



North Lakes Academy
K-8 Student/Parent/Guardian
Handbook

K-8 Building
4576 N 232nd Street
Forest Lake, MN 55025

Founded in 1999
Celebrating 24 Years of Service & Success!



Welcome Letter

Dear K-8 Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School year at NLA! We as a faculty and staff are excited to work with you and your students this school year.

Our goal is that each student has a successful, safe, and enriching school year. This handbook will provide you with general information concerning our school. We ask that parents and students take the time to become familiar with the policies, procedures, and expectations in this handbook. Most questions you have will be covered in this guide as well as other topics relevant to your child's education.

North Lakes Academy Vision & Mission Statements

Our Vision

North Lakes Academy will provide an environment in which elementary, middle and high school students will learn eagerly, extensively and deeply so that they will be able to assume productive and satisfying roles in a global society.

Our Mission

We will provide a rigorous, liberal arts curriculum in a small, personalized, developmentally appropriate learning environment and graduate students who are confident, skilled scholars and citizens.



GENERAL OVERVIEW

NLA is a tuition-free public charter school for students in grades Kindergarten through twelve. Serving the Lakes area since 1999, North Lakes Academy provides a personalized learning environment designed to meet a wide variety of academic needs. Average class size is 22 students, but may vary due to extenuating circumstances.

With strong core subjects and small class sizes, NLA provides quality learning in a responsive learning atmosphere. Students feel safe at NLA in classes of about 22 students where teachers can meet individual needs and learning styles.

K-8 Building Information

4576 232nd Street North,
Forest Lake, Minnesota 55025
Phone: 651-982-2773
Website: www.northlakesacademy.org

Upper School

308 15th St SW
Forest Lake, MN 55025
Phone: 651-982-2688
Fax: 651.464.6409
Website: www.northlakesacademy.org

SCHOOL HOURS

Student School Day: 7:50 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.
Staff Day: 7:30am-3:30pm
Office is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Students are allowed in the building beginning at 7:20am each morning.
All students not involved in after school activities should leave the building by 2:30pm unless enrolled in SAC.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY All students shall be afforded the right and opportunity to an equal education. No student shall be excluded, segregated or discriminated against in the school's educational environment for reasons of race, color, national origin, gender, economic status, disability, religion or religious affiliation or sexual orientation.

GENERAL SAFETY Student safety is a priority at North Lakes Academy. As a result, we take a strong position against fighting, as well as excessive roughhousing between students. Students are to keep hands and feet to themselves at all times. Any action, which could or does result in injury to another student, will be taken very seriously (See Discipline Policy).

CODE OF CONDUCT

North Lakes Academy, from its inception, has been guided by a philosophy that states, *"All behavior will contribute in a positive way to our learning community."* Discipline and consequences are defined by "Below the Line" and "Bottom Line" behaviors. NLA uses Responsive Classroom and Catalyst strategies for behavior management. More information can be found at



<https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/principles-practices/>

<https://www.thecatalystapproach.com/about/>

VOLUNTEERS NLA welcomes the help of volunteers in the office and in classrooms doing tasks to support teacher preparation and student learning. All volunteers must complete a background check prior to scheduled volunteer hours. Background checks are \$10 per person and checks can be made out to NLA. Background check forms are available in the office and online <https://www.northlakesacademy.org/forms>. A background check that returns with a felony, a violent crime conviction, or an action against a minor of any degree will preclude that individual from volunteering at NLA.

VISITORS Parents and visiting guests are welcome. For everyone's safety, ALL visitors must sign in at the school office. You will receive a visitor badge or sticker that must be worn while you are at the school. Upon leaving, visitors and parents must sign out at the office. Adults are welcome to observe in classrooms at any time that is pre arranged with the teacher. For a variety of reasons, ***NLA discourages parents from joining their students for lunch.***

SCHOOL CLOSINGS Emergency school closings due to severe weather, or any other reason, are posted on the school's website, WCCO, Facebook and Twitter. It is also announced via PowerSchool emails, texts and phone calls. To receive text messages via PowerSchool, ***you must opt-in to the system in your account settings.*** For help contact Nick Jensen at njensen@northlakesacademy.org

NLA uses Forest Lake Areas School District bussing and will close any time that District #831 closes.

