

**ADMINISTRATION OF
DR. JOHN M. FOLKS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Shawn McKenzie Principal
 Yvette Lopez Associate Principal
 Ann Devlin..... Academic Dean
 Miguel Trevino Assistant Principal
 Angie Perez Head Counselor
 Pilar Rincones..... Counselor
 Diana Hernandez Counselor
 Sheena Martinez Counselor

**Section A
Campus Policy
2023-2024**

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WELCOME

Welcome to Dr. John Folks Middle School! This Student-Parent Handbook has been prepared for your information and guidance. Keep in mind at all times that you, the student, are the most important aspect of school life at Dr. John Folks Middle School. Be proud of your school and take good care of it. As a Stallion, you are expected to conduct yourself with dignity, demonstrate respect and courtesy at all times and to strive to do your best. You will be challenged in the classroom to excel and will be given opportunities to grow as a young adult and to enjoy a variety of experiences associated with middle school including dances, games, clubs and concerts. Dr. John Folks Middle School is dedicated to the well-being of the whole child – mentally, physically, and emotionally. Therefore, it is necessary to have certain rules to ensure each individual the opportunity to benefit from their educational opportunity. This handbook outlines some of the basic policies around which your school functions. Please use it as a reference to keep informed of the basic guidelines and allow you to take full advantage of all school offerings. Please feel free to contact teachers, counselors and administrators when you deem it necessary. Active parental involvement is encouraged and welcomed. The cooperation of school patrons, based upon the knowledge of the school, will result in a more efficient and successful school program.

OUR NAMESAKE

Dr. John M. Folks

Dr. John Folks, one of Texas' most respected and beloved educators, devoted more than 40 years of his life to public education as a teacher, administrator, and statewide advocate for students. Before his 10-year tenure as Superintendent of Northside ISD, Dr. Folks served as Oklahoma State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dean of the School of Education at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Superintendent of the Midwest City-Del City Public Schools in suburban Oklahoma, and Superintendent of Spring ISD near Houston. Dr. Folks joined Northside ISD in 2002, and during his 10-year tenure, the District racked up numerous honors, all while facing enormous enrollment growth and serious financial challenges. In 2005, Northside was the first district in the state to receive the HEB Excellence in Education Award, and in 2007, NISD was one of five finalists in the nation for the Broad Prize, the Nobel Prize of education. Dr. Folks' most personal achievement came in 2011 when he was named Texas Superintendent of the Year by the Texas Association of School Boards for his statewide leadership and his unwavering and vocal support of Texas public education. Dr. Folks retired in 2012 and currently is a senior lecturer in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

SCHOOL COLORS

Navy Blue, Columbia Blue, White

SCHOOL MASCOT

Stallions

Mission, Vision and Core Beliefs

Mission –As a unified community, Dr. John Folks Middle School will provide a safe and nurturing experience built upon innovative, engaging instruction that meets the needs of our diverse learners.

Vision- We will develop respectable, responsible, compassionate lifelong learners who continue to pursue excellence.

Core Beliefs

- Students come first and are our primary concern. We will provide a quality education which honors their voice and prepares them to engage, contribute, and succeed.
- Our job is to create a learning environment conducive to all types of learning styles and to promote critical thinking skills so that students can become independent thinkers and life-long learners.
- Students' health, safety, engagement, challenge, and support is directly linked to their academic achievement and future success.
- Meaningful relationships unify students, families, educators, and the community and are vital to student success.
- Classroom teachers have the most impact on student achievement followed by campus principals.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

Principal

The principal is responsible to the superintendent of schools for proper administration of Dr. John Folks Middle School. It is his duty to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, and parents. He will be glad to help you with any of your problems. Conferences can be scheduled by calling 210-398-1605.

Associate Principal/Assistant Principal

The associate principal and assistant principal will work directly with the principal in the administration and organization of the school. They are in charge of attendance and handle the routine discipline problems. They handle the day by day operation of the school and assume the responsibility of the principal in his absence.

