



**North Mahaska  
Elementary School**

Student/Parent Handbook  
2021-2022

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[www.nmwarhawks.org](http://www.nmwarhawks.org)

*It is the mission of the North Mahaska Community Schools to prepare students to be positive, productive citizens, with the passion and skills for lifelong learning.*

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# Introduction

## Welcome Letter to Students and Parents

Welcome to North Mahaska Elementary School! 2021-2022 is going to be a fantastic year for the Warhawks. We are excited that you have chosen to be a part of the Warhawk family. Through positive relationships, and collaboration we are looking forward to witnessing continued growth for all of our students here at North Mahaska while ensuring that each student is provided a strong foundation setting them on the path to college and career readiness.

We recognize that family is a vital component of the overall success of every student. We invite every parent/relative to be a part of your child's educational experience here at North Mahaska. Thank you for entrusting us to work with your students as we embark upon a new school year.

We also believe that your children will appreciate the interest you are taking in their education. Educational experts agree when the parents show an interest in the education their children are receiving, the children tend to achieve at a higher level than those whose parents are not involved in their education. We invite you to ask your child about their educational experience each day, provide a set time at home for daily reading, and read with your child.

Volunteers are a much needed part of our school. Please check with your child's teacher for volunteer opportunities.

This handbook serves as a useful guide for all North Mahaska Elementary School students and parents. Students are expected to know the provisions of this handbook, which includes a description of the policies and procedures under which our school operates. Learning to develop and accept the responsibilities and obligations of good citizenship will help us to participate successfully in the 21st century. We hope that you will be involved in various activities within our school. Remember, your success at North Mahaska Elementary School will be directly proportional to your efforts. I have no doubt that our students will experience high levels of success inside the classroom and beyond. "Expect the Best!"

*Yours in Education,  
Angela Livezey  
PK-6 Principal & PK-12 Superintendent*

## Educational Philosophy

The Board of Education of the North Mahaska Community School District believes it is the responsibility of the school to provide all children of the district an equal opportunity to receive a free and appropriate education. The Board believes, so far as it is administratively and economically feasible, each student shall be treated as an individual with his/her own particular capabilities, aptitudes and personality. It is the function of the educational process to provide each student with opportunities for obtaining the knowledge, experience, and skills, which will best prepare him/ her to assume a position in adult society, and permit him/her to make the greatest positive contribution to society and to him/herself.

## **Objectives of Our School**

*Educational Programs* - Academic excellence in course material, life skills, and physical fitness at North Mahaska School involves hard work, perseverance, and a positive attitude, which is expected of both teachers and students.

**“Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.” - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Pursuant to our district’s mission statement as cited below, we are preparing students to be positive and productive members of society. We seek to educate the whole child.

North Mahaska Elementary has established the common expectations of  
“Be Respectful”, “Be Responsible”, “Be Safe”.

## **District Mission Statement**

North Mahaska will prepare students to be positive, productive citizens with the passion and skills for lifelong learning.

North Mahaska Long Range Goals for School Improvement:

1. To provide effective instruction and learning sequences that will increase the achievement of all students toward their maximum potential.
2. To provide new and improved instructional programs through a coordinated curriculum that more fully meets the diverse needs of students in all disciplines.
3. To improve leadership by developing and promoting effective working relationships and communications between administrators, staff, students, and community.
4. To provide an orderly environment and set high expectations for academic achievement of all students regardless of sex, race, ability, or socio-economic origins.
5. To provide for the psychological strength of the staff and feelings of success and security of each student.
6. To improve the effectiveness and quality of instruction and administrative leadership through well-planned, long-term staff development and monitoring progress.
7. To develop more effective partnerships with parents, community, and local organizations.

## **Email Addresses**

To communicate with staff members by email, use the staff member’s last name followed by the first initial of their first name with the extension @nmwarhawks.org. Example: John Doe - doej@nmwarhawks.org

## **School Website**

This is an excellent resource for various information regarding the district. The district website is:  
[www.nmwarhawks.org](http://www.nmwarhawks.org)

## **PowerSchool**

PowerSchool is our student management system that allows parents to attain student information, such as

attendance or grades, online at any time. Parents can log on through the district website and access attendance and grade information for their child through your [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#). Log-in information can be obtained through the Elementary and Jr/Sr High School offices.

## **School Fight Song**

(to the tune of the Notre Dame Fight Song)

*Cheer, Cheer for old N & M*

*You needn't worry; we're out to win.*

*Full of pep in every way, we always win every game we play.*

*We never stagger; we never fall.*

*Old N&M will win overall*

*While our loyal sons and daughters, march on to victory.*

*VICTORY!*

## **Faculty & Staff**

### **Administration**

Mrs. Angela Livezey - Elementary Principal/Superintendent

Mrs. Amber Goemaat - Jr./Sr. High School Principal

Mr. Ryan Groom - Activities Director

Mr. Tim Veiseth - K-12 Dean of Students & Behavior Interventionist

### **Instructional Staff**

Mrs. Terri Mateer -4 Year Old Preschool

Mrs. Crystal DeBoef -Kindergarten

Mrs. Kara Denburger- Kindergarten

Mrs. Renee Ferguson - First Grade

Ms. Alisha Briggs -First Grade

Mrs. Hannah Vogel -First Grade

Mrs. Stephanie Hargis -Second Grade

Miss Allison Canfield- Second Grade

Mrs. Ashley Schroeder -Third Grade

Mrs. Amy Terpstra -Third Grade

Mrs. Krysty Huffman -Fourth Grade

Ms. Maddison Mitchell -Fourth Grade

Mrs. Jean Knockel -Fifth Grade

Mrs. Lisa Watts -Fifth Grade

Mrs. Jessica Jones -Fifth Grade

Mr. Matt Wilson -Sixth Grade

Mrs. Tara Grier -Sixth Grade

Mrs. Nicole DeBoef -Guidance Counselor/Equity Coordinator

Mr. Brant Bollman -Art

Mrs. Tara Carrico -Music

Mr. L.E. Moore -Physical Education

Mr. Ryan Anderson -Special Education



Ms. Amy Griffin -Special Education  
Mrs. Carrie Kral - Special Education  
Mrs. McKenzie VanDenBerg -Special Education  
Mrs. Jenna Hibler - 4th-8th Grade Literacy Interventionist  
Mrs. Shayla Schilling -Math Instructional Coach

### **North Mahaska Building Leadership Team**

Mrs. Angela Livezey  
Mrs. Amber Goemaat  
Mrs. Renee Ferguson - Social-Emotional Lead & Mentor  
Mrs. Kate Hite -Curricular Resource Lead  
Mrs. Stacie Johannes - Literacy Lead/Instructional Coach  
Mrs. Jess Jones -Elementary Science Lead  
Mr. Terry Malone -Social Studies Lead & Mentor  
Mrs. Shayla Schilling - Mathematics Lead  
Mr. Kipp Schuler -Jr./Sr. High Science Lead  
Mrs. Lisa Watts - Literacy Lead/Social-Emotional Lead & Mentor

### **Support Staff**

#### **Administrative Assistants**

Mrs. Lindsay Bankes -Elementary Office  
Mrs. Cindy DeGoey -Jr./Sr. High Office  
Ms. Sarah McGriff - Business Manager, School Board Secretary  
Ms. Donna Spoelstra -Superintendent's Office

#### **Custodial/Maintenance**

Mr. Kiah Bucklin - Head Custodial/Maintenance  
Mrs. DeeAnn Bokhoven  
Mr. Jeff DeWitt  
Mr. Craig Montgomery

#### **Para-Educators**

Ms. Tanya Adkins  
Mrs. Whitney Blattler  
Mrs. Heather Held  
Mrs. Carmen Kelderman  
Mrs. Sara Lamb  
Mrs. Alisha Linder  
Mrs. Bev Stevens  
Mrs. Julie VanUtrecht  
Mrs. Sherri Wolver  
Mrs. Rachel Yang

#### **Transportation**

Mr. Jeff Walston - Transportation Director  
Mr. Bill Blake

Mrs. Kathy Breen  
Mrs. Michelle Meador  
Ms. Wendy Sampson

### Food & Nutritional Services -Contracted Food Service with Opa

#### Student Health Services

Mr. John Colligan - Student Athletic Training  
Mrs. Julie Knoot - School Nurse  
Mrs. Jana Vink - Clinical Social Worker - *Funded through Mental Health Supports Grant*

## **Student Support Services**

### **School Counseling Office**

The North Mahaska School District has established a k-12 school counseling program whose responsibility is to help students and satisfy their needs in the school environment. The School Counseling Program includes:

- Personal and group counseling
- Whole Group Guidance Lessons in the general education classrooms

Students may encounter problems with which they need assistance. These problems may be of a personal or educational nature. Teachers and parents are encouraged to refer or schedule student conferences with school counselors at any time during the school day. Students should remember that the school counseling program is a service offered for their benefit. School counseling and information resulting will be considered confidential.

### **Talented & Gifted Program (TAG) - Board Policy 604.3**

Talented & Gifted (TAG) Services at North Mahaska are designed to help meet the needs of highly capable students who may require modifications/extensions in the general education setting to maximize their potential. Necessary modifications/extensions may include:

- Pull-out time with intellectual peers
- Flexible grouping in the classroom
- Compacting of the curriculum
- Opportunities to test-out of classes or units
- Social/emotional support
- Chances to work with a mentor
- Co-taught classes with a content specialist and TAG coordinator
- Academic competitions
- Independent study options.

Students at North Mahaska are identified and served in the areas of reading, mathematics, general giftedness, and artistic ability. Gifted students are not always “straight-A” students and “straight-A” students are not always gifted.

At the elementary level, North Mahaska has a multi-faceted identification plan for placing students in gifted education. Students identified in elementary school remain eligible for services at the Jr/Sr High, unless both the school and family agree that services are no longer warranted.

A student who was not identified in elementary may be identified in Jr/Sr High using:

- Iowa Assessment Scores
- Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) Scores
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Scores
- Teacher recommendations
- Parent/Peer feedback

Strong communication is a key factor in providing appropriate services. Please direct any questions or concerns to the K-12 TAG Coordinator, Shalya Schilling at [schillings@nmwarhawks.org](mailto:schillings@nmwarhawks.org)

### **At-Risk Program - Board Policy 604.4**

The board recognizes some students require additional assistance in order to graduate from the regular education program. The school will provide a plan to encourage and provide an opportunity for at-risk students to achieve their potential and stay on track for meeting grade level expectations and graduating on time. Students who are in danger of not graduating with their class can participate in this program.

### **Special Education & Related Services - Board Policy 603.3**

The North Mahaska Community School District strives to make every student's educational experience a successful one. To ensure the success of all students, we sometimes must make accommodations and/or modifications for particular students. These modifications and accommodations are referred to as general education interventions. They involve attempts to correct a student's academic or behavioral difficulties in a systematic fashion in a student's regular classroom. Teachers, sometimes working with a team of teachers, develop interventions to provide for a student's difficulties. If initial interventions are ineffective at correcting the difficulty, further interventions may be attempted or a child's parent(s) may be contacted about the possibility of a full and individual evaluation for their child.

The school often enlists the support of professional staff from Area Education Agency to assist in developing these accommodations and modifications. Professional staff from the AEA consists of:

- Speech-Language Pathologists
- Hearing and Vision Specialists
- Occupational Therapists
- Transition/Work Experience Instructors
- School Social Workers
- School Psychologists.