The decision to close school will be made as early as possible in coordination with the FLAS Superintendent. The school cannot be responsible for students who arrive at school or at bus stops in spite of these announcements. If you have any question as to whether the school is in session that day, check the school's website or contact the school office.

EMERGENCY DRILLS AND TRAINING Fire drill information and other safety instruction information will be presented to the teachers and staff regularly. The physical safety of the students is our absolute, first responsibility. Whether in the parking lot, classroom, gym, playground, restrooms, hallways, on field trips, etc. the physical safety of our students should always be every adult's first priority. The North Lakes Academy Crisis Plan addresses numerous potential crisis situations which allow staff, students, and parents/legal guardians to deal with an emergency in a safe and orderly manner. Throughout the school year students and staff will conduct practice drills, including, but not limited to, lockdowns, fire, tornado and evacuation drills.

FORMS, RECORDS & DOCUMENTATION

North Lakes Academy students are expected to have all forms, records and documentation on file at the school in a timely manner. Transcripts from other schools need to be requested from previous schools at least two weeks before classes begin. All other forms must be filled out and returned by



the end of the first week of classes. Enrollment packets are sent to families and all forms are available through the school office. *A completed emergency form must be on file by that time or the student will not be allowed to attend school.*

PROOF OF LEGAL CUSTODY RIGHTS North Lakes Academy must have on file, in cases of divorce or separation where one parent has legal custody, a copy of the court order that defines all custody and visitation rights. The school must have on file appropriate legal documentation in order to assure compliance with any limiting court order. NLA will abide by state and federal data privacy laws which recognize the rights of natural, non-custodial parents to have access to their child's school records; these parents may arrange to review their child's school records in accordance with the school's policy.

A note on contentious marriage, divorce or custody arrangements NLA understands that divorce or separation can be difficult on families and children and that families with split households, contentious marriages, or contested custody agreements have an extra set of challenges to face when working with schools. NLA requests the following in these situations:

1. Parents and guardians remain respectful when speaking with school staff about the situation and the parties involved.
2. If the parties involved cannot agree on the best course of action for their student regarding educational decisions, they defer to the recommendation of the school.

STUDENT RECORDS Education records are maintained by NLA in a cumulative record system:

Cumulative folders include

1. Academic Transcripts
2. Enrollment Records; and
3. Health/Medical Records.

Records are promptly transferred, upon request, to other schools (see details below). Special Education records, where applicable, are maintained in the cumulative folder as well and are transferred in the same way.

PRIVACY RIGHTS Education records which identify or could be used to identify a student other than directory information may not be released to members of the general public without the written permission of the student's parent or guardian.

TRANSFER OF RECORDS TO OTHER SCHOOLS When a student transfers, NLA will forward educational records to the gaining institution upon official request and record of transfer. Parents and guardians have the right to review and inspect a copy of the materials being transferred and an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the record being transferred. Educational records will be transferred within ten working days following the receipt of the transfer request from the new district unless the parent/guardian asks for a hearing to challenge the accuracy of the contents.

ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY

We are committed to an environment that values academics and character. Academic accountability requires students to complete and present their own work. Academic dishonesty occurs when students take credit for work that is not their own through acts of cheating or plagiarism, or helps another student do so. Study or homework collaboration is not considered



academic dishonesty unless prohibited or limited by expectations established by the teacher. Parents or tutors may dialogue with a student about an assignment, but may not do the assignment for the student.

ASSESSMENTS

FAST

Students in grades K-8 will be taking the FAST suite of assessments three times each school year. These assessments provide teachers and families with data that help determine achievement and instructional levels in math and reading.

MCAs (MN Comprehensive Assessments)

Students in grades 3-8 take the MCAs in the spring. All grades 3-8 take Reading and Math exams. Grades 5 and 8 also take the Science exam.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

It is our desire at North Lakes Academy to facilitate ongoing communication. Parents/legal guardians are encouraged to contact the school whenever they would like to discuss something about their experience at NLA or have a suggestion to make. Members of the teaching staff and the administration will always make themselves available to discuss your child's education.

