

SECTION A

NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS POLICY 2019-2020

NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL
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Section A Campus Policy

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FOREWORD

Northside Alternative Middle School is dedicated to the dual purpose of helping students acquire the skills necessary for success and instill beliefs consistent with making good decisions. This handbook outlines the policies and procedures pertaining to student activities and responsibilities as set forth by the Board of Trustees of the Northside Independent School District and Northside Alternative Middle Schools; however, it is not all-inclusive. The district and campus administration reserve the right to amend or change these policies at any time. Please feel free to contact the administration for additional information.

To Students: It is the responsibility of each student to read, understand and abide by the rules and regulations stated in this handbook.

To Parents: It is important that the home and school work cooperatively for the maximum development of your son or daughter. Please make every effort to encourage your student to attend school regularly and punctually. Failing grades and/or irregular attendance can cause your student's placement at Northside Alternative Middle School to be extended. You are encouraged to actively participate in your child's education. Conferences may be scheduled by calling the school 397-2070.

To Parents and Students: Questions regarding interpretations of rules and regulations in this handbook should be directed to the Northside Alternative Middle Schools administration.

THE PURPOSE OF NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

The purpose of the Northside Alternative Middle Schools is to provide a positive and disciplined educational setting for Northside middle school students whose unacceptable behavior or involvement with alcohol, drugs or other substances at their regular school warrants removal from their home campus. Northside Alternative Middle Schools offer a supervised, highly-structured educational environment with a supportive counseling program.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

Your Principal

The principal is responsible to the superintendent of schools for proper administration of the Northside Alternative Middle School. It is the principal's duty to organize, supervise and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers and patrons. He will be glad to help you with any of your problems.

Your Vice Principal and Assistant Principal

The Vice Principal and Assistant Principal are responsible to the Principal. The Vice Principal has full authority in the absence of the Principal.

Your Counselor

The function of the counselor is to provide guidance, not discipline. The Northside Alternative Middle School counselor will be happy to assist you with problems concerning both school and your personal life. Group counseling sessions are also offered to address a variety of issues affecting students placed in an alternative program.

Your Teacher

Your teachers are specialists in the field in which they teach and are eager to help you get the most out of your classes. Your teachers will be on duty each school day at 8:00 a.m. and will remain after class until at least 4:10 p.m. for the purpose of helping any student. Your teachers are the classroom leaders and are charged with the responsibility of supervising and teaching the NISD Curriculum and TEKS.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABSENCES

State Absence Policy

By state law (Texas Education Code 21.041), a student may not be given credit for a class unless the student attends at least 90% of the days the class meets. A waiver (for extenuating circumstances) may be granted by a campus attendance committee. Please see section "D" of the handbook for the District guidelines on this policy. Each student's attendance while assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School will be reported to the home school upon that student's return.

Verification of Absences

When a student is unable to attend school, the parent is requested to call the office at 210-397-2070 to report the absence before 10:00 a.m.

Excused Absences

- a. Parent/guardian notes for less than four consecutive sick days
- b. Religious holidays
- c. Doctor, dentist, clinic or hospital visit
- d. Funeral for immediate family members
- e. Weather or road conditions that make travel dangerous
- f. Documented Court Appearances

Unexcused Absences

- a. Car trouble
- b. Trips with parents
- c. Baby-sitting
- d. Missed bus
- e. Overslept
- f. Reporting more than 15 minutes late for class

Readmission Procedures Following Absences

Following an absence, the student shall report to the main office with an excuse from home. Acceptable notes must include the following: date, parent/ guardian signature and phone number, reason for the absence, and the student's name. The student will obtain a blue absence slip from the office staff and present it to their teacher upon arrival to class. Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. must report to the office with the parent or guardian for appropriate admission to class.

Absences and Grades

Students are encouraged to make up work from all absences and suspensions. If the absence is long-term, parents are encouraged to request assignments through the office. Please see other sections of the handbook for district guidelines regarding make-up work.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AT NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Northside Alternative Middle School holds high expectations for students. Each student is expected to produce QUALITY work. We believe that high expectations for student performance instill pride and increase student self-concept.

SUCCESS SHEETS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

To maximize the student's organizational habits and to provide an effective communication process between Northside Alternative Middle School and the home, each student will have a daily assignment sheet. Teachers will provide daily academic and behavioral feedback on the front of the success sheet. The reverse side of the assignment sheet is a weekly progress report. Students will take the assignment sheet home weekly for parents to review, sign and send back to school with the student.