Prior to any direct involvement of the AEA staff with a particular student, a parent's permission must be secured through their signing of an "Informed Consent" form.

The board recognizes some students have different educational needs than other students. The school will provide a free appropriate public education program and related services to students identified in need of special education. The special education services will be provided from birth until the appropriate education is completed, age twenty-one or to maximum age allowable in accordance with the law. Students requiring special education will attend general education classes, participate in nonacademic and

extracurricular services and activities and receive services in a general education setting to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of each individual student. The appropriate education for each student is written in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Special education students are required to meet the requirements stated in board policy or in their IEPs for graduation. It is the responsibility of the superintendent and the area education agency director of special education to provide or make provisions for appropriate special education and related services.

## **Student Assistance Team**

In addition to the counselors, members of the Student Assistance Team (SAT) work to identify students who are having difficulties in their academics, social relations, and/or behavior. Team members will meet with students who are referred to them by other staff members in hopes of resolving issues that are interfering with the student's academic success. Team members include but are not limited to: School administrator, guidance counselor, general education teacher, special education teacher, At-risk coordinator, AEA personnel.

## **Mental Health Services**

Mental Health can affect all areas of life including academics. North Mahaska supports students through social-emotional learning, skill building, and supports. Through a grant received from the University of Northern Iowa we are able to provide counseling services to students.

If you would like more information on these services, please contact the elementary school office.

## **Building Schedule**

Our school day starts at 8:15. Students may enter into the school at 7:45 if they are eating breakfast. Those not eating breakfast will be allowed in the building at 8:00 a.m. Students will transition to the classroom at 8:00 a.m upon entry. The tardy bell rings at 8:15. Dismissal time is 3:30.

Lunch Dismissal - Classes will be dismissed on a staggered schedule. When students finish eating, they are to remain in assigned areas until being dismissed to return to class or recess. Students are to ask permission from the lunchroom supervisor to go to the restroom.

Parents eating lunch with their children must check in at the elementary office. Adult breakfast and lunch tickets can be purchased at the elementary office. Parents may sit with their child at the round table during lunch. We would ask that you do not invite other students to sit with you.

**(Lunchroom procedures subject to change due to COVID-19 and mitigation strategies / Parents are not permitted to each lunch with their students at the time.)**

## **School Cancellations/Delays/Early-Dismissals**

Should weather conditions or other emergency conditions make it impossible to hold school or cause a delay or early-dismissal, an announcement will be made through the Student Information System (PowerSchool) powered by *Swift Reach*. A text message will be sent to each parent/guardian listed for each student.

The school will also use the following media outlets to communicate weather or emergency related cancellations, delays, or dismissals:

- KBOE (104.9) Oskaloosa
- WHO - Channel 5
- KCCI - Channel 8
- WHO - Channel 13
- Facebook
- NMwarhawks.org
- KMZM (740) Oskaloosa

Announcements will be made as early in the morning as possible.

If school is dismissed because of inclement weather after the school day has begun, parents are notified by the same means. The superintendent determines whether buses will follow the regular routes. If the buses do not follow the regular routes, they follow emergency routes or the parents are responsible for picking up the students at the student's school.

Extracurricular activities or practices scheduled for the day or evening of a day when school is canceled or dismissed early are generally canceled and rescheduled. The Principal and/or Athletic Director may determine whether to hold extracurricular activities or practice.

## **Student Attendance**

### **Attendance Policy - Board Policy(ies) 501.9, 501.10, 501.10R**

Daily, punctual attendance is an integral part of the learning experience and is required of all students to receive the maximum benefit of the educational program. The habit of good attendance established early is one which helps a person be successful throughout his or her lifetime. More and more, employers, colleges and vocational schools expect good attendance and are checking attendance records for absences and tardies. They are aware of how good and prompt attendance indicates dependability in a prospective student and/or employee.

The education that goes on in the classroom builds from day to day, and as a result, absences always cause some disruption in the educational progress of the absent student. Students who are absent may not understand what the teachers are currently presenting, and may also become discouraged with the double burden of keeping current and making up missed work. Attendance is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation and communication among students, parents, and the school.

#### **Acceptable reasons for a student's absence from school are limited to the following:**

- **Illness** - *Students may be required to submit a doctor's statement if absences from an illness exceed 3 consecutive days.*
- **Death of immediate family member**
- **Serious illness in immediate family**
- **Medical, vision, or dental appointments** (*students are required to provide a doctor's statement*)
- **Court appearances** (*documentation is required*)

- **Participation in school sponsored events** *(These are excused only with prior approval from the principal's office and Make-Up Work form completed and signed by all scheduled teachers.)*
- **Religious Observances**
- **Family members being deployed or returning from military deployment**
- **Legal appointments** *(documentation is required)*
- **Family vacations** *(These are excused only with prior approval from the principal's office and Make-Up Work form completed and signed by all scheduled teachers.)*
- **Doctor, Dental, Eye and counseling appointments**

**The following absences are to be avoided:**

- **Personal outings** *(shopping, haircuts, tanning appointments, manicure/pedicure appointments, hunting or trapping, lunch with family/relatives, concerts, non-school related music lessons [piano, voice, instrumental, etc.], etc.)*
- **Work** (only juniors and seniors with approved release)
- **Childcare, babysitting siblings/relatives** (unexcused)
- **Tired or oversleeping** (unexcused)
- **Missing rides or not making plans for transportation** (unexcused)

**General Statements regarding Attendance**

- If a student is absent for any reason not listed above, they will be considered unexcused unless prior arrangements have been made with the principal's office.
- Make-Up Work - Students will be expected to make up the work missed during any absence. This work must be done within the number of days absent, plus one day, or at the teacher's discretion.
- **Any student who will be absent should have his/her guardian call the office (641-637-4041) by 8:30am.** If notification is not received, the office will attempt to contact the guardian(s) at home or at work.
- **All absences must be reported to the Elementary School office by 9:30am to be considered excused.** Failure to receive such information shall cause the student to be considered unexcused/truant.

Students are expected to be in class and to make attendance a top priority. Only through attendance and class participation do students achieve the benefits of the education program. Participating in class discussion, developing an appreciation for the views and abilities of other students, and forming the habit of regular attendance are legitimate class objectives. Learning lost due to an absence can never be replaced. Regular attendance and being well prepared for class helps students in school as well as prepares students for adulthood.

Truancy is the failure to attend school for the minimum number of days established in the school calendar by the board. Truancy is the act of being absent without a reasonable excuse. Truancy will not be tolerated by the board.

When a student has been excessively absent from school, then the student's parent will be contacted regarding the student's attendance. The classroom teacher, principal, At-Risk Coordinator, or guidance counselor may initiate contact via telephone, email, home visit, or letter.

When a student's progress has been "significantly delayed" due to absences, school administration may notify the student and parent and initiate appropriate sanctions.

A student who is absent from school six (6) non-school related days per semester or in total six (6) periods from one class is considered to have **"excessive absenteeism."**

Students who reach the six (6) class/day level may be contacted by letter notifying them of their absences and explaining to them what future consequences could be put in place if attendance does not improve.

A student who obtains ten (10) non-school related absences in a semester runs the risk of experiencing **“significant delays”** in their learning.

If a student’s attendance does not improve and total absences in one semester exceed fifteen (15), a written contract for school attendance may be put in place, and the student/parent may be referred to the county truancy officer.

The Principal shall investigate the cause for a student's truancy. If the Principal is unable to secure the truant student's attendance, the Principal shall refer the matter to a mediator for mediation (Truancy Intervention Process).

Students who know they will be absent must notify the office prior to absence. If advance notification is not possible, parents must notify the office at 637-4041 on the day of the absence prior to 8:30 A.M. If notification is not received, the office attempts to contact the parents at their emergency number. Before a student is readmitted after an absence, the student must bring a note signed by the student's parents or call the office explaining the reason for the absence. Otherwise, it is an unexcused absence.

The school determines whether an absence is excused or unexcused. Excused absences include, but are not limited to, illness, family emergency, recognized religious observances and school activities. Students are expected to be in class on time. Being tardy for class is considered an unexcused absence unless approved by the principal.

Students who need to leave school during the school day must receive permission from the office and have a note signed by the student's parents, have their parents telephone the office or have their parents pick them up. Students who return to class or arrive after the school day has begun must present a signed note from their parents to the office for readmission; without this admission slip, students are considered absent.

If the student arrives after the tardy bell, they are to report to the principal's office for a tardy slip. An attempt will be made to inform the parent of any unexcused tardiness. Tardy is also considered not being in your homeroom at 8:15 without a teacher's excuse. If you arrive late to school because the bus is late, this is not counted as being tardy.

If a student arrives between 8:15 and 8:45 and they have been to a doctor, dentist, etc. they are not counted Tardy.

If a student arrives between 8:15 and 9:30 they are counted Tardy. If they arrive after 9:30 they are counted 1/2 day absent.

If a student leaves anytime before 2:15 they are counted 1/2 day absent.

Students participating in school activities must be in school at least one-half day on the day of the event in order to participate in a school activity. The remaining half-day is considered an excused absence. Only in extraordinary circumstances, may this rule be waived by the principal.

All Absences are recorded and become part of the permanent record and will remain a permanent part of the official school file. The administration has the right to investigate absences, even when excuses are furnished by the parents, if there is reason to believe the absence was not justified. Iowa has a compulsory attendance law which makes parents responsible for their children's regular attendance (Iowa Code).

## **TRUANCY LAWS OF THE STATE OF IOWA**

1. A "TRUANT" IS DEFINED AS A CHILD WHO HAS REACHED THE AGE OF SIX AND IS UNDER THE AGE OF 16 YEARS BY SEPTEMBER 15 WHO FAILS TO ATTEND SCHOOL WITHOUT A REASONABLE EXCUSE FOR BEING ABSENT.
2. A PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR LEGAL OR ACTUAL CUSTODIAN OF A CHILD WHO IS OF COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHILD ATTENDING SCHOOL.
3. THE SCHOOL BOARD MAY APPOINT A PERSON AS A TRUANCY OFFICER TO ENFORCE THE TRUANCY LAWS WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT.
4. THE TRUANCY OFFICE HAS THE AUTHORITY TO TAKE ANY TRUANT CHILD INTO CUSTODY AND DELIVER THEM TO SCHOOL.
5. IF THE SCHOOL'S EFFORTS TO GET A CHILD BACK TO SCHOOL ARE UNSUCCESSFUL, THE SCHOOL IS REQUIRED TO TURN THE CASE OVER TO THE COUNTY ATTORNEY FOR MEDIATION OR PROSECUTION.
6. A PERSON WHO VIOLATES AN AGREEMENT REACHED THROUGH MEDIATION OR WHO REFUSES TO PARTICIPATE IN MEDIATION IS, UPON CONVICTION, GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR AND CAN BE PUNISHED BY IMPRISONMENT OR A FINE. THE COURT CAN ALSO ORDER THE PERSON TO PERFORM UNPAID COMMUNITY SERVICES INSTEAD OF ANY FINE OR IMPRISONMENT.
7. A CHILD WHO DOES NOT ATTEND A PUBLIC SCHOOL, AN ACCREDITED NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL, COMPETENT PRIVATE INSTRUCTION, AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL, ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES, OR WHO IS NOT EMPLOYED AT LEAST TWENTY HOURS PER WEEK IS NOT ENTITLED TO A MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENSE UNTIL THE PERSON IS 18 YEARS OF AGE. A PERSON UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS OF AGE WHO HAS BEEN ISSUED A MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE, AND WHO DOES NOT ATTEND SCHOOL IS REQUIRED TO SURRENDER THEIR DRIVER'S LICENSE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, AND MAY BE ISSUED A TEMPORARY RESTRICTED LICENSE.