EMERGENCY MESSAGES Emergency messages, such as school closings, late buses, or other messages are announced via PowerSchool emails, texts and/or phone calls. To receive text messages via PowerSchool, you must opt-in to the system in your account settings. For help contact njensen@northlakesacademy.org

POWERSCHOOL Our online student information system is called PowerSchool. This system helps us share information about our students' attendance, grades, homework completion, etc., and we use the data to improve the educational programming by streamlining some of our procedures. Each family is provided with a PowerSchool login and can set up their account. This allows parents/guardians online access to their students' contact information, schedule, progress reports and report cards. Upon enrollment, you will be provided with an activation code specific to your child/ren. **You must opt-in to the system in your account settings.** For help contact njensen@northlakesacademy.org

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER The NLA Newsletter is a primary means of district communication for upcoming events, the latest news and positive facts about students at NLA. The newsletter is emailed 2+ times each month and delivered to email address parents/guardians have activated in Powerschool.

WEBSITE The NLA uses its website as a communication tool. Updated school information is available at www.northlakesacademy.org.

TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS Elementary teachers will communicate with families via a weekly email or through updates on Schoology or SeeSaw or email. Middle school teachers post all updates on Schoology.

CONTACTING TEACHERS-- Email is preferred In order to contact a teacher, you may email, contact the front desk and ask to leave a message on voicemail for any teacher at any time, or send



notes with your child. Please note that teachers are not expected to answer phone messages, email or other messages during the teaching day. **All staff members have an email address that consists of their first initial followed by their last name.** (Example for John Doe: *jdoe@northlakesacademy.org*)

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS Please contact your child's teacher when you have questions or concerns. The sooner a question is answered or a concern is resolved, the better the opportunity for continued successful learning to occur. Teachers may not respond to emails while they are teaching, but will respond by the end of the next workday. If there are family changes or significant events occurring in your child's life, which might affect emotional, behavioral or educational performance, it would be helpful to inform the classroom teacher of necessary information. By working together we can achieve a successful environment for learning.

The communication procedure for issues with teachers is as follows:

- Direct communication with the teacher. This shows respect for the teacher and also for the parent communicating the information.
- If the concern remains unresolved, please contact the Executive Director, who will coordinate a meeting between the parents, teacher, and appropriate staff.

CONFERENCES Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and early spring. These conferences give parents/legal guardians and teachers an opportunity to share information regarding each child's academic and social achievement. We encourage students to attend their conferences.

REPORT CARDS & PROGRESS REPORTS Report Cards will be available through PowerSchool at the end of each semester. These reports have a two-fold purpose: to indicate each child's progress in the academic areas of study, and to assess each pupil's progress in work habits.

PHONE USE

CELL PHONE USE The North Lakes Academy staff recognizes that many students carry personal cell phones to school and families often have a plan for cell phone use to communicate with their students. In the spirit of our Code of Conduct and academic progress, the K-8 staff has put together guidelines for personal cell phones during school hours. **Students are welcome to use the office phone during school hours should an urgent matter arise.**

- Cell phones cannot be seen or used in the building during the school day. Students must have their phone off or on silent and stored in a locker or backpack. Use is only permitted after 2:15pm.
 - In order to protect student property, students may choose to leave their phones with the front office during school hours.
 - Phones will not be allowed to be visible on field trips or any other event taking place during school hours.
 - Students may use their phones outside the school building, after school hours. Students who are seen carrying or using cell phones in the building, between 7:20-2:15am day will have the phone taken away by the staff member and the phone will be kept in the office.
- First Offense – Phone will be taken and stored in the office; student will be able to get the phone back at the end of the day.



- Second Offense – A family member will have to come to school to claim the phone.
- Third Offense—The student must check in their phone every morning to the office.
- If guidelines continue to be disregarded, administration will deal with the situation on an individual basis.

USE OF ELECTRONICS IN THE CLASSROOM Unauthorized use of electronics is prohibited. Electronics to be used in learning (Chromebooks, Chromepads, etc) will be provided by the school. Personal cell phones, Chromebooks, laptops, iPads, tablets, iPods, and AirPods are not allowed to be used in the building during school hours. These items should be kept in the student’s backpack or in a locker during the school day. If a student is concerned about theft, they can check the item in with the office and it will be returned to them at 2:15pm. ***NLA is not responsible for the loss or theft of these items.***

The use of computers is integrated into our overall curriculum, with the objective that students learn to use computers as a tool. Students are expected to sign and abide by an “appropriate use” contract which governs Internet and computer use. NLA believes in a “growth toward independence” model of technology use and will incorporate more technology into the curriculum as students matriculate through the grade levels. All classroom teachers have access to Chromepads for teaching, learning, group and individual work.

