teachers, counselors, administrators and other appropriate district staff. This section is designed to address the severe pervasive behaviors.

Consequences

For each misbehavior described, there are specific consequences for first, second, third, and fourth violations. Those consequences are shown as “*,” suspension for a specified number of days, or expulsion. Those are defined as follows:

“*” for elementary schools is defined as: Consequences for violations will include student conference and parent notification, and may include, but are not limited to, parent conference, restitution, detention, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

In the following chart, “suspension” is defined as out-of-school suspension. Suspension means an action taken by the school administration, under rules promulgated by the school board, prohibiting a pupil from attending school for a period of no more than ten school days. If a suspension is longer than five days, the suspending administrator must provide the superintendent with a reason for the longer suspension. In no event shall suspension exceed 15 school days, provided that an alternative program shall be implemented to the extent that suspension exceeds five days. (A one-day suspension is for a consecutive period of time equivalent to one school day. For example, if a student is suspended at noon, he or she may be suspended up until noon on the following school day.)

Expulsion is action taken by the school board to prohibit a student from further school attendance for up to one school year from the date the student is expelled.

In addition to the consequences detailed, a specific school or the District Transportation Department may respond to student misbehavior in a variety of ways which include, but are not limited to, parent conferences, mediation, restitution, reports to probation services, criminal reports, community service, fines, loss of driving and parking privileges (at the high school level), and chemical evaluation.

Administrators may involve the police and other law enforcement authorities as necessary. If a student violates a district rule which is also a violation of a law, the student will be referred to the police in addition to being dealt with as described in this regulation.

Consequences for a specific offense may be more severe than indicated if staff believe it is appropriate.

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Students are expected to not engage in the following activities. The consequences apply regardless of whether the misbehavior took place in school, on district property, in a district vehicle, or at a school or district activity. Consequences may be changed by principal pending individual situations.

MISBEHAVIOR	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Abuse, Verbal – Arousing alarm in others through the use of language that is discriminatory, abusive, obscene, or threatening. Toward student or staff (Grades K-5)	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.
Alcohol, Marijuana or Other Chemicals, Possession or Use Possessing or using any narcotic or controlled substance where possession or use is prohibited by Minnesota or federal law. (Any prescription medication a student is required to take, with the exception of prescribed inhalers, must be left with and administered by the school nurse, in accordance with district administrative regulation 506.2.2AR.) Grades K-5	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.	expulsion
Ammunition, Possession – Possession of bullets or other projectiles designed to be used in a weapon. Grades K-5	*	3 day susp.	5-day susp.	expulsion
Arson – Intentional destruction or damage to school or district buildings or property by means of fire. Grades K-5	expulsion			

MISBEHAVIOR (continued)	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Assault, Physical – Acting with intent to cause fear in another person, immediate bodily harm or death, or intentionally inflicting or attempting to inflict bodily harm upon another person. Upon a student or staff member. Grades K-5	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day
Assault, Aggravated – Committing an assault upon another person with a weapon, or an assault which inflicts great bodily harm upon another person. Grades K-5	expulsion			
Bodily Harm, Inflicting – Committing an accidental act which, although a result of poor judgment, inflicts great bodily harm upon another person. Grades K-5	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.
Bomb Threat, False – Intentionally giving a false alarm of a bomb. Grades K-5	3 day susp.	expulsion		
Burglary – Entering a building without consent and with intent to commit a crime, or entering a building without consent and committing a crime. Grades K-5	3 day susp.	expulsion		
Dress and Grooming – Clothing may not include words or visuals which are obscene, abusive or discriminatory, or which advertise narcotics or dangerous drugs. Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.

MISBEHAVIOR (continued)	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Explosives, Possession and/or Use – Possessing or using any compound or mixture, the primary or common purpose of which is to function by explosion, with substantially instantaneous release of gas and heat. Grades K-5	expulsion			
Fighting – Mutual combat (differentiated from poking, pushing, shoving or scuffling) in which one or the other party(ies) contributed to the situation by verbal and/or physical action. Grades K-5	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.
Fire Alarm, False – Intentionally giving a false alarm of a fire or tampering or interfering with any fire alarm. Grades K-5	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.
Fire Extinguisher, Unauthorized Use – Unauthorized handling of a fire extinguisher. Grades K-5	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.
Fireworks, Possession – Possessing or offering for sale any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or an audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation. Grades K-5	*	3 day susp.	5 day susp.	Expulsion
Fireworks, Use – Using any substance or combination of substances or articles prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation. Grades K-5	3 day susp.	5 day susp.	Expulsion	
Gambling – Playing a game of chance for stakes.				

Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	A-4
MISBEHAVIOR (continued)	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense	
Harassment, Including Sexual – Participating in or conspiring with others to engage in acts that injure, degrade, intimidate, or disgrace other individuals, including indecent exposure, and words or actions that negatively impact an individual or group based on their racial, cultural, or religious background, their sex, or any disabilities they may have. Refer to policy #413 on the school’s website	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	
Insubordination – Willful refusal to follow an appropriate direction or order given by a staff member. Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	
Interference, Disruption or Obstruction – Any action taken to attempt to prevent a staff member or student from exercising his or her lawfully assigned duties. Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	
Nuisance Devices, Possession – Objects which cause distractions, such as cell phones, radios, phones, etc. Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	
Records or Identification Falsification – Falsifying signatures or data, refusing to give proper identification or giving false information to a staff member. Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	

MISBEHAVIOR (continued)	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Robbery or Extortion – Obtaining property from another person where his or her consent was induced by use of force, threat of force, or under false pretenses. Grades K-5	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.
Terroristic Threat – Threatening directly or indirectly, to commit any crime of violence with the purpose of terrorizing another person and/or causing damage to property. Grades K-5	Zero Tolerance, automatic 5 day suspension			
Theft or Knowingly Receiving or Possessing Stolen Property – Unauthorized taking property of another person or receiving or possessing such property. Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.
Tobacco – Possessing or using tobacco in district buildings, on district grounds, in district vehicles, or at district events, in violation of district administrative regulation 406.5AR, Tobacco Free Environment. Grades K-5	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.	5 day susp.
Trespassing – Being present in any district facility or portion of a district facility, when it is closed to the public, or unauthorized presence in a district vehicle. Grades K-5	*	*	1 day susp.	3 day susp.
MISBEHAVIOR (continued)	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense

Weapon or Look-alike Weapon, Possession

(See Policy #501) –

Possessing any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, or any device intended to look like a firearm; any device or instrument designed as a weapon and capable of producing severe bodily harm, ie., laser pen or intended to look like a device or instrument capable of producing severe bodily harm; or any other device, instrument or substance, which, in the manner in which it is used or intended to be used, is calculated or likely to produce severe bodily harm or looks like it is calculated or likely to produce severe bodily harm.

Look-alike weapon possession

*

1 day susp.

3 day susp.

5 day susp.

Weapon, possession

Grades K-5

suspension/expulsion

Willful Damage of Property (Vandalism) – Littering, defacing, cutting, or otherwise damaging property that belongs to the school, to other students, to staff members, or to other individuals while the student is on school property, at a school activity, in a district vehicle, or under the supervision of school staff.

Grades K-5

*

1 day susp.

3 day susp.

5 day susp.A-7

Attendance Procedures

Regular attendance in all classes is vital to ensuring a quality learning experience and productive future for all students. Classroom experiences are both meaningful and essential components of the learning process. Regular class attendance instills self-discipline, exposes the students to group interactions with teachers and fellow students, enables the student to hear and participate in class discussions, and involves the student in educational experiences not available in other circumstances. Make-up assignments can never fully replace the learning experience students miss when they are absent from class.

The District 721 attendance policy is based on the following beliefs:

1. Encourages all students to attend school.
2. Can be consistently and efficiently administered.
3. Has consequences and holds students accountable.
4. Has a systematic method of intervention, which is needed to support students' attendance.
5. Is supported by staff, students, parents/guardians, and the community.
6. Is communicated and understood by staff, students, and parents/guardians.
7. Identifies responsibility of students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
8. Allows a teacher to determine what value is placed on attendance/participation.

MINNESOTA COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

The Minnesota compulsory instruction law requires students between the ages of seven and sixteen to receive educational instruction by attending school. (Minnesota Statute 120A.22) Note: This standard also applies to students who are enrolled in school between the ages of 5 and 7, as well as those between the ages of 16 and 18.

CONTINUING TRUANT

Minnesota Statute 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of Minnesota Statute 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minnesota Statute 120A.05, without valid excuse within a single school year for:

1. Three days if the child is in elementary school.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY

When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minnesota Statute 260A.03 provides that the school attendance officer or other designated school official shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first-class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:

1. That the child is truant.
2. That the parent/guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences.
3. That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to Minnesota Statute 120A.22 and parents/guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minnesota Statute 120A.34.
4. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minnesota Statute 120A.34.
5. That alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district.

6. That the parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy.
7. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent/guardian and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minnesota Statute Chapter 260.
8. That if the child is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the child may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the child's driving privilege pursuant to Minnesota Statute 260C.201.
9. That it is recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the child to school and attend classes with the child for one day.