Students are responsible for arranging to make up schoolwork and are allowed to make up schoolwork only upon the approval of their teacher. Students who know they are going to be absent prior to an absence must make arrangements with their teachers in advance to make up schoolwork. Students have 2 days for each day absent to make up schoolwork upon return from the absence.

## **Excessive Absenteeism - Board Policy 501.10R**

When a student has been excessively absent from school, the student's parent will be contacted regarding the student's attendance. A classroom teacher, principal, school counselor, or at-risk coordinator may initiate contact via telephone, email, or letter.

## **Truancy Procedure**

The following timeline represents the school's policy and response to total truancy/unexcused absences:

- After the 5th unexcused absence - a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian from the At-Risk Coordinator and/or Principal.
- After the 7th unexcused absence - a letter will be sent via US Postal Service to a student's parent/guardian.
- After the 10th unexcused absence - an additional phone call to parent/guardians and meeting time set to establish academic probation.
- After the 12th unexcused absence - a written attendance contract is put in place.
- After the 15th unexcused absence - legal action will commence.
  - Certified letter sent to parent/guardian



- Truancy case turned over the Mahaska County Attorney's office

## **Leaving The School Grounds -Board Policy 501.11**

Students who request to leave school grounds will not be allowed to do so without parent/guardian permission prior to leaving. We will not allow students to leave for any reason until a parent/guardian has been notified and permission has been obtained. Students who leave school grounds at any time during school hours without permission and without signing out, may be subject to detention to make up the missed academic time.

## **Student Discipline**

North Mahaska Community Schools take pride in the quality of young people who pass through our halls.

At North Mahaska Elementary School we implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a school-wide program supported by research. Schools who have implemented PBIS have seen an increase in student achievement and positive school climate. With the implementation of PBIS, students better understand behavioral expectations, less time is spent redirecting students, and more time is available for instruction. In addition, the school environment is conducive to students feeling safe and connected.

The underlying theme is teaching behavioral expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject.

The school will focus on three to five behavioral expectations that are positively stated and easy to remember. In other words, rather than telling students what not to do, the school will focus on the preferred behaviors and positively reinforce the desired behaviors.

At this time, the three behavioral expectations we are focusing on our respect, responsibility and safety. PBIS Matrix: [North Mahaska PBIS Expectations By Setting](#)

Some basic steps are followed to deal with behavior problems when they occur:

1. Our goal is to have the students recognize what they have done.
2. Determine if it was the right thing, and
3. Plan a better course of action in the future.

We want to help students learn they are responsible for their own actions. When they decide to do something that is wrong, they will learn there are natural consequences to their actions. At the same time, when they do what is right, our goal is to give them recognition for that behavior. When a student misbehaves and disregards the school rules, the Consequences may include:

- "Time out" in isolation in their classroom
- Verbal reprimand
- Behavioral contract with student
- Counseling
- Writing behavioral essays
- Withdrawal of privileges (as in no recess)
- Parent Conference
- Referrals for evaluation
- Principal's "Time Out" area
- Detention
- Suspension

Other behavior modification activities may be used. The degree of Consequence is related to the severity of the misbehavior and continuation of the misbehavior.

Students will be expected to meet or exceed all of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports expectations. Disrespect, profanity, verbal aggression, and physical aggression will not be tolerated. PBIS Matrix for Major and Minor Offences: . . [North Mahaska Elementary's Matrix for Major and Minor Offenses](#)

Persistent behavior problems with a youngster may warrant referrals to outside agencies for assistance, such as social workers, psychologists, and behavior design interventionists.

## **Detention**

Students may be retained by the staff after dismissal for disciplinary reasons. The school will not be held responsible for transportation of students who are retained. Unless there is an emergency, a town student may stay the same afternoon the problem occurs. A rural student may stay the same afternoon or the following school day afternoon if transportation needs to be arranged.

Detentions will be served from 3:30-4:00, Monday-Thursday with the teacher assigned to Detention Duty. Students will be made aware of which staff member to which they should report. Failure to make up and/or failure to be on time can result in an in-school suspension.

## **Suspension and Expulsion - Elementary**

Students may be suspended by the principal or superintendent for a reasonable time. Only the Board of Education can exclude or expel a student from school. Students being suspended or expelled will be provided Due Process.

### **SUSPENSION**

Students may be suspended for misconduct and violation of school district policies by those school officials designated by the school board.

### **EXPULSION**

The Board of Education may, by a majority vote, expel any student from school for a violation of rules and regulations approved by the Board of Education when the presence of the student is considered to be detrimental to other scholars or to the purpose for which school is conducted.

The following are some of the behaviors that may warrant suspension or expulsion:

- A. Use or possession of tobacco on school property, including chewing tobacco.
- B. Open or persistent defiance of authority and/or school rules and regulations, including verbal abuse or recognizable derogatory gestures.
- C. Striking or assaulting any student or school employee.
- D. Threat of physical assault or intimidation of others including efforts to obtain money or materials of value.
- E. Damaging school property-vandalism.
- F. Profanity or obscenity.
- G. Theft.
- H. Failure to abide by corrective measures for misconduct.
- I. Possession of an instrument or weapon designed to produce serious bodily harm.
- J. Use, sale or possession of narcotics, look-alike drugs, or intoxicating liquors.

- K. Habitually creating classroom disturbances.
- L. Habitually arriving at class without required materials.
- M. Habitual absence or tardiness.
- N. Gambling.
- O. Other inappropriate behavior.

## **Due Process**

Students who earn consequences for an infraction of school rules are entitled to due process. In general, the due process consists of the following steps:

1. The student is informed of the infraction.
2. The student is given the opportunity to be informed of the evidence against them and may present a defense.
3. The student has the right to appeal.

An appeal follows the following sequence:

- The staff member who issued the consequence
- Principal
- Superintendent

If the matter is not settled to the satisfaction of either party, they may appeal to the School Board. During the hearing or appeal, the student may be represented by a third party.

- During the due process, an effort shall be made to involve the parent or guardian
- A student may be removed immediately from the school when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process.
  - In the case of immediate removal from school, the necessary notice and hearing shall be given as soon as practical.
  - Parents or guardians shall be notified by a phone call and in writing, that suspension has occurred and the reasons therefore.

## **Student Code of Conduct - Board Policy 503.1**

The board believes inappropriate student conduct causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment, interferes with the rights of others or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school premises. Appropriate classroom behavior allows teachers to communicate more effectively with students.

Students will conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. Consequences for misconduct will be fair and developmentally appropriate in light of the circumstances.

Students who fail to abide by this policy and the administrative regulations supporting it may be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with the education program; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school district or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to participate in or obtain their education; conduct that is violent or destructive; or conduct which

interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension, probation, and expulsion.

A student who commits an assault against an employee on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school-owned or school-operated chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school district activities will be suspended by the principal. Notice of the suspension is sent to the board president. The board will review the suspension to determine whether to impose further sanctions against the student which may include expulsion. Assault for purposes of this section of this policy is defined as:

- An act which is intended to cause pain or injury to, or which is intended to result in physical contact which will be insulting or offensive to another, coupled with the apparent ability to execute the act; or
- Any act which is intended to place another in fear of immediate physical contact which will be painful, injurious, insulting or offensive, coupled with the apparent ability to execute the act; or
- Intentionally points any firearm toward another or displays in a threatening manner any dangerous weapon toward another.

The act is not an assault when the person doing any of the above and the other person are voluntary participants in a sport, social or other activity, not in itself criminal, when the act is a reasonably foreseeable incident of such sport or activity, and does not create an unreasonable risk of serious injury or breach of the peace.

Building administration can develop discipline procedures, as needed which are consistent with board policies and are reasonable. The procedures may include but are not limited to the following:

### **Dismissal from a class or activity**

The administration can remove a student from a class or activity in which the student has been or is presenting a discipline problem or distraction to the educational process. Removal from the classroom means a student is sent to the administration office. It shall be within the discretion of the person in charge of the classroom to remove the student.

### **Payment for damage to equipment or buildings**

In case of intended damage, a student and/or parent-guardian can be assessed for the repairs needed, and the student may be expected to repair the damage.

### **Community Service**

In lieu of using some other method of discipline, a student may be assigned to a school work project after the school day has ended, on Saturday, or after the school year has ended.

### **Probation - Board Policy 503.1R1**

Probation means a student is given a conditional suspension of a penalty for a definite period of time in addition to being reprimanded. The conditional suspension shall mean the student must meet the conditions and terms for the suspension of the penalty. Failure of the student to meet these conditions and terms shall result in immediate reinstatement of the penalty.

### **Suspension - Board Policy 503.1R1**

Suspension means an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and/or a restriction from activities or loss of eligibility. An in-school suspension means the student will attend school but will be temporarily isolated from one or more classes while under supervision. Cell phone policy is in effect while serving in-school suspension.

- While on in-school suspension the student may complete and receive credit for all assigned schoolwork. A student may practice with the team or activity, but may not perform in events representing the school following determination of guilt (see athletic good conduct policy and non-athletic student eligibility policy). An in-school suspension will not exceed ten consecutive school days. An in-school suspension is considered an unexcused absence.
- An out-of-school suspension means the student is removed from the school environment, which includes school classes and activities. An out-of-school suspension may be one (1) to ten (10) days in length. All class work may be made up while on out-of-school suspension. Any student on out-of-school suspension is NOT to be at school at any time during the suspension period. A student on out-of-school suspension may not participate in school activities. An out-of-school suspension is considered an unexcused absence.
- A restriction from school activities means a student will attend classes and practice but will be removed from school activity(s) or banned from attending succeeding school activities. The administration can deny a student the right to be present at school events, if previous action by the student has been detrimental to the student body, to the faculty/staff or crowd attitude and control.

### **Expulsion - Board Policy - 503.2**

Expulsion means an action by the North Mahaska School Board to remove a student from the school environment, which includes, but is not limited to, classes and activities, for a period of time set by the board. Students may be expelled for violations of board policy, school rules or the law. It shall be within the discretion of the board to discipline a student by using an expulsion for a single offense or for a series of offenses depending on the nature of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the offense.

When a student is recommended for expulsion by the board, the student is provided with:

1. Notice of the reasons for the proposed expulsion
2. The names of the witnesses and an oral or written report on the facts to which each witness testifies unless the witnesses are students whose names may be released at the discretion of the superintendent
3. An opportunity to present a defense against the charges and provide either oral testimony or written affidavits of witnesses on the student's behalf
4. The right to be represented by counsel
5. The results and finding of the board in writing open to the student's inspection.

In addition to these procedures, a special education student must be provided with additional procedures. A determination should be made of whether the student is actually guilty of the misconduct. A staffing team should determine whether the student's behavior is caused by the student's disability and whether the conduct is the result of inappropriate placement. Discussions and conclusions of this meeting should be recorded.