OFFICE PHONE USE Students may use the school telephone for school business (i.e., forgot my instrument for band) and emergency use only.

MESSAGES FROM HOME Only emergency messages will be delivered directly to students in class. Families may leave non-emergency messages with the office staff that will be delivered during the student’s lunch period. Students cannot be pulled from class to take non-emergency phone calls.

PROGRAMMING

Our academic goal for each child is to promote higher-level thinking, while meeting each child at his/her ability level in order to help them reach their full potential.

CURRICULUM

Reading/Language Arts: The curriculum for literacy is Fountas & Pinnell Comprehensive Classroom, which is supplemented by literature and novel units in the upper grades.

Math: The math program at NLA for K-5 is Math Expressions. For grades 6th-8th it is All things Algebra is used as the curriculum.

Science/Social Studies: Science and social studies are tied very closely to the Core Knowledge Sequence. The Science program is supplemented with Foss Science Kits as well as additional reading material in each class. For Social Studies, students use supplemental reading materials.

Physical Education/Health: The Physical Education curriculum stresses the importance of general good health and the development of the skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to



participate in group and individual sports which can be enjoyed throughout a lifetime. The curriculum incorporates all of the Minnesota Physical Education standards.

Music: Students in Grades K-5 will receive music as a specials rotations this year. Students also have the opportunity to choose a musical instrument for band starting in 5th grade.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The purpose of extracurricular activities is to develop character, promote self-confidence, foster school spirit, and develop the gifts and talents of students. We expect a growing number of extra-curricular activities to be offered after school to enrich the experiences of our students.

Supervision Students involved in after school activities need to take all of their belongings with them to that event. Students must be supervised at all times. Most activities will run from 2:15pm-3:15pm. It is critical that students who are involved in extracurricular activities are picked up on time. Parents are asked to come in to the school to retrieve children from their classrooms. There is no supervision after the pick-up time that is scheduled. Siblings of students who are in a supervised activity are *not* allowed to wait in the school unsupervised. Only students enrolled in a supervised extracurricular activity should be in the school after 2:15 p.m.

Absences A student who is absent from school is not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities the day of the absence. A student needs to be present in school for four hours to participate in after school activities. School-initiated absences will be accepted and extracurricular participation permitted.

- A student may not participate in any activity or program if he/she has an unexcused absence during the day.
- If a student is suspended from any class he/she may not participate in any activity or program that day.
- If a student is absent from school due to medical reasons, he/she must present a physician's statement. The note must be presented to the coach or advisor before the student participates in the activity or program.

Conduct Participants are expected to represent North Lakes Academy and abide by our Code of Conduct at all times, for activities both on- and off-campus.

ELIGIBILITY Students may become ineligible to participate in activities (athletics, music, drama and clubs included) for academic, behavioral or chemical offenses. These guidelines are official NLA board policy and are provided to all athletes at the beginning of each season and are available to all upon request at the NLA office. It is the coaches' and student's responsibility to see that these guidelines are followed. Guidelines for regaining eligibility are also provided in this policy.

FIELD TRIPS Cultural and educational field experiences scheduled during each school year are planned to enhance your child's educational process. Each elementary grade will participate in at least one field trip during the school year, middle school fieldtrips vary each year. Permission slips from parents/legal guardians must be signed and returned to the classroom teacher before a student may participate.



Chaperones - Parents/guardians may volunteer to chaperone field trips provided an approved background check is on file with the district office (see volunteer policy).

Dress Code - Students attending field trips are required to abide by the NLA dress code.

Refunds - Field trip money is non-refundable.

ACADEMICS

HOMEWORK A quality education requires student preparation outside of school and is enhanced by family support and involvement with work that a student brings home. Homework allows for practice in a particular subject, study for quizzes and tests, and leads to responsibility. It is carefully assigned as a meaningful part of the learning experience. The amount of the homework depends on the grade of the child. Homework may be the completion of class work that was not finished in school, work on a project, study for an exam, or an extended lesson for student enrichment.

Homework assignments are part of each student's grade. Therefore, missing assignments must be turned in as soon as possible. Students are also responsible for homework assignments missed during an absence from school.