Due to morning duties and responsibilities on campus, administrators are not available for conferences prior to 8:40 am. We strongly suggest that if you wish to speak to an administrator, or have a conference with them, that you call 210-398-1624 to schedule an appointment. If you are unable to reach and administrator directly by phone, please leave a message and a campus administrator will return your phone call within 24 hours.

Academic Dean

The academic dean works with the principal to ensure that students are offered high quality instruction and appropriate rigor in their courses. It is her duty to coordinate all testing for the campus and assist teachers in creating a classroom environment that is learner-centered and engaging.

Counselors

You have a guidance counselor who will be assigned to you while you are at Dr. John Folks Middle School. Your counselor will be happy to assist you with problems concerning both school and/or your personal life. If you want an appointment with your counselor, this can be arranged with the secretary in the guidance office at any time. If your counselor cannot see you that same day, they will make an appointment with you as soon as possible. **The function of the counselor is advisory, not disciplinary.**

Police Officer

The police officer assists students when needed and helps maintain a safe environment. He/she helps supervise all after school events and helps monitor traffic. The Northside ISD Police Department maintains a 24-hour, anonymous SAFE hotline number at (210) 397-7233.

School Nurse

The school nurse is available to help you at school with medical emergencies and will work closely with your parents and physician in administering prescribed medication. The clinic is located in the main office. Please notify the school nurse of any medical conditions that may be of concern. The school nurse is unable to administer over-the-counter medication to your child and can only administer prescriptions in their original container.

GENERAL INFORMATION

After School Activities

All school and U.I.L. rules apply to conduct and dress code for students who attend after-school activities. Written permission and/or an admission fee may be required for many events. Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents for these activities; parents are expected to pick up their child immediately at the conclusion of each activity. Children should not have to wait longer than 15 minutes for parents to pick them up after a school event. If a parent or guardian does not pick up their child in a timely manner, the protocol and procedure set forth by NISD in the Crisis Handbook could be followed by the administrator or staff member if they deem it necessary. Students who are not picked up in a timely manner after a school event or school function could be denied the right to attend future after school functions for the remainder of the year. Students who exhibit inappropriate behaviors will be removed from the activity. Any clothing deemed inappropriate or suggestive is not permitted.

Circumstances that restrict students from attending after-school events are the following:

- out of school suspension/in school suspension assigned for the day of the event
- other disciplinary actions that may warrant non-attendance of the event
- absence from school the day of the event
- repeated misconduct at after-school events
- assignment to an alternative educational campus
- withdrawal from Dr. Folks Middle School (athletic events may be permitted)

Attendance Procedures

Parents are charged with the responsibility of ensuring their child comes to school and attends all classes. Students are expected to attend school and be on time to their classes. State law and school policy requires attendance every day that school is in session. Illness, doctor/clinic visits, death in the family, court appearances, religious holidays, and school-sponsored activities are the only excusable reasons for Non-attendance. Absences for reasons other than those stated above will be determined excused or unexcused by the Principal or her designee. Upon return from an absence, a student must present a parent note to the attendance office prior to the beginning of school. The note must be submitted to the Attendance Clerk within 3 school days or the absence will remain unexcused. Following an absence a student must present a parent note that includes:

1. Reason for absence
2. Date of absence(s)
3. Parent signature
4. A working telephone number where parent can be contacted
5. Student name and Student ID

For absences exceeding three consecutive days, a doctor's note is required. A parent may contact the Attendance Clerk in the morning of an absence so as to request work. Student assignments will then be available at 3:00 p.m. the following business day.

Tardies - Students should be in their classrooms when the tardy bell rings. Unexcused tardy accumulations in any one class during a nine week's grading period will result in the student being referred to the office for disciplinary action.

NOTE: Please refer to the District policies on attendance in the following section of this handbook.

Backpack / Book Bags

Backpacks and /or book bags may be used to carry books, electronics, and supplies throughout the day. Rolling backpacks are not permitted.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROCEDURES

All students will enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner. Students will be allowed to sit wherever they elect, as long as cafeteria rules are followed. Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their assigned seat and duty teachers will dismiss students. Students may not leave the cafeteria before permission is granted.