If the special education student's conduct is not caused by the disability, the student may be expelled or suspended for a long-term period following written notice to the parent and pursuant to the school district's expulsion hearing procedures. If the misconduct is caused by the disability and a change in placement is recommended, the change must be made pursuant to the placement procedures used by the school district.

NOTE: This is a mandatory policy and is a reflection of Iowa law regarding student expulsion. It is consistent with the due process requirements of the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The last two paragraphs reflect federal special education law.

### **Notice: Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Physical Confinement and Detention-**

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use “reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain” to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property. State law also limits school employees’ abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child’s parent.

If you have any questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education’s web site: [www.iowa.gov/educate](http://www.iowa.gov/educate). *(Normal detention and suspension of students as currently practiced at North Mahaska is allowed by this law.)*

## **Student Expectations**

### **Fieldtrips and Open House**

In certain classes, field trips and excursions are authorized and may be taken as an extension of the classroom to contribute to the achievement of the educational goals of the school district. If a field trip is required for a course, students are expected to attend the field trip unless extenuating circumstances are approved by the principal. Absences in other classes or school activities due to attendance on field trips or excursions are considered excused absences.

While on field trips, students are guests and considered ambassadors and representatives of the school district. Students must treat employees, chaperons and guides with respect and courtesy.

Volunteers for school activities may be subject to a background check.

Prior to attending a field trip, students must return a note signed by the student's parents. Registration field trip permission may be used when determined by the principal.

### **Student funds and fund raising**

Students may raise funds for school activities upon approval of the principal prior to the fund raising event or the start of a fundraising campaign. Funds raised remain in the control of the school district and the board. School sponsored student organizations must have the approval of the principal prior to spending the money raised. Classes who wish to donate a gift to the school district should discuss potential gifts with the principal prior to selecting a gift.

### **Assemblies**

Throughout the year the school district sponsors school assemblies. Attendance at these assemblies is a privilege. Students must act in an orderly fashion and remain quiet on their way to an assembly, during an assembly and on their way back to the classroom after an assembly. Students attend assemblies unless, for disciplinary reasons, the privilege is taken away.

Students who are not attending assemblies shall report to the office during assemblies.

## **Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco/E Cigarettes/Vaping - Board Policy 502.7**

Federal and state laws assert the possession or consumption of drugs, tobacco (including E-Cigarettes, Vapor, or any imitation of tobacco products), or the drinking of alcohol on school grounds is just cause for suspension or expulsion. These regulations are also in effect for after school activities such as athletic contests and dances.

If students are to be found in possession of or consuming prohibited materials on or off of school property the following consequences will be enforced:

- Possession and/or consumption of alcohol - Three (3) days in or out-of-school suspension and can be up to ten (10) days.
- Possession and/or consumption of tobacco (including E-Cigarettes, Vapor, or any imitation of tobacco products) - Two (2) days in or out-of-school suspension and can be up to ten (10) days.

Parents of students found in violation of this policy will be contacted by administration.

Underage students will also be reported to law enforcement officials for any violation.

\*This policy does not include the use of medications prescribed by a doctor that have been taken in accordance with [North Mahaska Medication Policy](#).

## **Profanity/Inappropriate Language**

The use of profanity (spoken, written, or gesture in the school building or on school grounds) or offensive language is not an acceptable standard of the North Mahaska Community School District. Unacceptable language as defined here will also include religious, sexual, and racial slurs. Students reported in violation of this standard may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

## **Dress/Hygiene Policy - Board Policy 502.1**

The board believes inappropriate student appearance causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors. Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. The standards will be those generally acceptable to the community as appropriate in a school setting.

The following guidelines are what is considered inappropriate by North Mahaska School standards favoring modesty in dress:

- Tank tops or muscle shirts that expose the chest and/or undergarments.
- Pieces of clothing that expose the student's midriff, cleavage, undergarments, and/or other areas considered to be private/inappropriate.
- Skirts or shorts that are shorter than the tips of a student's fingers held at the side and shorts that expose the pockets and/or pants or shorts which reveal anatomical details.
- Hats or bandanas should not be worn inside the school building. \*Exception: Homecoming (or similarly planned student and/or school spirit activities) or after-school sporting events.

At School or school-sponsored events the following is considered inappropriate

Hats and any other clothing displaying/advertising items that:

- promote or condone illegal activities and/or substances
- promote the use and/or legalization of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances
- displays obscene material
- Profanity
- vulgar statements
- satanic symbols
- gang symbols
- hate messages
- sexual innuendos
- Suicide
- Intolerance
- violent messages
- reference to subversion, or other messages which are interpreted as being inappropriate or offensive, are considered a violation of this policy.

Students who wear clothing that is deemed inappropriate will be asked to change. If a student's dress becomes a habitual issue he or she can be subject to consequences for violation of this policy.

## **Student Conduct on School Transportation**

Students utilizing the North Mahaska Transportation Department shall conduct themselves in an orderly, respectful manner in accordance with their age and maturity level.

The following guidelines will be used for all students utilizing transportation provided by the North Mahaska Community School District:

- There should be no excessive conversation with the driver.
- Students should not extend hands, arms, or any other extremities or inanimate objects out of the bus or school vehicle windows.
- Students should not throw any objects out of the bus or school vehicle windows.
- Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Students are to obey all directions from the driver.
- A student who does not normally ride a particular bus route must obtain a permission slip from the office before he or she will be allowed to ride.
- The bus driver has the right to assign seats to students riding the bus.
- There should be no food or drink on any school bus.
- No food or drink will be allowed on the bus. All trash should be removed from any vehicle as students exit.

\*All school expectations for good character and behavior should be displayed on school transportation.

## **Bus Suspensions**

Riding the bus is a privilege. The riding privilege can be suspended for breaking the rules listed above or for any behavior that disrupts the safe operation of the bus.

### **First Offense**

- Verbal warning
- Bus riding privileges may be suspended depending on the severity of the offense.



## **Second Offense**

- Bus riding privileges may be suspended for up to three (3) days.

## **Third & Subsequent Offenses**

- Bus riding privileges may be suspended for up to ten (10) days.
- The North Mahaska Board of Education may take action to suspend a student for the remainder of the school year should problems persist. *\*All students have a right to due process.*

## **Activity Bus**

The school district may sponsor an activity bus to transport students to school activities. A fee may be charged to students riding the activity bus. Riding on the activity bus is a privilege that can be taken away.

Students who ride an activity bus must ride to and from the event on the bus. Students ride home on the activity bus unless prior arrangements have been made with the principal or the student's parents personally appear and request to transport the student home.

Elementary students riding the activity bus must be accompanied by a parent.

## **Student Interpersonal Relationships**

It is the belief of the faculty, administration, and the members of the North Mahaska Board of Education that the school promotes a caring and supportive environment. However, there are some displays of affection that are not acceptable in school.

The following types of actions are considered improper in school or at school events:

- Kissing
- Close body contact
- Holding hands

At school activities, behavior must be appropriate to the situation. Violation of this rule may result in consequences.

## **Vandalism - Board Policy 502.2**

Students will treat school district property with the care and respect they would treat their own property. Students found to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school district property may be required to reimburse the school district. They may be subject to discipline under board policy and the school district rules and regulations. They may also be referred to local law enforcement authorities.

## **Weapons - Board Policy 502.6**

The board believes weapons, other dangerous objects and look-alikes in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district. School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons, dangerous objects and look-alikes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-alikes will be taken from students and others

who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district. Parents of students found to possess weapons, dangerous objects or look-a-likes on school property are notified of the incident. Possession or confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects will be reported to law enforcement officials, and students will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

## **Harassment/Bullying - Board Policy 104**

Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by the board. The board is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. To that end, the board has in place policies, procedures, and practices that are designed to reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment as well as processes and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment of students by other students, by school employees, and by volunteers who have direct contact with students will not be tolerated in the school or school district.

**Harassment** - aggressive pressure or intimidation.

**Bullying** - seeking to harm, intimidate, or coerce someone who is perceived as vulnerable

Any conduct of a verbal, physical, written, or cyber nature that is intended to:

- Embarrass
- Distress
- Agitate
- Disturb
- Trouble

Behavior is considered “bullying” or harassment if:

- It places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or property
- It has a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s physical or mental health
- It has the effect of substantially interfering with the student’s academic performance
- It has the effect of substantially interfering with the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

*Harassment or Bullying based on factors other than sex are but are not limited to:*

- Verbal, physical, written, or cyber harassment or abuse
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades, jobs, athletic ability, etc.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities

**Sexual Harassment** - behavior characterized by the making of unwelcome and inappropriate sexual remarks or physical advances in a workplace or other professional or social situation

*Sexual Harassment includes, but is not limited to:*

- Verbal, physical, written, or cyber harassment or abuse
- Pressure for sexual activity
- Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats

## **Sportsmanship**

North Mahaska Schools encourages positive sportsmanship and behavior at all activities. Students, parents, and other spectators are urged to encourage players and coaches with positive comments and acts; and respect the decisions of the game officials. North Mahaska will be known as a school superior in sportsmanship. If a student’s, parent’s, or other spectator’s words and/or actions do not uphold the standard

of superior sportsmanship he/she may be asked to leave the event. Removal from a school event due to inappropriate conduct may result in further consequences.

## **Policies & Procedures**

### **Student Health and Wellbeing**

#### **Smoke free air act**

By state law, tobacco use is prohibited on any school grounds, in any school facility, in any school vehicle, or at any public school activity. This includes smoking in private cars or vehicles parked on school property or at any outdoor school sponsored activities such as football games or golf meets. Designated smoking areas are not allowed.

#### **Emergency Drills**

Periodically the school holds emergency fire and tornado drills. At the beginning of each semester, teachers notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms.

Students are expected to remain quiet and orderly during a drill or an emergency. Students who pull the fire alarm or call in false alarms, in addition to being disciplined under the school district's policies, rule and regulations may be reported to law enforcement officials.

The safety and well-being of the students is very important to the staff of the school district. It is very important for everyone in the school to conduct themselves carefully and with concern for their own safety. We encourage students to notify teachers or administration of risks of injury or harm to themselves or others. Students should always be courteous when passing in the hallways with no running or yelling. Students should obey pedestrian and bicycle safety rules.

The school is in compliance with the state's requirement for emergency operations plan. North Mahaska CSD has an Emergency Operation Plan in place and will, as required, hold an annual intruder drill. This drill may be with staff, tabletop discussion, or involve students (as appropriate).

The North Mahaska Community School District does comply with the U.S. Government and OSHA standards for potential transmission of blood borne pathogens (Hepatitis B and AIDS-HIV). Only trained staff members will participate in cleaning up blood or dealing with injuries involving blood.

### **Student Health**

A licensed school nurse will be on duty each day from 8:00 am to 3:30pm.

The following procedures will be followed regarding student health management:

- Students who become ill or are injured should be sent to the nurse. Basic first aid will be given, but no medicine (prescription or over-the-counter medications) can be given without parental consent.

North Mahaska Community School District does comply with the United States Government and OSHA standards for potential transmission of bloodborne pathogens (Hepatitis B and AIDS-HIV). Only trained staff members will participate in cleaning up blood or dealing with injuries involving blood.

### **Medication Policy - Board Policy 507.2**

Some students may need prescription and nonprescription medication to participate in their educational program.