Grades K-2

Parents/guardians are expected to have significant involvement in homework assignments through second grade because most homework is designed to practice skills and an adult's guidance is necessary for that practice to be of high quality. At a minimum, daily homework will require at least 20 minutes of reading time.

Grades 3-5

Parents/guardians can be most helpful in third grade and above by providing guidance for organizing time at home. Many projects are completed in class but those which have "at home" components are to be entirely done by students. If practice of skills is needed, parents/legal guardians should support and or/participate that practice. At a minimum, daily homework will require at least 20 minutes of reading time.

Grades 6-8

As students prepare for their high school career, the curriculum, standards and learning all become more vigorous. Students can expect some amount of homework each day. If you feel that the homework is too much, please reach out to your child's teacher to see how your child may be helped in this area.

SPECIAL EDUCATION The Special Education Department at NLA is a team of specialized professionals dedicated to assuring a "free, appropriate public education in the least

restrictive environment." Parents/guardians may request an assessment for their child to determine eligibility, to be administered by the NLA Special Education Department. Teachers may also recommend assessment for a student. The Child Find Team will review the needs of each identified student before testing begins.

TITLE I/ADSIS Title I and ADSIS are federally funded programs that give qualified students an extra boost in the areas of reading and math. These programs are carried out through our interventionists (RTI). Students that need additional instruction to grasp concepts will be



recommended to RTI. It is our desire to remediate specific skills in a timely matter rather than wait for a larger learning gap to occur.

READ ACT The READ Act replaces Read Well by Third Grade. This is new this year. We will be looking into how best NLA will meet the expectations of the new act. The focus this year will be looking at our Tiered interventions to make sure that all students are making grade level reading progress.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure a student is attending school on time every day, to inform the school in the event of a student absence/tardiness, and to collaborate with teachers regarding any missing schoolwork. It is the student's responsibility to be on time for morning routines and prepared with materials needed for learning, and to follow class procedures for any make-up work.

Teachers take daily attendance after the 7:50am bell. Teachers work cooperatively with students and parents to provide assignments and assistance when a student has been absent. Research supports that regular school attendance and punctuality are directly related to success in academic work and high school graduation rates, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications, and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE Students in grades 1-8 are required by law to attend school every day classes are in session. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class period. Students arriving after 10am will be marked absent for the first half of the day, and will receive credit for one-half day in the attendance logs.

ABSENCES/REPORTING Parents are expected to call the school daily by 9:00am to report an absence. The attendance line is available 24 hours a day by calling 651-982-2773. If parents do not call in, the absence will be considered unexcused. If the child is absent and the parent/guardian has not called the school, a staff member of the school will make a reasonable attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone.

Parents are also responsible for reporting a change in supervision for their child.

The SAC program must be contacted separately to report an absence. See the SAC program handbook.

EXCUSED ABSENCES To be considered an excused absence, the student's parent/guardian may be asked to verify, in writing, the reason for the student's absence from school. The following are examples of absences that may be excused:

1. Illness. (If a student has more than 7 days of illness in a semester the school will require a medical professional's note.)
2. Family vacations with prior notice.
3. Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
4. A death in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative.
5. Medical, dental, or orthodontic treatment or counseling appointments.
6. Court appearances due to family or personal action.



7. Religious instruction not to exceed three hours in any week and religious observations.
8. Family emergencies.
9. Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension. Suspensions are to be handled as excused absences and students will be permitted to complete make up work.
10. The Director may excuse absences for other reasons.

VERIFICATION REQUESTS *A family will receive a warning letter after 5 Excused Absences . After 10 Excused Absences, families will be required to provide verification of the student's continuing absences from school* (doctor/dentist/therapist note, etc). Failure to provide documentation for absence will result in the absence being unexcused. Continuation of unverified absences will result in reporting to the County Truancy Services.

CONSEQUENCES OF EXCUSED ABSENCES Students whose absences are excused are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher. It is the responsibility of the student to ask for the missed work. It is the responsibility of the teacher to prepare requested work that was missed. Work missed because of absence must be made up within the number of days absent from the date of the student's return to school. If gone only one day you have up to two days to return completed work to ensure teacher and student have enough time to prepare missed work and student has enough time to complete and ask questions.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

The following are examples of absences that will be unexcused:

1. Truancy. An absence by a student that was not approved by the parent and/or NLA.
2. Giving no reason for absence
3. Transportation difficulties (missed bus, car broke down).
4. Babysitting.
5. Need for sleep or rest.
6. Tardies that exceed 25% of the school day (1.5 hours).

