

PAT M. NEFF MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS HANDBOOK

PAT M. NEFF MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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Section A Campus Handbook 2021-2022

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WELCOME

Welcome to Texan Country! We at Pat Neff Middle School have high expectations of you! We expect you to be proud of your school, to be respectful of the staff and your fellow classmates, and to represent your school with class and dignity. Most of all, we expect you to learn the necessary skills needed for you to be successful in your future. You will learn that by exhibiting a positive attitude and by putting forth effort, you will be rewarded with good grades and good citizenship. These outcomes will make your years at Pat Neff enjoyable and productive.

Pat Neff Middle School is dedicated to the purpose of teaching students to use their minds well and build skills that will be useful and required, now and in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to have certain rules to insure each individual the opportunity to benefit from their educational opportunity. This handbook outlines some of the basic policies around which your school functions. Frequent reference will keep you informed of guidelines and allow you to take full advantage of all school offerings. Please feel free to contact teachers and administrators when you deem it necessary. The cooperation of school patrons, based upon the knowledge of the school, will result in a more efficient and successful school program.

Conferences may be scheduled by calling the school at the following number, 397-4100.

PAT MORRIS NEFF

Pat M. Neff Middle School is in the Northside Independent School District and proudly bears the name of a former governor of Texas, Pat Morris Neff. Born near Waco on November 26, 1871, Governor Neff was a graduate of Baylor University and the University of Texas Law School. He entered the practice of law in Waco, and became prosecuting attorney for McLennan County. In 1903-04, while serving in the State Legislature, Neff became the youngest Speaker of the House ever to serve in Texas.

Prominent in educational circles, to the extent of being offered the presidency of the University of Texas, Neff declined and entered instead the campaign for governor. His first term of office began in January of 1921, during the post World War I depression. He was re-elected for his second term and served until January 1925. Noteworthy accomplishments during these years included the establishment of a system of state parks, attention to conservation and industrial development, as well as the establishment of three colleges: a teacher's college at Nacogdoches, Texas A & I, and Texas Tech in Lubbock.

Governor Neff was of service to his state in a number of ways after his term of office ended. He was a member of the National Railroad Mediation Board, Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, and president of Baylor University until his death in January, 1952

SCHOOL COLORS

BLUE AND WHITE

SCHOOL MASCOT

TEXANS

Mission, Vision and Core Beliefs

Mission - Pat Neff Middle School will create a community of risk takers who, with respect and perseverance, will grow to take on today's realities and prepare for tomorrow's possibilities.

Vision - To create an inviting, safe, positive, and challenging environment for students, teachers, and the community where all are mutually respected and accountable.

Core Beliefs - We are committed to:

- Promoting high achievement and academic success through collaboration and shared decision making with stakeholders.
- Creating a nurturing, safe, and supportive atmosphere.
- Providing data driven instruction.
- Differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- Seeking and implementing innovative teaching techniques to promote academic excellence.
- Implementing research-based best practices that support critical thinking and problem solving.
- Utilizing current technology to enhance the quality of instruction

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

The Principal

The Principal is responsible to the Superintendent of schools for proper administration of Pat Neff Middle School. It is her duty to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, and patrons. She will be glad to help you with any of your concerns. Conferences can be scheduled by calling 397-4105.

The Associate Principal/Assistant Principal

The Associate Principal and Assistant Principal work directly with the principal in the management and organization of the school. They handle the day-by-day operations of the school and assume the responsibility of the Principal in her absence.

Due to morning duties and responsibilities on campus, administrators are not available for conferences prior to 8:40 a.m. We strongly suggest that if you wish to speak to an administrator, or have a conference with them, that you call 397-4123 or 210-397-4124 to schedule an appointment. If you are unable to reach an administrator directly by phone, please leave a message and a campus administrator will return your call within 24 hours.

The Academic Dean

The Academic Dean works directly with the Principal in the instructional processes of the school to improve student performance at Pat Neff Middle School. She is in charge of all campus testing, both at the district and state level. She handles the day to day operations of the school that address academics and may assume the responsibility of the Principal in her absence. Conferences may be scheduled by calling 397-4106.