Medication shall be administered when the student's parent or guardian (hereafter "parent") provides a signed and dated written statement requesting medication administration and the medication is in the original, labeled container, either as dispensed or in the manufacturer's container. When administration of the medication requires ongoing professional health judgment, an individual health plan shall be developed by the licensed health personnel with the student and the student's parent.

Students who have demonstrated competence in administering their own medications may self-administer their medication. A written statement by the student's parent shall be on file requesting co-administration of medication, when competence has been demonstrated.

By law, students with asthma or other airway constriction diseases may self-administer their medication upon approval of their parents and prescribing physician regardless of competency.

The following procedures will be followed concerning medication administration:

- Students bringing medications to school must take it to the office upon arriving at school. ***NO medications (prescription or over-the-counter) should be stored in student lockers or remain in student possession.*** A note signed by the parent with the correct information (instructions, dosage, etc.) must accompany the medication.
- Medication should be in the original bottle with the dosage prescribed by the physician.

## **Immunization**

Prior to starting school or when transferring into the school district, students must present an approved Iowa Department of Public Health immunization certificate signed by a health care provider stating that the student has received the immunizations required by law. Students without the proper certificate are not allowed to attend school until they receive the immunizations or the student makes arrangements with the principal. Only for specific medical or religious purposes are students exempted from the immunization requirements. Parents who have questions should contact the office. Preschool, Prekindergarten, and kindergarten students will not be allowed to attend school without proper immunization records, or permission from the county nurse and/or principal. Dental and Lead screenings are also required for all kindergarten students.

For the purposes of immunization law, health care provider means doctor, physician's assistant, registered nurse, nurse practitioner, certified public health nurse, school nurse or officer of a local public health department.

Iowa law, effective July 3, 1991, required all children entering kindergarten to have received two doses of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine prior to entry. The first dose shall have been given after 12 months of age. The second dose having been given after the child's fourth birthday. Three doses of DPT and polio are also required, one dose having been given after the child's fourth birthday. Beginning with the 1999-2000 school year students must have received three doses of hepatitis-B vaccine. Also required is the varicella vaccine or proof for chickenpox with the date given.

## **Blood testing before school entry**

All Iowa school children must have proof of a blood lead test before starting kindergarten, or as soon after that as the parents are notified that the child needs a test. There is a religious exemption, and a form can be obtained from the school or the Iowa Department of Public Health that must be filled out and notarized.

## **Dental Screenings**

House File 906, which was passed by the 2007 legislature and is effective July 1, 2008, requires all children entering elementary and high school to have a dental screening. The purpose of the dental screening requirement is to improve the oral health of Iowa's children. Dental screenings will facilitate early detection and referral for treatment of dental disease; reduce the incidence, impact, and cost of dental disease; inform parents and guardians of their children's dental problems; encourage the establishment of effective oral health practices early in life; promote the importance of oral health as an integral component of preparation for school and learning; and contribute to statewide surveillance of oral health. Parents must provide evidence of the completion of the screening to the school district prior to the age of 6.

## **Vision Screening**

The Iowa house and senate have passed a bill requiring vision testing for children before they start kindergarten and again as they approach third grade.

The legislation requires vision screening by a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist or at a physician's office, child care center, free clinic or health department. The screening can also be performed at a school or even via an online screening conducted by a parent or guardian.

## **Physical Examinations**

Parents are encouraged to have their children receive periodic physical examinations. Children entering Pre- Kindergarten or Kindergarten shall submit a certificate of health from a licensed physician.

## **Student Illness or Injury at School**

A student who becomes ill or is injured at school must notify his or her teacher or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents according to the information on the emergency form. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student is released to the student's parents or sitter if parents can't be notified, or another person approved by the parents. The student may return to school after they have been fever free for 24 hours.

While the school district is not responsible for treating medical emergencies, employees may administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. The school contacts emergency medical personnel if necessary and attempts to notify the parents where the student has been transported for treatment.

## **Communicable and Infectious Diseases**

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves or does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. If there is a question about whether a student should continue to attend classes, the student shall not attend class or participate in school activities without their personal physician's approval. Infectious or communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, mumps, measles and chickenpox.

### **Recommended exclusion from school for communicable diseases:**

Chicken pox - minimum of 7 days from onset of pox unless a physician's statement is otherwise.  
Scarlet Fever, Scarletina, Strep Throat - 7 days from onset if untreated or 24 hours after antibiotics, unless a physician's statement is otherwise.  
Scabies - Until adequately treated by a physician.  
Impetigo - At the discretion of the principal - until physician permits return  
Fever, vomiting, or diarrhea - minimum of 24 hours symptom free

A student shall notify the building principal, or superintendent, when the student learns he/she has a communicable disease. It shall be the responsibility of the principal, or superintendent, when upon investigation has knowledge that a reportable communicable disease is present, to notify the Iowa Department of Public Health.

The parent should be prepared to provide a physician's statement before and after the recommended exclusion from school, if requested. The above precautions are from the welfare of children who have the disease and for the other children in school.

## **Health Screening**

Throughout the year, the school district may sponsor health screening for vision, hearing, scoliosis and height and weight measurements. Students are automatically screened unless the parent submits a note asking the student be excused from the screening. The grade levels included in the screening are determined annually. Upon a teacher's recommendation and with parental permission, students not scheduled for screening may also be screened.

Referral forms for speech, hearing, psychological testing, social work, etc. are available in the elementary school office. Please visit with your child's classroom teacher or the principal if you have questions about the referral process.

## **Sexual Abuse and Harrassment by School Employees**

The school district does not tolerate employees physically or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, teacher, principal or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations. The school district has designated Nicole DeBoef at 637-4041, or Angie Radcliffe at 637-4187 as its Level I

investigators. The alternate Level I investigators are Angela Livezey at 637-4041 or Amber Goemaat at 637-4187.

Physical abuse is a non-accidental physical injury that leaves a mark at least 24 hours after the incident. While employees cannot use physical force to discipline a student, there are times when the use of physical force is appropriate. The times when physical force is appropriate include, but are not limited to, times when it is necessary to stop a disturbance, to obtain a weapon or other dangerous object, for purposes of self-defense or to protect the safety of others, to remove a disruptive student, to protect others from harm, for the protection of property or to protect a student from self-infliction of harm.

Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, sexual acts involving a student and intentional sexual behavior as well as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of the student's education or benefits; submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

## **How to File a Report if you Suspect the Abuse of a Student by a School Employee**

Any person who has knowledge of an incident of abuse of a student committed by a school employee may file a report with a designated investigator or any other school administrator. To generate an investigation, the report must include basic information showing that the victim of the alleged act or omission of the school employee meets the definition of abuse, and that the person allegedly responsible for the abuse is a school employee.

The report shall be in writing, signed and witnessed, and shall contain all of the following:

- A. The full name, address, and telephone number of the person filing.
- B. The full name, age, address, and telephone number of the student.
- C. The name and place of employment of the school employee(s) or agents who allegedly committed the abuse.
- D. A concise statement of facts surrounding the incident, including date, time and place of occurrence, if known.
- E. A list of possible witnesses by name, if known.
- F. Names and locations of any and all persons who examined, counseled or treated the student for the alleged abuse, including the dates on which those services were provided, if known.

The following have been appointed by the Board of Directors as Level I investigators: Nicole DeBoef 637-4041 or Angie Radcliffe 637-4187. Alternate investigators: Angela Livezey 637-4041 or Amber Goemaat 637-4187.

## **Initiations, Hazing, or Harassment**

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age or marital status includes conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble persons when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the student's participation in school programs or activities;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student; or

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile working or learning environment. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:
- Verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse;
- Pressure for sexual activity;
- repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications; and
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats.

**Harassment based upon factors other than sex includes, but is not limited to:**

- Verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse;
- repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.; and
- Demeaning jokes, stories or activities.

Harassment and abuse are violations of school district policies, rules and regulations and, in some cases, may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report students violating this rule to law enforcement officials.

**Students who feel that they have been harassed should:**

- Communicate to the harasser that the student expects the behavior to stop, if the student is comfortable doing so. If the student needs assistance communicating with the harasser, the student should ask a teacher, counselor or principal to help.

**If the harassment does not stop, or the student does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser, the student should;**

- tell a teacher, counselor or principal; and
- write down exactly what happened, keep a copy and give another copy to the teacher, counselor or principal including;
  - \*\* What, when and where it happened;
  - \*\* Who was involved?
  - \*\* Exactly what was said or what the harasser did;
  - \*\* Witnesses to the harassment;
  - \*\* What the student said or did, either at the time or later;
  - \*\* How the student felt; and
  - \*\* How the harasser responded.

**Homeless Children and Youth**

The District shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children and youth of school age within the District, encourage their enrollment and eliminate existing barriers which may exist in District policies or practices to their receiving education.

A homeless child is defined as a child or youth between the ages of 5 and 21 who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes a child or youth who is living on the street, in a car, tent or abandoned building or some other form of shelter not designated as permanent; who is living in a community shelter facility; or who is living with non-nuclear family members or with friends, who may or may not have legal guardianship over the child or youth of school age.

So that enrollment of homeless children and youth of school age may be facilitated the following policy areas shall be modified as necessary: school records, immunization requirements, waiver of fees and charges, enrollment requirements/placement, residency and transportation. All services, which are available to resident students, shall be made available to homeless children or youths enrolled in the



District. Services include special education, talented and gifted programs, vocational education, English as a second language programs, health services and food and nutrition programs.

## **Child Abuse Reporting**

The Board of Directors strongly supports Chapter 232 of the Iowa Code and requires that all employees who are mandatory reporters under this chapter be familiar with the requirements therein. The Code of Iowa requires mandatory reporters (certified school employees, social workers, health practitioners, certified psychologists, licensed day care facility employees, Mental Health Center staff and peace officers) to report to the Department of Human Services all instances of suspected child abuse involving students. The law further states that any mandatory reporter who knowingly and willfully fails to report a suspected case of child abuse is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

## **Food & Drink**

Students are allowed water in a water bottle in the classroom. Students are not allowed food or any other drink in the classroom or lockers (exception: student lunch bag). The teacher may allow food and drink for special occasions.

Food should be consumed in the cafeteria area. Students should not take food back to their lockers after breakfast or lunch.

## **Athletic Facilities**

North Mahaska Community School District prides itself in our facilities. It is up to all students, staff, and visitors to ensure our facilities remain both attractive and functional.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Cell phones are a part of everyday life for some of our students in the elementary.. However, the appropriate and respectful use of these devices is imperative.

The following cell phone policy will be enforced by all staff and administration:

- NO cell phone usage during class time (unless otherwise permitted under this policy).
  - Each staff member will establish a location for students to store their phones during class.
    - This area should be in full view of the classroom.
  - Students are not required to utilize this location, **HOWEVER**, should the student be caught using or be under reasonable suspicion of using his/her phone during class time, the phone will be confiscated and placed in the office until the end of the school day.

### **Consequences of Violation of the Cell Phone Policy**

#### **First Offense**

- Phone is confiscated and placed in the office for the remainder of the day.
- Student may pick it up after his/her final class or the 3:30 dismissal bell.

### **Second Offense**

- Phone is confiscated and placed in the office for the remainder of the day.
- Parents contacted
- Student may pick the phone up after the 3:30 dismissal bell.
- Student receives detention to be served within 24 hours.