Visitors must sign in and receive a visitor's sticker before coming into the cafeteria. Folks MS will not accept food brought in from a restaurant or a "fast food" chain by delivery or parent. The school does allow for parents/guardians to bring in food to eat **with** their student in a designated location. Parents may not bring lunch to other students. These individuals **MUST** be identified on the student's emergency records in advance. No celebrations are permitted in the cafeteria (e.g. birthdays).

Breakfast/Lunch Money - Go to <https://www.nisd.net> to access your student's cafeteria account and add money as needed. We encourage parents to monitor their student's lunch account online to prevent any problems that deal with your child's purchases.

Bus Assignments and Transportation

Students are expected to ride the bus assigned to them by transportation. Riding a bus is a privilege, not a right. Students may be assigned a specific seat on their bus. Only a family emergency would warrant assignment to a different bus. Staying overnight with a friend is not an emergency. In order to ride a different bus home, a note must be sent by a parent/guardian the day prior to or the morning of and be brought to the Associate Principal's office for administrative approval. Parent contact will be made before the end of the school day to verify the changes. Please keep in mind the number of students assigned to a bus will be taken into consideration prior to granting approval. All bus routes and assignments of students are done through the district's transportation offices. Specific questions regarding bus routing should be directed to the NISD Transportation department at (210) 398-1550.

CAMPUS OPERATING HOURS

- Classes begin for Dr. Folks Middle School students at **8:40 a.m.** and end each afternoon at **3:55 p.m.** each day, Monday through Friday.
- The doors will be opened to all students at 7:45 a.m. and supervision of students will begin at that time. Students who arrive at school before 8:30 a.m. are allowed to eat breakfast (if they choose) and to report to the grade level designated areas.
- Front Office Hours are from 7:45 AM - 4:30 PM.
- Students will not be allowed to be checked out after 3:30 PM due to dismissal procedures.

Campus Visitors

Our staff encourages visits from parents and patrons. We welcome you. All parents and visitors are required to register in the Main Office with the secretary and indicate the reason for visiting the campus. They are also required to sign-out prior to leaving the campus. Upon sign-in, all parents and visitors must receive a Visitor's Pass, and must wear this pass where it can be visible to staff. These precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff. Older siblings are not allowed to visit unless accompanied by a parent. For classroom visitation policy, see **Section B**.

Delivery of Items/Outside Food Items

In an effort to minimize interruptions and maximize instructional time, we do not deliver items directly to students. However, we also recognize that students will sometimes forget an item at home. We will deliver glasses and house keys. For all other items, the student is expected to come by the office BETWEEN classes to retrieve their belongings. This procedure helps the school to maintain an academic environment and is effective in helping students practice personal responsibility. Flowers, balloons, birthday presents etc, will be held in the office until the end of the day when students can pick them up to be taken home. Folks MS will not accept food brought in from a restaurant or a "fast food" chain by delivery service or parent.

Dress for Success

The district's dress code is implemented (Section D); therefore, students will be expected to follow the guidelines set forth by the district. Dress code standards are extended to extra-curricular activities held on the campus. In an effort to promote a safe and positive school environment which is conducive to learning, students should wear appropriate clothing that will not cause disruptions in learning or safety. Inappropriate, indecent, or distracting clothing will not be allowed. Pants with rips or tears that show skin above the knee, will not be allowed.

Changes in dress code, deemed appropriate and necessary by the school principal, may be announced, implemented and enforced during the course of the academic school year. Students not complying with the dress code may be removed from the regular school setting until the parent is able to provide appropriate attire. Book covers, folders, book bags, school property, body parts, and/or personal property or clothing displaying obscenities, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, gang related materials or any design or inscription that administration determines to be unacceptable are not permitted Dr. John Folks Middle School. These items will be confiscated and documented in the student's discipline record.

Final determination of acceptable dress code and grooming rests with the principal or his/her designee.