The Counselors

All students are assigned a guidance counselor. Your counselor will be happy to assist you with problems concerning both school and your personal life. If you want an appointment with your counselor this can be arranged with the secretary in the guidance office before and after school. Parents can refer their child by contacting the counseling office, and students can refer themselves through the online referral system posted in every classroom, hallway, and restroom. If your counselor cannot see you that same day, he/she will make an appointment with you for the next day. Conferences with students receive first consideration of the counselor's time. ***The function of the counselor is advisory, not disciplinary, and all information is confidential.***

The 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.

The Police Officer

The Police Officer assists students when needed and helps maintain a safe environment. He/she helps supervise after school events and helps monitor traffic. The SAFE hotline number is 397-7233 or text safe@nisd.net.

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. Formal attire and/or limousine transportation are not appropriate for these events. 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 Neff 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.

The first rule of success for a student is to “show up” on time. Attendance is one of the Principal’s top priorities in managing the school’s population. Students cannot learn if they are not present in school; teachers cannot teach empty seats.

1. Notes must be turned in to the Attendance Office immediately upon student’s return to school. The note must include the following: a) date of note, b) name, id#, grade level of child, c) date(s) of absence(s), d) specific reason for absence(s), e) parent signature, and f) telephone number(s) where parent can be reached. *Third party notes are accepted (i.e., doctor, dental, funeral, family court) and need to meet the same criteria as listed above.

2. Students without a note will be issued an unexcused absence. The student must bring a note within three school days to the attendance secretary for the record to be amended.

3. Students with 3 or more unexcused full or partial day absences, in accordance with state law, will be issued an attendance warning notice (AWN). Students with additional absences after issuance of AWN may be routed to truancy court.

NOTE: Please refer to the District policy on Attendance in Section D of this handbook.

Tardies - Students should be in their classrooms when the tardy (second) 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.

BACKPACKS/BOOK BAGS

Any appropriate backpack is acceptable

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROCEDURES

All students will enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner and follow the appropriate cafeteria rules. Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their seat and duty teachers will dismiss students. Students may not leave the cafeteria before permission is granted. Parents who wish to have lunch with their child must sign in at the front office to obtain a visitor’s badge. Parents may then proceed to the cafeteria to have lunch with their own child. Other students are not allowed to join the parent/child luncheon. Parents may bring lunch to their children; however, parents may not bring lunch for other students. No celebrations are permitted in the cafeteria (e.g. birthdays). To ensure that other students do not feel uncomfortable or left out, parents who bring outside food and drinks should eat lunch with their children at a designated table in the cafeteria. Fast food deliveries to students are not allowed.

Breakfast/Lunch Money - Breakfast and lunch are free, but money can be added to the child’s account for extra items. 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 required to ride the designated 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, and receive an official bus change form, a note must be sent by a parent/guardian the day prior to or the morning of and be brought to the Administration Office for administrative approval. **This approval must be obtained prior to the end of the school day** (these will not be approved after school in the bus loop) for a student to ride a different bus. Students will be given a note from the Administrative Office that needs to be given to the bus driver. The number of students assigned to buses and the systemized route system are disrupted when ineligible students ride on alternate routes. All bus routes and assignments of students are done through the district’s transportation offices.

CAMPUS OPERATING HOURS

- Classes begin each morning with announcements starting at 8:35 am; 1st period official start time is 8:40 am; and the end of the day is at 4:05 pm.. Students are not supervised until 7:45am.

- Upon arrival to campus, students report to designated areas as follows: 6th grade Cafeteria (7:40-8:00 am) Upper D building (8:00-8:25 am); 7th grade Upper K building (7:40-8:25 am); 8th grade Lower D building (7:40-8:25 am). Breakfast is served at interval times and grade levels are released accordingly. Students are not permitted to loiter at the front of the building/courtyard/football field/bus loop before or after school. During the school day, students will follow their individual class schedule and report to all classes on time.
- Front Office Hours are from 7:45 - 4:30 PM.
- Students will not be allowed to be checked out after 3:45 PM due to dismissal procedures.

CAMPUS VISITORS

All Parents and Visitors are required to register in the Front Office regardless of how long they plan to stay on campus, and must 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, 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. All volunteers and mentors are also required to do a criminal background check before volunteering on campus or field trips. The background check may be done on-line through the NISD website.