### **Third Offense**

- The phone is confiscated and placed in the office for the remainder of the day.
- Parents contacted
- A parent must retrieve the student's phone from the office.
- Student receives detention to be served within 24 hours.

### **Subsequent Offenses:**

- is confiscated and placed in the office for the remainder of the day.
- Parents contacted
- A parent must retrieve the student's phone from the office.
- Student receives a detention to be served within 24 hours.
- Student will be required to leave phone with administration during the school day for a minimum of five (5) school days.

Cell phones are banned from use for any purpose in locker rooms and restrooms at ALL times. All cell phones must be turned "OFF", and locked in a PE locker, or stored in a backpack, pocket, or similar enclosure when in the locker room or restroom.

The school district will not be responsible for financial charges related to student cell phone at any time, to include during times of confiscation. The school district will not be responsible for loss, damage, destruction, or theft of any cell phone brought to school.

## **Acceptable Use Policy - Board Policy 605.6**

Because technology is a vital part of the school district curriculum, the Internet will be made available to employees and students. Appropriate and equitable use of the Internet will allow employees and students to access resources unavailable through traditional means.

- Individual student accounts and email addresses may be issued to students.
- Because information appears, disappears and changes constantly, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate. The school district makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of information received on the Internet.
- Although students will be under teacher supervision while on the network, it is not possible to constantly monitor individual students and what they are accessing on the network.
- Students Internet activities will be monitored by the school district.
  - The school district will use technology protection measure to protect students from inappropriate access.
- Student Internet records and access records are confidential records treated like other student records.
- Employees and students will be instructed on the appropriate use of the Internet.

## **Lockers**

Students may be assigned a locker.

**1. Maintenance Searches:** Although school lockers are temporarily assigned to individual students, they remain the property of the school district at all times. The school district has reasonable and valid interest in ensuring that the lockers are maintained. For this reason, periodic inspection of lockers is permissible to check for cleanliness and vandalism. General maintenance inspections may be conducted by school authorities at any time upon at least 24 hours notice of the date and time of the inspection. Iowa law now allows some locker searches without notice. The student may be present during this search.

Any contraband discovered during such searches shall be confiscated by the administration. The administration may try to correct the problem through counseling, parental involvement medical referrals, or other such referrals depending on the severity of the situation.

**2. Non-Maintenance Searches:** The student's locker and its contents may be searched when a school authority has reasonable suspicion that the locker contains illegal or contraband items. Such searches should be conducted in the presence of another adult witness.

- Student lockers and their contents should be maintained properly.
- Students are responsible for any items placed in their lockers. It is suggested that valuables are left at home.

(See also [Search & Seizure](#)).

## **Hallway Displays**

Any posters (other than classwork on display by a teacher) must be approved by the administration before it can be hung in hallways.

## **Student Records - Board Policy 506.1**

From the time a student enters school, until the day they graduate or leave school, a record of his/her activity in school is compiled. This is a permanent record and will remain a permanent part of the official school file. It indicates the student's performance in the following areas of his/her school career:

- **Attendance** - The total number of days absent and/or tardy during each school year.
- **Extra-Curricular Activities** - A list of all activities in which he/she has participated, honors earned, and offices held during his/her school career.
- **Scholarship** - The semester grade received in each course, and, upon graduating, his/her four year cumulative grade point average.
- **Assessments** - Results of all statewide assessments (Iowa Assessments, Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress - ISASP, Measures of Academic Progress - MAP) taken under supervision of the staff.

Parents will have the right to access the information relating to their student or to be informed of the information. Eligible students will also have the right to access the information relating to themselves, or be informed of the information.

## **School Breakfast/Lunch**

Student Breakfast: \$1.80

Adult Breakfast: \$2.05

Student Lunch: \$2.70

Extra Milk: \$0.40

Adult Lunch: \$3.85

The school does not charge meals to any student. Student meal account deposits must be made before 9:30 a.m. to be credited for that day. Students and parents should keep track of lunch accounts to keep them from going too far in debt. Student meal account information can be located through the [Parent/Student PowerSchool Portal](#).

Payment arrangements must be made if an account goes beyond -\$6.00. If arrangements have not been made a student may be asked to bring lunch or breakfast from home..

North Mahaska Community School District participates in the Federal Lunch Assistance Program for children from low-income families. All families who believe would qualify for this program or want more information may contact the Elementary School office. We encourage families to complete the application for free and reduced lunch as the guidelines are generous, and it helps the school. The more families that qualify for free and reduced lunch, the more federal funding we receive.

## **Hot Lunch Program Policy**

These three steps are followed in the notification of students and parents of low hot lunch balances:

1. Tell the student
2. Send a note home
3. Call the parent

The breakfast, lunch, and additional milk participation will be together. There will not be a separate account for each item.

Lunch and milk prices are subject to change depending upon the reimbursement rates for the Federal and State government. The Federal grant setting up the school lunch program states meals must be available to all students regardless of the ability to pay. If your child received free or reduced price lunches last May, he or she will receive reduced or free meals the first week of school. Applications must be turned in before the second week so that we may determine whether your child is eligible for free or reduced meals for this year. An Application is included with this handbook. If the Application is not turned in by the first week of school, lunches will be full price until the Application is turned in and been approved or denied. Money can be paid to your family lunch account in the school office or on line.

A breakfast program is being offered at the Elementary and High School. Any student that is eligible for free or reduced lunches is automatically eligible for free and reduced breakfasts. Extra milk in addition to a carton of milk provided with free and reduced meals will cost an additional \$.40 a carton.

Breakfast is served at 7:55 for elementary students. Any student wishing to eat breakfast should go directly to breakfast when arriving at school.

## **Student Insurance**

The school no longer offers student health and accident insurance. Parents may purchase insurance for their children at their discretion through hawk-i. Parents who would like more information about student health insurance through hawk-i should contact the school office or hawk-i directly at **1-800-257-8563**.

## **Fines & Fees - Board Policy 503.3**

Students may be assessed fines or fees for school issued items issued to them such as textbooks,

technology equipment etc.

## **Waiver of Student Fees**

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunches, the Family Investment Program (FIP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), transportation assistance under open enrollment, or who are in foster care or whose families are homeless are eligible to have their student fees waived or partially waived. Students whose families are experiencing a temporary financial difficulty may be eligible for a temporary waiver of student fees. Parents or students who believe that they may qualify for temporary financial hardships should contact the building principal for a waiver form. A waiver form is required for all waivers. A waiver does not carry over from year to year, and therefore must be completed on an annual basis.

## **Search & Seizure - Board Policy 502.8**

School district authorities may, without a search warrant, search students or protected student areas based on a reasonable and articulable suspicion that a school district policy, rule, regulation or law has been violated. The search is in a manner reasonable in scope to maintain order and discipline in the schools, promote the educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors to the school district facilities. The furnishing of a locker, desk, computer, or other facility or space owned by the school and provided as a courtesy to a student, even if the student provides the lock for it, will not create a protected student area and will not give rise to an expectation of privacy with respect to the locker, desk, or other facility.

**Reasonable Suspicion** - Reasonable suspicion may be formed by considering factors, such as the following:

- Information received from reliable sources
- Suspicious behavior by the students
- Student's past history combined with one or both of the factors above.

**Reasonable Scope** - Search will be permissible in its scope or intrusiveness when the measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search determined on factors such as:

- Age of the student
- Sex of the student as it relates to the sex of the person conducting the search
- Nature of the infraction
- Search without delay

### **Types of Searches**

- **Personal Search** - A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g. purse, bag, etc.) may be searched when a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal items. Items found in the search are evidence of the violation of school rules and policies.
- **Pat-Down Search** - If a pat-down search, or a search of a student's garments (clothes, socks, pockets, etc.) is conducted, it shall be conducted in private, unless an emergency exists affecting the health and safety of students or personnel. It shall be conducted by a school official of the same sex and with another adult witness, of the same sex present (Same sex is not necessary if the search does not involve touching of the person or removal of normal clothing - i.e. search of jackets, sweaters, etc.). A more intrusive search of the student's person is permissible in emergency situations when the health and safety of the students, employees, or visitors on the school premises are threatened. Such a search may only be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex with another of the same sex present, unless the health and safety of students will be endangered by the delay. It is

recognized that strip searches, body cavity searches, and the use of drug sniffing animals to search a student's body are not permitted under Iowa law.

- **Locker Search** - Although school lockers are temporarily assigned to individual students, they remain the property of the school district at all times.
  - Maintenance Search - The school district has a reasonable and valid interest in ensuring that the lockers are maintained. Periodic inspections of lockers are permissible to check for cleanliness and vandalism. General maintenance inspections may be conducted by school authorities at any time. Any illegal items discovered during such searches shall involve counseling, parent involvement, medical referrals, or other such referral depending on the severity of the situation.
  - Non-Maintenance Search - The student's locker and its contents may be searched when a school authority has reasonable suspicion that the locker contains illegal items. Such searches should be conducted in the presence of another adult witness.
- **Searches Occurring During Extra-Curricular Events or Field Trips** - During field trips or extra-curricular events, school administrators and teachers shall have the same authority over students participating in the field trip as a parent or guardian with parental rights, duties, and responsibilities. Consequently, an administrator or school employee on a field trip retain the authority to search the student, the student's vehicle, or other personal items if the school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal or unauthorized items are present. There must still be reasonable suspicion to support a search during a field trip or extra-curricular activity.

## **Illegal Items Found in School or in Student Possession**

Students are prohibited from distributing, dispensing, manufacturing, possessing, using, and being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or look-a-like substances; and possessing or using tobacco, tobacco products or look-a-like substances. Weapons are not allowed on school grounds or at school activities with the exception of weapons in the control of law enforcement officials or those being used for educational purposes and approved by the principal. Parents of students found in violation of this policy may be contacted, and the students may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are not to bring any type of knife to school. Refer to school board policy.

## **Security Cameras**

North Mahaska Community School District utilizes security cameras to ensure a certain level of safety and security. Cameras are operational 24 hours a day both inside the building and in parking and outdoor area(s) surrounding the building as well as on most buses. Camera footage can be used to assist in confirming suspected rule/policy infractions. The North Mahaska Community School District reserves the right to use this footage for legal/criminal evidence if such a need does arise.

A security system is in use, requiring all main entrances to the school to be locked and controlled by an intercom and video system. Anyone who wishes to enter the building must use the main entrance door on the south side of the building. Our staff will have the authority to grant access to visitors from the office. All doors will remain locked until dismissal. For security purposes, we ask that parents wait outside until students are dismissed.

## **Visitors**

All visitors entering the building during the school day are to enter at the front office. Visitors will be issued

a visitor pass and will be asked to check out of the office when leaving the building.

## **Family Night - Board Policy 508.2**

In keeping with good community relations, student school activities will not be scheduled on Wednesday night beyond 6:00 p.m. whenever possible. It is the responsibility of the principal and the athletic director to oversee the scheduling of school activities for compliance with this policy.

## **Curfew**

School grounds are closed from 11:00pm to 6:00am daily. Violators may be prosecuted for trespassing.

\*Exceptions may be made for school events.

## **Activity Passes**

Contact the Jr/Sr High School office to purchase an activity pass.