HABITUAL TRUANT

1. A habitual truant is a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is an elementary school; for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school; or a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school.
2. A school district attendance officer shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent/legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under Minnesota Statute Chapter 260A.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Hold your child accountable for regular attendance and for following the attendance policy.
2. Limit absences by scheduling appointments, vacations, college visits, etc., on non-school days.
3. Notify the office, in writing, of an extended pre-excused absence before the absence.
4. Contact the office, counselor, social worker and/or teacher if you have any concerns about your child's attendance.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Know and implement the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy.
2. Report any discrepancies in the daily attendance report to the office.
3. Take attendance each day and enter any absences or tardies.
4. Communicate with parent/guardian when a student's attendance adversely affects his/her grade or progress.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Distribute District Rights and Responsibilities attendance policy to all students, parents/guardians, and staff.
2. Plan interventions for students with excessive absences.
3. Communicate with parents regarding student attendance.
4. Review disputes of classification(s) of absences and make ultimate building decision.

CLASSIFICATION OF ABSENCES

All absences will be classified by the school administration as one of the following: **EXCUSED, UNEXCUSED, MEDICAL OR TARDY.**

EXCUSED ABSENCES

With the exception of students who are emancipated from their parents/guardians, all students must provide the school office with a phone call or a note which is signed by the student's parent/guardian and which states a valid reason for the absence. At New Prague Area Schools, we require a call from the parent/guardian by 9:10 a.m. or a note signed by a parent/guardian prior to day of absence for student to be excused stating that the absence is/was a result of the one of the following conditions:

1. Illness, injury, or hospitalization of the student.
2. Disability of the student. If a student suffers from a permanent or temporary disability which prevents the student from regular attendance, verification from the student's physician specifying the nature of the disability and the anticipated duration of the disabling condition will be required once per school year. For each absence, the student's parent/guardian must provide the school office with a signed note verifying the reason for the absence.
3. Medical, dental, and other professional appointments (note: this does not include appointments such as haircuts or tanning sessions), which cannot be scheduled outside the school hours.
4. Family emergency, serious illness in family, or death in the family.
5. Religious or cultural holidays or observances as approved by administration.
6. Mandatory court appearances. Must be verified with a court subpoena or letter from lawyer and/or parent/guardian.
7. Conditions beyond the student's control. If a student is absent for part of a day because of conditions beyond the student's control, the parent/guardian must call the office that day. Examples of conditions of beyond a student's control include, but are not limited to, absence as a result of an automobile accident, and absence as a result of inclement weather which delays the student's arrival on the school bus.
8. Pre-approved family trips and college visits taken with a parent. Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule such trips during school breaks and vacations.
9. Compliance with any provision of a disabled student's Individual Education Plan or Section 504 Accommodation Plan.
10. Special education assessment performed by, or at the direction of, school district personnel. A student will be given a school-related absence.
11. Pre-excused participation in a school-sponsored activity. Examples include, but are not limited to, participation in a school-sponsored field trip, foreign exchange program, student council, state tournament, Knowledge Bowl, athletic contest, music lessons pre-arranged with the music teacher, or school-sponsored music performance. School-related absences will not count against the cap of ten absences.

Vacation Absence

12. When students miss school due to vacation, it is left to teacher's discretion if the make-up work is assigned prior to vacation or after returning. Work assigned prior to leaving on a vacation will not exceed five days. Due date should be agreed upon at the time of assignment. Generally, all work is expected to be made up five days after return.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Any absence, which is not excused under this policy, will be counted as unexcused. **Oversleeping, a malfunctioning alarm clock, missing the bus, shopping, or visiting friends are not a basis for an excused absence.** Administration reserves the right to determine whether or not an absence is excused or unexcused.

MEDICAL ABSENCE

If students have been out of school for two days or longer because of illness or hospitalization, and if they bring a note from their doctor stating the medical condition and length of absence, the attendance record will be corrected to reflect the fact that the absence was due to a medical reason. Doctors' excused absences will not count against the cap of ten absences.

TARDIES

A tardy is defined as entrance into a class within the first hour of school. Five minutes after the second bell sounds, the tardy becomes an unexcused absence. Subsequent tardies will result in parents being notified by a letter from the principal.

EXTENDED ABSENCES

1. Parents should be aware that according to Minnesota State Law, a student who is absent for fifteen consecutive days must be withdrawn.
2. No credit is earned during the time a student is not enrolled.
3. Students under 18 years of age who have any combination of seven unexcused absences will result in a Truancy Petition being filed with the appropriate County District Court, Juvenile Court Division.
4. If the student has suffered an extended illness and required work has not been completed, the class record will show an incomplete. A grade will be assigned after the work is completed according to the make-up policy guidelines.
5. If a student experiences an extended, long-term illness of 15 consecutive school days, he/she may be eligible for homebound instruction. Parents should contact a counselor or the principal to make these arrangements.