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, school items (books, assignments, etc), house keys, and lunch money. For all other items, the student is expected to come by the office BETWEEN classes to retrieve their belongings. No business will be permitted to deliver food to a student (i.e. pizza delivery, sandwich delivery, food delivery services). This procedure helps the school maintain an academic environment and is effective in helping students practice personal responsibility. **Parent/Guardian dropping off food needs to be an emergency contact listed in HAC. Students need to be aware food is being delivered and are not permitted to share food.** Flowers, balloons, birthday presents etc. will not be delivered and will be held in the office until the end of the day when students can pick them up to be taken home.

Dress for Success

Uniforms are optional this year as we all get into our routine of being back on campus. The district's dress code will be 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, suggestive or distracting clothing 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.

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

ELECTRONIC DEVICES/ TECHNOLOGY

Personal Electronic Devices (PED's) must be turned off and not visible during the school day unless you are using the device for 'teacher approved' instructional purposes in the classroom. Students who violate this policy will be subject to escalating consequences which will include confiscation of the device and require a parent to pick up the device as well as loss of privilege to bring the device on campus. Students should follow specific guidelines regarding PED's in Section B and Section E of the Student-Parent Handbook which include the Acceptable Use of District's Technology Resources.

To function effectively in this environment, students must assume personal responsibility to behave ethically, even when technology provides them the freedom to do other- wise. The use of the 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 the 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, the Home Access Center (HAC). Students and parents can access the 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. 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 and available on HAC at the end of each grading period. They provide the student's academic grades, citizenship grades, plus other pertinent information. We urge you to check your child's report card every nine weeks. If a parent cannot access 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, contact the counselors' office and administration.

The Home Access Center (HAC) is another method of increasing collaboration and communication between teachers and parents. Parents and students have

real-time, on-line access to your student's daily grades and attendance records. Teachers will update grades weekly. Please be aware that some projects and papers may take longer to grade.

Please use the following process to access your student's information:

1. Go to the following website, <https://hac.nisd.net/>.
2. Your user name is the email address where you received your temporary password. Your temporary password will need to be reset when you sign in.
3. The first time you log-on to HAC you will be automatically directed to the MY ACCOUNT page.
 - a. It is important that you create a new password that only you know and will remember.
 - b. The password must be 8 - 15 characters.
 - c. The password may contain letters, numbers, and symbols.
 - d. Select CHANGE PASSWORD when finished.
 - e. Create three challenge questions to help secure your account.
 - f. You may enter any three questions and answers.
 - g. The questions and answers cannot be the same word or phrase.
 - h. The three questions cannot be the same.
 - i. The three answers cannot be the same.
4. Select CONTINUE TO HOME ACCESS CENTER when finished.

LOCKERS

Pat Neff Middle School does not use lockers. However, students will be assigned a locker in the gym for use during their PE class and students must provide their own lock. Students should not share lockers or give their combinations to anyone.

LOST AND FOUND

IF YOU FIND ANY ARTICLE OF VALUE, PLEASE 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. Students should carefully label each article, such as clothing, books, and supplies for easy identification. If you are in possession of an item that does not belong to you, you will be subject to disciplinary measures. Lost and found items collected and not claimed by the end of each grading period will be donated to charity.

NUISANCE ITEMS

Items that cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere are not permitted. 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.

Withdrawal of Student - Parents or guardians wishing to withdraw a student from school during the year should initiate this request in person through the Grade Reporting/Attendance Secretary. A withdrawal document will be taken to each of the student's teachers, the librarian, the cafeteria manager, the nurse, and Assistant Principal's secretary with any textbooks that were issued to the student. Each teacher will list the grade for that particular nine weeks period up to the time of withdrawal. The librarian will indicate that the student's library record is clear. In addition, before withdrawal is completed, all other records must be clear.

When all of the necessary information has been obtained, the student should return the withdrawal document to the Grade Reporting/Attendance Secretary for an administrator's signature. One copy will be given to the student, and the other will be retained by the school.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Please refer to Section B of Northside's Student and Parent Agreement for the Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Communication System policy.

PAT NEFF BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS/PBIS

All Texans, which include students, faculty, and staff, are expected to treat each other with respect. Every Texan has an obligation to encourage and uplift others to be the best they can be.

Neff implements a system called PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) that encourages and rewards positive student behavior and clearly

defines student expectations. Every area of the campus has a posted matrix with the RAYS acronym and student expectations.

- Prompt
- Respectful
- Integrity
- Determined
- Engaged

****Note: As policies and procedures change, administration reserves the right to update the campus handbook.**