\$275 - Family Yearly Pass

\$100 - Adult Yearly Pass

\$50 - Student Yearly Pass

\$40 - Adult - Football/Volleyball Only

\$25 - Student - Football/Volleyball Only

\$40 - Adult - Basketball/Wrestling Only

\$25 - Student - Basketball/Wrestling Only

\$40 - Adult - Softball/Baseball Only

\$25 - Student - Softball/Baseball Only

## **Procedures for Resolving Parental Concerns**

North Mahaska Schools recognize concerns will arise. Board policies require concerns to be resolved at the lowest organizational level. When a concern arises, address the concern directly with the school personnel that the concern is directly involved with. This process is designed to improve communication, seek understanding, and to resolve concerns while keeping relationships intact.

Unsure of who to contact to ask a question or to resolve a concern click on the link: [Flowchart for Questions and Concerns](#)

[Parent, Guardian, and Community Concerns](#)

## **Transportation to/from School Events**

Any student riding on a school vehicle to attend/participate in an event must also make the return trip in the school vehicle unless a written parental excuse is presented to the chaperone before the bus leaves the school or the parent takes the student home from the contest themselves. Students may ride with their parents by notifying the coach/sponsor and signing them out at the conclusion of the event. A student may be permitted to ride home with another parent/adult if the student's parent completes the [Parent](#)

[Transportation Permission Form](#) and submits it to the Elementary School Office *prior* to the school vehicle leaving for an event. The parent/adult assuming responsibility for the student is to sign out the student at the conclusion of the event.

## **Bus Stops**

Bus stop locations are published annually in the registration materials. Parents are responsible for notifying the school know if there is any change at any time in the pick up or drop off location. Parents are allowed one pick up and drop off location unless special circumstances warranted. (No more than two bus stops per family). Students riding home with another student must have parent permission.

## **Good Conduct Policy - Board Policy 503.4**

Participation in school activities is a privilege. School activities provide the benefits of promoting additional interests and abilities in the students during their school years and for their lifetimes. Students who participate in extracurricular activities serve as ambassadors of the school district throughout the calendar year, whether away from school or at school. Students who wish to have the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities must conduct themselves in accordance with board policy and must refrain from activities which are illegal, immoral or unhealthy. Students who fail to abide by this policy and the administrative regulations supporting it may be subject to disciplinary measures. The principal will keep records of violations of the good conduct rule. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop rules and regulations for school activities. Students wanting to participate in school activities must meet the requirements set out by the school district for participation in the activity.

## **Grading**

The North Mahaska Elementary uses Standards Based Reporting for K-6. Teachers report what students know and are able to do relative to the academic standard.

### **The following markings will be used for reporting:**

- R- Reinforcement needed
- P- Progressing adequately
- M- Meets expectations

As required by law, North Mahaska Schools Implements the Iowa Core. If you would like to know more about the Iowa Core specific to your child's grade level, visit: [Browse Iowa Core Content by Grade Level](#)

Reporting student progress on the essential skills and concepts at the elementary level requires a different method of reporting. The new method of reporting is called standards based reporting. The new method of reporting will provide parents with essential skills and concepts and skill sets all students should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of each grade span or grade level. The purpose of standards-based reporting is to raise the student achievement by clearly communicating students' progress toward learning targets.

Standards-based reporting aligns grading with the state academic standards as measured by consistent and accurate student achievement data and common criteria for grading. Standards-based reporting also accurately communicates achievement of learning targets to students, parents, and educators. The



influence of positive and consistent work habits on student learning is reported separately from the academics.

## **Report Cards/Midterm Reports**

Report Cards will be available one week after the conclusion of a marking period (quarter or semester). Midterm Reports are available at the end of approximately four weeks in a quarter.

Reports can be provided in any of the following ways:

1. Hard (Paper) Copy
  - a. Sent home with student
  - b. Mailed directly to the parent/guardian
  - c. Picked up from Elementary School office by parent/guardian
2. Digital Copy
  - a. Emailed directly to parent/guardian

## **Homework**

Teachers assign homework, extra class activities or assignments as necessary. Homework is an opportunity for students to practice skills and activities, to share and discuss ideas, to review materials, to become acquainted with resources, to organize thoughts, to prepare for classroom activities or to make up incomplete class work. Students are expected to complete homework on time. Failure to complete homework may result in loss of class credit and a failing grade in the class. Students may be assigned to academic make up time after school if they are behind in their homework or waisting class time.

## **Presidential Award**

To be eligible for the President's Award for Educational Excellence, students must maintain a grade point average of 3.5 and achieve in the 85th percentile or higher in math or reading on the Iowa Assessments throughout 4th, 5th, and 6th grade. This award is presented at the conclusion of 6th grade.

The President's Award for Educational Improvement recognizes students that show outstanding educational growth, improvement, and commitment to their learning. This award is presented at the conclusion of 6th grade.

## **Library Rules - Care of Books**

Any overdue books are given 1 day grace then a note is sent to the room. If the student is not through with the book, he or she may renew the book for one (1) more period. When a book is overdue, the student is not allowed to check any other books out until it is taken care of. One notice will be sent and if the book is not returned within 2 weeks a letter will be sent to the parents. If the book is never accounted for, the replacement cost will be charged. Encyclopedias and magazines are checked out for one (1) week to the classroom and are not to be taken home.

## **Care of School Property**

Students are expected to take care of school property including desks, chairs, books, lockers and school equipment. Vandalism is not tolerated. Students found to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school property may be required to reimburse the school district. In certain circumstances, students may be reported to law enforcement officials.

## **Biking To School**

All bicycles are to be parked at the north side bicycle rack. Once the student reaches the school grounds, the bike must be parked until school is dismissed or permission from the principal is given.

## **Physical Education**

Students in grades K-6 will have P.E. twice a week. Students in sixth grade may be required to shower after P.E. The sixth grade student will furnish their own gym clothes, which will be described by the gym teacher. Students will be required to have gym shoes while participating on the gym floor. Sixth grade students will be assigned a locker.

A signed note (preferably by a physician) must be presented to the gym teacher if an excuse from participation is needed. Permission from the principal may be required. A note from the physician may be required.

## **Healthy Kids Act**

In 2008, the Iowa Legislature enacted the "Healthy Kids Act", **requiring that all students in grades 6-12 engage in physical activity for a minimum of 120 minutes per week in which there are at least five days of school.** The law also requires that we monitor how students fulfill this requirement.

## **Cheating**

Students are expected to do their own schoolwork. Cheating by looking at another student's schoolwork, copying others' work, copying from other sources or similar cheating is not tolerated.

## **Communications To And From School**

When sending a note or money to school, the student should receive clear instruction from the parents about who is the appropriate person to receive the note or the money. Also, the school regularly sends notes and papers home with students. Parents need to remind their child to notify them of notes or papers from school for the parents. Parents are responsible for knowing the contents of the notes or papers sent home.

## **Dual Enrollment Students**

Home school or home school assistance program students enrolled in classes or participating in school activities in the school district are subject to the same policies, rules and regulations as other students and are disciplined in the same manner as other students. Dual enrollment students interested in participating in school activities or enrolling in classes should contact the elementary principal.

## **Human Growth And Development**

The school district provides students with instruction in human growth and development. Parents may review the human growth and development curriculum prior to its use and have their child excused from human growth and development instruction. Parents should contact the principal if they wish to review the curriculum or to excuse their child from human growth and development instruction. An alternative curriculum may be requested by the principal. It is our hope that the parent and staff can work together to obtain an alternate curriculum.

## **Interferences In School**

Students may not possess radios, televisions, pets, water guns and other similar items on school grounds or at school activities. The items are taken away from the students and may be returned at a later date.

## **Weapons**

The board believes weapons and other dangerous objects in the school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment and present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

Parents of students found to possess a weapon or dangerous objects on school property shall be notified of the incident. Confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects shall be reported to the law enforcement officials, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action including suspensions or expulsion.

## **Inspection of Educational Materials**

Parents and other members of the school district community may view the instructional materials used by students in the office. Persons wishing to view instructional materials or to express concerns about instructional materials should contact the building principal.

## **Legal Status of Students**

If a student's legal status, such as a student's name or the student's custodian arrangement, should change during the school year, the parent or guardian must notify the school district. The school district needs to know when these changes occur to ensure that the school district has a current student record.

## **Telephone Use During The Day**

Generally, students receiving telephone calls during school hours are not called to the telephone. The office will take a message and forward it to the student. Only in emergency situations are students removed from class or another school activity to receive a telephone call. Teachers will provide permission for students to make necessary telephone calls home.

## **Lost and Found**

Whenever possible, we encourage parents to put a label or name tag on items. Lost items are kept in the lost and found tub in the entryway. Because of lack of space, items not identified may be disposed of after two weeks. Make sure you or your child checks for lost items frequently.

## **Recess and Playground Rules**

There is no before school recess.

Morning Bell 8:00 am (Students can go to their classroom at this time.)

Tardy Bell 8:15 am

Afternoon dismissal bell 3:30 pm

- Students must obey the adult supervising the playground or gym and not just their classroom teacher.
- If a ball or other items leaves the playground, students must get the playground supervisors permission to retrieve the item.
- Prohibited behavior - horseplay, snowballs, roughhousing, throwing dangerous objects, etc.
- No tackle football.
- No skateboards
- No radios or cassette players.
- Toys or other items brought from home are the responsibility of the student who brought them.
- Students must get permission from the playground supervisor before entering the building during recess.
- Recess privileges can be taken away completely, or a "time out" area may be used.
- Only one student to a swing.
- No climbing up slides.
- Students are not encouraged to play on the school grounds after school since there is no playground supervisor on duty.

## **Birthday Treats and Parties**

Recognizing ones birthday by bringing treats is acceptable. **ALL TREATS MUST BE COMMERCIALY WRAPPED. Teachers would appreciate knowing before the day of the treats. This may be done by sending a note to school with your child for the teacher.**

All deliveries made to the school for students will be attempted to be given to the student at the end of the day. Please be aware that we do have people with latex allergies, so we discourage sending latex balloons. The school is not responsible for gifts sent to students during the day. It is the parent's responsibility for pick-up of any gifts delivered to the school. There will be NO balloons allowed on the buses.

## **Invitation to Parties**

If invitations are not given to all students in a class, the school district prefers the invitations be mailed

## **Sharing Time**

Guns and knives (and look alikes) are not permitted at school any time.

Special pets may be brought to school to show classmates, only with permission from the teacher and principal. Pets are to be brought in cages, and MUST show proof of shot updates. Pets are not to be brought onto the bus. Items brought to school for sharing are the responsibility of the student, and not the school district.

## **School Supplies**

Room supply lists are given to parents with registration materials. Local stores will also have a copy of supply lists for parents. These items should be brought to school on or near the first day of school.

## **After School Destination**

Parents are to notify their child's classroom teacher if they desire their child to go somewhere else rather than the child's normal after school destination. Bus stops will not be made at other than the regular destination without prior permission from the Superintendent. Do not leave a message for the teacher or staff and assume the message will be received before the end of the day. Teachers and staff are engaged with students throughout the day and it can be difficult to check voicemail and email prior to the end of the day. If you send a message, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that it has been received (as verified by returned email or voice message).

## **Restrooms**

Restrooms are not a place to loiter. Students will be instructed on the appropriate use and times to use restrooms, as well as how to handle emergency needs by each homeroom teacher.

## **Gum Chewing**

No gum chewing is allowed during school time unless special times are designated by the teacher. In this case, gum will be disposed of properly before leaving the room.