ASSIGNMENT TO THE NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students are assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School only after Northside staff has determined the appropriateness of the assignment. In the case of students receiving special education services, an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee is convened to determine the most appropriate placement.

Students are assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School through the hearing process conducted at the Office of Pupil Personnel. The Hearing Officer determines the initial length of the assignment to Northside Alternative Middle School. Each student must meet the following criteria to be eligible to return to the home campus: complete the time assigned by the Hearing Officer, earn passing grades in all courses during the assignment to Northside Alternative Middle School, demonstrate appropriate behavior as determined by the principal, and have appropriate attendance. Any student who is not successfully meeting the above criteria may be extended beyond the original length of assignment as deemed appropriate by the Principal. While assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School, students must demonstrate their ability to conform to the school rules. Failure to do so may result in a hearing at the Central Office with the recommendation for the student's expulsion from the Northside Independent School District.

COUNSELING

Philosophy

Students who violate the district's policies can receive assistance provided by counseling and education offered in a supportive environment. Counseling is offered for issues such as: drugs/alcohol, persistent misbehavior, anger management, and violence prevention. Counselors will assist students in making decisions with fewer negative and more positive outcomes.

Services

Parents have the right to temporarily withdraw their child from any part of the counseling program that may conflict with their religious or moral beliefs. Group and individual counseling services are offered and students may be referred for these services by parents, administrators, teachers, and through self-referral. The counselor is available to provide parents/guardians with information, support, and referrals to outside agencies.

In the Choices class, students will receive information on responsible behavior, drug/alcohol and violence prevention, decision-making skills, positive school transitions, goal setting, and addictions. Parents may view counseling/guidance materials during prep days or by request. Counseling services may be made available through agencies or organizations outside Northside ISD. These services can be provided with the approval of the Northside ISD Guidance and Counseling Department and the campus administration.

Confidentiality

Federal confidentiality laws protect students receiving counseling services. Please discuss this further with the counselor.

CELLULAR PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Northside Independent School District's telecommunication device policy allows middle school students to have possession of a cellular telephone while on school property, or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property. Since the Northside Alternative Middle School is an alternative educational program and a disciplinary educational campus for students, possession of a cellular telephone or other electronic device while on campus is not allowed at any time. Students are allowed to bring electronic devices to school with them. All electronic devices will be held in the office and returned to students at dismissal. Consequences for possession of a personal electronic device on school campus include confiscation of the device and requiring parents to pick it up at the school office.

DRESS CODE

The district has adopted standardized attire for all students enrolled in the Northside Alternative Middle School. All students assigned to the DAEP campus will adhere to the standardized attire requirement.

This consists of the following:

1. Pants: Jeans or khakis, with no rips, holes or tears.
2. Shirt: White polo-style shirt (without large logos or emblems).
3. Footwear: Socks and shoes must be appropriate for school. No open-toed or backless shoes are allowed.
4. Students may wear a white, gray or black long-sleeve shirt under the polo shirt.
5. School-issued student ID.

The student's standardized attire must be of proper fit and proper appearance (without sagging, holes, having extra pockets or modifications, etc.). The outermost clothing must be the pants and shirt as noted above. Pants are to always be worn at the waist (not on, or below, the hips). Jogging pants are not allowed. Pants with rips, holes or tears that allow skin to be seen through them are not allowed. No hats, bandanas or other headgear are permitted. Bags, purses, or backpacks are also not allowed. Violations of the standardized attire will result in the inappropriate items being confiscated and held for release to parents. Items left at the end of the school year will be considered abandoned and will be donated to charity. Parents may be contacted if necessary to provide the proper attire should their child arrive at school and not be in compliance with the school's standardized dress code.

The above information is subject to change as new trends in gang-related activities or other societal fashion concerns need to be addressed. Final determination of acceptable dress and grooming rests with the principal and cannot be appealed. The above standardized attire replaces the Northside Independent School District's dress code for the duration of a student's assignment to Northside Alternative Middle School.

FOOD SERVICE

Breakfast and lunch are provided through NISD food service on a daily basis in a structured and monitored environment. Students may bring lunches from home, but they are subject to search. No restaurant food may be delivered to students at the alternative schools. All food brought for lunch is to be consumed during the lunch period in the lunchroom. Any food item brought to school must be in a one-time-use container, and must be discarded at the end of the meal period.