Electronic Devices/Technology

Our mission is to transform the learning experience for all students and we continue to place our focus on academic success. Cell phones will not be permitted during the school day. Students will be able to use them until 8:30 am each morning, then they will be put away for the remainder of the school day. Teachers will have the option of allowing use in class for instructional purposes only. We want to keep students free of distractions in the hallways and classrooms, focused on instruction, and fostering positive social interactions among one another. However, campus incentives may occasionally include technology use during lunch. Telephones are available in every classroom and in all campus offices in the event that a student needs to contact a parent. Responsibility for the mobile device rests with the owner of the device and the district/school accepts no financial responsibility for damage, loss or theft. The mobile device should be kept secure in their backpack when not in use. Mobile devices should not be left in any open area unattended.

One of our most valuable instructional resources is the provision of a Chromebook for every student. In an effort to preserve this resource, we ask that Chromebooks only be used for instructional purposes and be kept in backpacks when not in use. Students must use the Northside network and the Internet in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the Northside ISD Acceptable Use Policy. District provided devices should not be utilized for playing games or messaging other students.

The use of Northside network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for inappropriate behavior. Users assume responsibility for understanding the Acceptable Use Policy and guidelines as a condition of using the Northside network and the Internet. Use of Northside network or the Internet that is inconsistent with this policy may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

GRADE REPORTING THROUGH HOME ACCESS CENTER (HAC)

Parents are encouraged to regularly monitor their student's progress throughout the year by utilizing NISD's on-line Parent Portal. Students will receive a progress report in the middle of each nine weeks grading period. The progress reports are designed to inform parents and students of current classroom performance and grades. The teacher may require the students to have you sign and return each progress report sent home to verify that you received your child's report. If the teacher deems necessary, you may be contacted by phone to make sure you received the report. This is especially true if the progress of your child is not acceptable or if the grades or conduct are below average.

Report cards will be issued at the end of each grading period. They provide the student's academic grades, citizenship grades, plus other pertinent information. We implore you to make sure that you receive a report card every six weeks. If a parent did not receive their child's report card, please contact the counselor's office for assistance. If a parent/guardian has any questions or concerns regarding your child's education, please start by contacting the teacher, then if the question or concern is not answered/solved, then contact the counselors' office and administration.

Lockers

To promote productive transitions, Folks M.S. does not issue school lockers. Textbooks are in the classroom for students to use and will not be carried throughout the day. Students may carry their backpacks throughout the day and are encouraged to bring only necessary school supplies. Students will be assigned a gym locker for use during their PE class. Students should secure all of their belongings in their locked locker. Items left unattended in the locker room, not in a locked locker, have the potential for being stolen. Please ensure your student is securing their items in the locker room.

Lost and Found

IF YOU FIND ANY ARTICLE OF VALUE, TURN IT IN TO THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

As the school assumes no responsibility for lost articles, students are encouraged to take every precaution to protect their possessions. Students should not bring expensive or valuable items to school, and students should carefully label each article, such as clothing, books, and supplies for easy identification. If you accept an item that is not yours or are in possession of an item that is not yours, you may be subject to disciplinary measures. Lost and found items collected and not claimed by the end of the six weeks grading period will be donated to charity.

Nuisance Items

These items cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere and can be easily lost or stolen. The school cannot be held responsible for any of these lost or stolen items. Confiscated items will be returned to the parent only. Students who bring these items to school are subject to disciplinary action.

REGISTRATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Registrations - To register your student, please go to <https://www.nisd.net/schools/registration> and complete the pre-registration. A counselor will contact you and schedule an appointment to complete the registration process.

Withdraw of Student - When it is known that a student is going to withdraw, the parents or guardians should notify the Counseling Office at least one day in advance, if possible. All textbooks and library books must be returned. Any fines owed the school need to be paid before records may be released. On the day of withdrawal, the student should report to the Counselor's office and pick up a check-out form which must be signed by each teacher. Textbooks must be returned to the Textbook administrator. The check-out form must be returned to the Counselor's Office before a final clearance can be granted. NO records will be released until all obligations (textbooks, fines, release forms, etc.) have been fulfilled. A parent signature will be required for final clearance to be given.

Stallions Code

Dr. John Folks Middle School Stallions will:

1. Show respect for self, others and property.
2. Be present, punctual, prepared and attentive to the assigned task.
3. Exhibit non-disruptive behaviors.
4. Take responsibility for their actions.
5. Follow student handbook policies.