## **Procedures For Students who are Transferring to Another School District**

The school district automatically transfers a student's records to a new school district upon receipt of a written request from the new school district for the student's records. Parents notified that the student's records have been sent are given an opportunity to view the student's records that were sent and a right to a hearing to challenge the content of the student's records that were sent. Parental consent is not necessary to forward a student's records to a student's new school district or for the school district to request them from a student's previous school district. When a new student transfers into the school district, the student's records are requested from the previous school district.

## **Student Photographs**

Student pictures are taken in the fall of each year and sometimes spring pictures. Picture information is sent home prior to the picture date. Parents are not required to purchase pictures.

## **Elementary School-Wide Procedures**

To maintain and improve school-wide climate to help strengthen academic performance the following school-wide procedures have been adopted:

Students are expected to maintain:

- Hall courtesy which includes: staying to the right, single file when possible, no switching, no lockers during class time, hands to self, walking, and quiet voices. We will use Line Basics.
- Appropriate restroom behavior and proper hygiene.
- Quiet voices in computer labs and put away materials.
- Proper playground manners such as walking to and from recess while in the building use designated exits, appropriate language, proper use of equipment, treat others with respect, appropriate clothing, and problem solving skills.
- Proper lunchroom manners such as table manners, noise level, and respect for one another.

## **Grievance Procedure**

Step 1- Informal Discussion

Step 2- Written Complaint

Step 3- Written Appeal

Step 1: A student or parent with a grievance of discrimination may first discuss the matter informally with the teacher counselor or building principal involved. Any employee with a grievance may discuss it with their principal or immediate supervisor. Such discussion may resolve the matter.

Step 2: If the grievance cannot be resolved informally, complainant may, within fifteen (15) working days of the alleged discrimination, make a formal written complaint on a compliance violation form, clearly stating the date and nature of grievance and remedy requests to the Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Officer. The Compliance Officer will remain impartial at all times and will be an advocate for thorough inquiry and investigation. Following the investigation, and with fifteen (15) working days after receipt of the

complaint, a written report will be filed with the person or department causing such complaint and a report sent to the grievant of this action.

Step 3: If no agreement can be reached through the Compliance Officer, the grievant may present a written and dated appeal to the Hearing Officer with ten (10) working days after receiving the report from the Compliance Officer. The Hearing Officer has the option of a formal hearing of the grievant and/or alleged discriminator or department for discussion of the appeal. Any minor student may be accompanied by the parent or guardian. A written decision must be filed by the Hearing officer within 10 working days of the appeal date and sent to the complainant, the alleged discriminatory source, and the Compliance Officer.

None of the preceding steps in the grievance procedure preclude the right of the complaining art from directing a complaint to the Iowa Civil Right Commission, the Federal Office of Civil Rights or other agencies available for mediation or rectification of civil rights grievances, or to seek private counsel.

**Compliance Officer: Guidance Counselor -Nicole DeBoef**

**Hearing Officer: Superintendent -Angela Livezey**

North Mahaska Community Schools, New Sharon, Iowa 50207  
641-637-4187 Weekdays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## **Open-Enrollment - Board Policy 501.14-501.15**

North Mahaska will participate in open enrollment as a receiving district. As a receiving district, the board may allow nonresident students, who meet the legal requirements, to open enroll into the school district.

Generally, students in grades 9-12 open enrolling into the school district will not be eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics, at the varsity level, during the first ninety days of open enrollment into the school district.

Parents are responsible for providing transportation to and from North Mahaska without reimbursement unless the parents qualify for transportation assistance.

Iowa's open enrollment law allows students residing in one school district to request transfer to another school district upon the parents' request. Application forms for open enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year are available at the superintendent's office. Persons interested in pursuing open enrollment should obtain forms in the near future, because the deadline for filing official applications with the district of residence is March 1, 2022. The last date to file for open enrollment for students who will be entering kindergarten for the 2021-2022 school year is September 1, 2021. When we send you the forms, you will also receive a set of easy to follow instructions for completing the forms. Parents/guardians of open enrollment students whose income falls below the federal poverty guidelines are eligible for transportation assistance. This may be in the form of actual transportation, or in the form of a cash stipend. Parents and students should be aware that open enrollment may result in the loss of athletic eligibility for up to one full semester (90 days) for the student or students involved. If you have questions concerning the open enrollment program, or to receive the forms, please contact Angela Livezey at 641- 637-4187.

## **Parent-Teacher/Student-Led Conferences**

Parent/teacher and Student-Led conferences may be held twice per school year. This is an opportunity to discuss your son/daughter's progress in the course(s) he/she is enrolled in, address concerns and work with your child's teacher in order to maximize his/her opportunities in earning a quality education. We strongly encourage all parents to take advantage of these opportunities.

### **2021-2022 Conferences for the Elementary School will be structured in the following way:**

#### **Fall**

September 27 - Grades PK-6 - Scheduled conference times for parents to meet with teachers.

September 28 - Grades PK-6 - Scheduled conference times for parents to meet with teachers.

September 30 - Grades PK-6 - Scheduled conference times for parents to meet with teachers.

#### **Spring (February 21, 22, 24)**

February 21 - Grades PK-6 - Scheduled conference times for parents to meet with teachers.

February 22 - Grades PK-6 - Scheduled conference times for parents to meet with teachers.

February 24 - Grades PK-6 - Scheduled conference times for parents to meet with teachers.

## **Testing**

The Iowa Statewide Assessment of Academic Progress (ISASP) will be given to all 3rd through 6th-grade students each year. Additionally, FAST (Formative Assessment System for Teachers) will be administered to students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade 3 times a year. IGDIs (Individual Growth and Development Indicators) will be given to four year old preschool students three times a year. SAEBRS (Social, Academic and Emotional Behavioral Risk Screener) is administered for K-6 students 3 x per year.

## **Textbooks/Other School Owned Materials**

In the majority of classes, students will be issued a book or books, or other pieces of equipment or materials for which they will be responsible. Students may be held responsible for the replacement or repair costs for lost/damaged books, equipment, or other materials. For those books, equipment, or materials that experience excessive wear, fines may be assessed by teachers/administration.

# **Notices**

## **Equal Education Opportunity Statement - Board Policy 102**

North Mahaska Schools will not discriminate in its educational activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity, or disability. The school requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing



business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules, and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity. North Mahaska is committed to the policy that no otherwise qualified person will be excluded from educational activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, or creed. Further, the school affirms the right of all students and staff to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm and harassment.

## **Notice of Non-Discrimination - Board Policy 102.E1**

Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services for the North Mahaska Community School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age (except students), religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities.

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age (except students), religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treatment in, its hiring and employment practices.

Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), § 504 or Iowa Code § 280.3 is directed to contact the Superintendent of Schools located at 2163 135th Street in New Sharon, Iowa, 641-637-4187, who has been designated by the school district to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the ADA, § 504 and Iowa Code § 280.3 (2007).

## **Equity Statement**

It is the policy of the North Mahaska Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the bases of race color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices.

There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Nicole DeBoef, Elementary At-Risk Coordinator, 2163 135th Street, New Sharon, IA 50207 at (641)637-4041 or at [deboefn@nmwarhawks.org](mailto:deboefn@nmwarhawks.org).

## **Family Education and Privacy Act**

The act provided for access by parents to permanent school records and an opportunity to challenge any content which may be inaccurate, misleading or inappropriate.

The North Mahaska Community School district collects and maintains records on each student in order to facilitate instruction, guidance, and educational progress of the student. The records contain information about the student and his/her education, and may include but are not limited to the following type of records: family background data, aptitude tests, educational-vocational plans, honors and activities, observations, and external agency reports.

The records of each student are located in the school building in which he/she attends.

The following persons, agencies, and organizations may have restricted access to student records without prior written consent of the parent or student over the age of 18 years. Any other access to student records shall be only upon written consent or upon court order or legally issued subpoena.

1. School officials and teachers with legitimate educational interest.
2. Officials of other schools in which the student proposes to enroll.
3. Representatives of state and local government when auditing and evaluating federal education programs.
4. In connection with a student's educational financial aid application.
5. Government officials to whom information is to be reported under the state law adopted prior to 11/19/1974.
6. Organizations which process and evaluate standardized tests.
7. Accrediting organization for accreditation purposes.
8. Parents of dependent children regardless of the child's age.
9. In connection with an emergency.

Student's records are reviewed and inappropriate material is removed periodically. At a minimum, this occurs when a student moves from elementary school to junior high/high school and when a student transfers out of the district. Those records not of permanent importance are destroyed within three years of graduation or discontinued attendance.

Parents of students under age 18 and students over 18 may exercise the opportunity to review the educational records of students, to obtain copies of the records, to write a response to material in the record, to challenge the content of the records on grounds of inappropriateness, inaccuracy or invasion of privacy, and to have the records explained.

The procedure to be followed in exercising any of the rights under school policies or rules may be obtained from any of the aforementioned persons responsible for the maintaining of student records in each building.

## **Educational Records**

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the board secretary, in the central administration office.

## **Annual Notice Student Directory Information**

The Principal or person in charge of each attendance center may release the following types of information to the public as they see fit, keeping in mind the privacy of the students and the student's family, and the totality of the surrounding circumstances: Name, address, telephone listing, date, and place of birth, major field of study, participation in official recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of the athletic teams, date of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous school or institution attended by the students.

Any parent objecting to the public release of such information must file a written objection with the aforementioned person responsible for maintaining students' records in each building and that information objected to shall not be publicly released.

## **JURISDICTIONAL STATEMENT**

This handbook is an extension of board policy and is a reflection of the goals and objectives of the board. The board, administration and employees expect students to conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students are expected to treat teachers, other employees, students, visitors and guests with respect and courtesy. Students may not use abusive language, profanity or obscene gestures or language.

This handbook and school district policies, rules and regulations are in effect while students are on school grounds, school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school-owned and/or school operated buses or vehicles or chartered buses; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district or involves students or staff. School district policies, rules and regulations are in effect 12 months a year. A violation of school district policy, rule or regulation may result in disciplinary action and may affect a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities whether the violation occurred while school was in session or while school was not in session.

Students are expected to comply with and abide by the school district's policies, rules and regulations may be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with the education program; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school district or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to obtain their education or to participate in school activities; or conduct which interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension, probation and expulsion. Discipline can also include prohibition from participating in extracurricular activities, including athletics. The discipline imposed is based upon the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident and the student's record.

The school reserves and retains the right to modify, eliminate or establish school district policies, rules and regulations as circumstances warrant, including those contained in the handbook. Students are expected to know the contents of the handbook and comply with it. Students or parents with questions or concerns may contact the office for information about the current enforcement of the policies, rules or regulations of the school district.

## **Definition**

In this handbook, the word "parent" also means "guardian" unless otherwise stated. An administrator's title, such as superintendent or principal, also means that individual's designee unless otherwise stated. The term "school grounds" includes the school district facilities, school district property, property within the jurisdiction of the school district or school district premises, school-owned or school-operated buses or vehicles and chartered buses. The terms "school facilities" includes school district buildings. The term "school activities" means all school activities in which students are involved, whether they are school sponsored, school-approved, or an event or activity held on or off school grounds.

***This parent handbook is for you and your child's information. Please review this material and discuss it with your child. If you have questions concerning the handbook, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the elementary office. The elementary office hours are Monday-Friday 7:50 AM to 4:10 PM.***