GRAFFITI/TAGGING

Book covers, folders, assignments, assignment sheets, school property, body parts, and/or personal property or clothing displaying obscenities, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, musical groups, gang related materials or any other design or inscription the Principal determines to be unacceptable are not permitted at the Northside Alternative Middle Schools. Tagging of any sort on school facilities is unacceptable and may cause a student to be subject to arrest and expulsion.

GUM/CANDY

Due to the unsafe conditions created by the improper disposal and/or sharing of gum and candy, students are not permitted to have it during the school day.

HEALTH CARE

Students are to report to the CLINIC (secretary's office) immediately if they become ill or injured during the school day. Ill or injured students will be given first aid or other appropriate care in the clinic. If the student requires immediate medical attention or is too ill to return to class promptly, parents, guardian or another alternate adult listed on the medical card will be notified to promptly pick up the student. The parent/guardian is responsible for furnishing ALL emergency information on the student's medical card including alternate adults and current phone numbers. TO ENSURE STUDENT SAFETY, ONLY PERSONS LISTED ON THE MEDICAL CARD ARE ALLOWED TO SIGN A STUDENT OUT OF SCHOOL. In the event the designated persons are unavailable, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to make arrangements for the student to be picked up and to notify the school as to the person picking the student up. IN EXTREME EMERGENCIES, E.M.S. WILL BE CALLED. PAYMENT FOR THESE SERVICES IS THE PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY.

LEAVING CAMPUS

Students who need to leave school during the day should submit a parental note to the office. If parents need to take their child out of school during the school day, they must come to the office to check the student out of school. All students are to remain on the campus once they arrive. Students leaving or returning to school during the day must check in/out with the school secretary. Unauthorized departure from the campus will result in additional consequences, up to, and including, a central office hearing or law enforcement intervention. If a student leaves campus without permission during the school day, his/her parents will be contacted, and the student will not be allowed back on campus for the remainder of that school day. Returning to campus after an unauthorized departure will result in the student being held for parent pick-up.

LIBRARIES

Each campus library supports the curriculum and provides a wide variety of materials suitable to the interest and abilities of students. Other approved on-line resources may be used within the classroom in support of the curriculum. Home access to the online card catalog is available at <http://webcat.nisd.net/>.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost items are kept in the reception office. Should you lose something at school, check in the office first. The school assumes no responsibility for lost articles. Students are urged to take every precaution to protect their possessions. Students are not to bring expensive or valuable items to school. Students are to carefully label each article, such as clothing, books and supplies, in order that each may be easily identified.

NUISANCE ITEMS

Items such as balloons, flowers, games, electronic devices, excessive cash, etc. are not allowed. These items cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere, and they can be easily lost or stolen. Students are permitted to bring only a house key to school. All other items will be confiscated. Inexpensive items, such as, gum, candy, make-up, lip gloss, etc. will be thrown away. More expensive items will be returned to the parent or student when the student is withdrawn from Northside Alternative Middle School.

PARENT INFORMATION

Students will bring home a parent contact sheet each week; this includes a progress report. Parents are expected to review and sign this paper so the student can return it to the campus. Parents can also use the "Home Access Center" which can be accessed from the district's home page or <http://www.nisd.net/parent-connection>. Please call the school if you have any concerns or questions.

REPORT CARDS

At the end of each grading period, report cards will be sent home to parents. Academic grades, citizenship, attendance and teacher comments may appear on the report cards.

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

The school day begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends at 3:50 p.m. Northside Alternative Middle School does not have provisions to supervise students on the campus prior to 7:00 a.m. Bus service is available to all students. Buses deliver students to school between 8:00a.m and 8:30 a.m, and leave school to return students home between 3:50 and 4:00 p.m.

For morning pick-up, students must be at the bus stop in enough time to catch the bus. A return bus will not be sent for students who arrive late to the bus stop.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Northside Alternative Middle School requires reasonable order and proper student behavior throughout all classrooms, hallways, restrooms, physical activity areas, buses and office areas. All students are responsible for their conduct while at school and in transit to and from school. Disruption of the school environment or to the teaching/learning process is not acceptable. The Northside Independent School District's Student Code of Conduct is in effect at Northside Alternative Middle School. For additional information about the Student Code of Conduct, please refer to section "C" of this handbook.

The Student Code of Conduct is supplemented by the following rules.

1. Upon arrival, all students will be inspected and then dismissed to breakfast and class.
2. Students will walk from one area to another in an orderly fashion, without talking loudly.
3. Students are not to enter a classroom unless directed to do so by the teacher.
4. At the beginning of each class, students are to follow all teacher instructions.
5. Students may talk when given permission by the teacher, and all discussion must be school-related. Personal conversations are not allowed during class.
7. No personal items, including backpacks or school supplies, are allowed at school.
8. Students will speak to all staff members in a courteous and respectful manner at all times.
9. Restroom breaks are at designated times during the school day, to maximize instructional time. Students must be given permission to use the restroom during class.
10. Northside Alternative Middle School students are prohibited from visiting any other school at any time. Northside Alternative Middle School students found on any school district properties are subject to arrest for trespassing.
11. All food is to be consumed in the cafeteria. Talking is not allowed in the cafeteria.
12. Students are responsible for obtaining their parent's/guardian's signature on the weekly success sheet.
13. If a student does not ride the bus for three consecutive days, transportation services will be suspended until the parent/guardian contacts the Northside Transportation Department at 397-0870 to re-instate transportation.
14. Fighting, bullying, gang-related activity, and any other dangerous activity will not be tolerated on campus or on the buses. Any student who engages in these actions is subject to disciplinary action.
15. Students referred to the office for misbehavior are subject to extension of their DAEP assignment.
16. Students who engage in persistent misbehavior may be referred to a more specialized program on the NAMS campus, designed to provide additional structure and opportunity for success.
17. Student schedules may be changed at any time, based on campus and student needs.
18. Students who behave inappropriately or disrespectfully are subject to disciplinary action.

Please contact the campus staff for questions about discipline, academics, or campus procedures.

Student Mentor Program

Northside Alternative Middle School has entered into partnerships with businesses and universities to provide adult mentors for our students. Mentors work with our students on academic study and tutorials, hobbies and projects, reading materials of interest, through friendly, positive interactions. If you would like to have your child considered for the mentor program please contact school personnel for details.

TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents/guardians may schedule appointments with teachers by calling the school at 397-2070. Conferences will be scheduled at a time convenient to both the parent/guardian and the teacher.

TEXTBOOKS/ CURRICULUM MATERIALS

State adopted textbooks and other curriculum materials are available to students at the alternative schools.

TRANSPORTATION

The Northside Transportation Department provides students transportation to and from school. Students using the bus service are to be at their designated bus pick up point prior to the scheduled arrival time.

If a student is not going to ride a bus home after school, the parent must sign the student out. Unless the student has been removed from the bus or other arrangements have been made, he/she will be placed on the bus after school in order to ensure the student will have transportation home. Changes to student dismissal may not be made after 3:15 p.m.

The following safety rules are in place on Northside Alternative Middle School buses:

1. Students will sit and remain in their assigned seat at all times while on the bus.
2. Students will be waiting on the curb in the morning for the bus, or the driver will not stop.
3. Students will not talk loudly, use profanity or make obscene gestures while on the bus.
4. While on the bus, students will keep all portions of their body inside the bus windows.
5. Students will not eat, drink or chew gum while they are on the bus.
6. Students will not bring any electronic devices on the bus.
7. Northside Alternative Middle School students will comply with all transportation policies as stated in Section D of this handbook.
8. Bus safety reports may result in the loss of bus privileges. Because of the unique nature of Northside Alternative Middle School, we are aware that removal from bus service causes inconvenience to parents. We are committed to helping students be at school each day, and will work with parents to the extent possible when students are suspended from bus service.
9. Students will adhere to the school dress code while riding the district school bus.
10. Severe disruptions of transportation may result in police intervention.

VISITORS

For the security of our students, all parents and visitors are required to register in the office 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 should receive a Visitor's Pass. Parents and other community members are welcome to visit our school; the District encourages such visitation. Visits to a specific classroom or program must be scheduled through the principal's office and must not interfere with the instruction or discipline managed by the teacher.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Students must meet criteria based on attendance, behavior, and grades in order to complete their assigned placement at the Northside Alternative Middle School. Verification of successful performance in these areas is the responsibility of administration. On the day a student is being withdrawn, he/she will receive his/her withdrawal form to take home to the parent. The parent should immediately contact the home campus to schedule a re-entry conference so that school is not missed.

CONCLUSION

The Northside Alternative Middle School has been established to guide students in their decision making. In coordination with families, feeder campuses, and community resources, our aim is to help students make improvements in academics and positive behaviors.