CONSEQUENCES OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCES By law, *if a student has 3 or more unexcused absences in a school year, he/she is considered "continuing truant." Schools are required to notify County Services if a child has been absent without legal excuse for three to five days.*

At this point, a county school attendance social worker will arrange a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school, with the goal of establishing a contract in which the parent(s)/guardian(s) agree to address issues impacting their child's school attendance and to assure their child's regular attendance for the remainder of the school year. If students continue to be absent from school without a legally justifiable excuse, a report may be made to Child Protection for further assessment of the situation.

MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Students who are absent are required to make up assignments missed or complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the teacher. Parents/guardians may request the student's homework by contacting their child's teachers directly.

TARDINESS After 7:50am families must sign students in at the office before students will be allowed to go to class. Tardiness is disruptive to the educational process and is inconsiderate to both teachers and



other students; therefore, it is imperative that students are punctual. Please make sure that your student(s) arrive into the building by 7:45am so they have time to get to class by 7:50am. Students are expected to attend school for the entire school day, 7:50am-2:15pm. Students arriving late, leaving for any part of the day, or leaving before 2:15pm need to report to the school office and must have a parent/guardian sign them in or out.

- Three or more “tardies” in any calendar month will result in a conference with an administrator.
- A student is tardy if he/she is not in their classroom by 7:50am (elementary) or the start of each period (middle school).
- A student is considered absent for a half day if they miss more than three hours of the day.
- A student is considered absent for a full day if he/she misses four or more hours of the school day.

RELEASE OF STUDENT

Procedures are followed to ensure the safety of students who are released during the day:

- The parent/legal guardian or authorized person must come to the office and sign out the student. Students will remain with the teacher until notified by the office staff.
- In no case should a student ever leave during the school day without signing out in the office.

If any person other than the custodial parent/legal guardian is to pick up the student, the school must have a verbal statement from the custodial parent/legal guardian specifying the necessary information. The individual picking up the student must provide photo ID.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

Vacations when school is in session are discouraged. NLA recognizes the value of the educational experience family vacations can provide for children, but encourages families to plan their vacations or trips when school is not in session. However, if family trips are unavoidable, the school should be notified at least a week in advance. In the event of an extended absence:

1. Any missing work is expected to be made up.
2. Necessary vacations may not exceed ten days.
3. Teachers are not responsible to provide work in advance for students on family vacations.

HEALTH SERVICES

The classroom teacher refers students to the office whenever symptoms indicate the possibility of illness and/or pain. NLA employs a Wellness Coordinator trained in CPR and basic first aid, and contracts with a nursing service to provide monitoring and training. Minor injuries are treated at school. Major injuries will be handled by calling emergency services and parents/guardians.

HEALTH CONCERNS Parents/legal guardians must keep their child home if the child has any of the following illnesses:

- Fever of 100.0 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eye

Children should be fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication), before returning to school.



ILLNESS Students who become ill during the school day will be required to go home – as soon as possible. It is the parent/guardian responsibility to either pick up their student or arrange for another adult to do so. NLA does not have full time nursing. Therefore, students who are feeling ill during the school day may have a 20-minute recuperation/rest period in the school office and then must return to class or go home.

For the health and wellbeing of the entire NLA community, the school cannot be responsible for monitoring of ill students. Students who are not picked-up within an hour of their families/guardians being contacted will be transported to the nearest hospital via ambulance at the cost of the family.

MEDICATIONS No medication will be given at school, except for those that have been prescribed by a physician. This includes over the counter medications. Any medication that is taken at school must be brought to the nurse's office in their original Rx container, appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. This label must include the child's name, the prescribing physician's name, the name of the medication with directions (dose and frequency), and the pharmacy phone number. A medication administration form needs to be completed each school year. That form can be found at <https://form.jotform.com/200704267072044>

If the student needs to take medication at school, the parent/guardian should bring the medication to school and not send it with their child. The parent/guardian is also responsible for picking up their child's medication if it has been discontinued or at the end of the school year. If medication is not picked up in a timely manner, the medication will be disposed of appropriately.

Students may not carry any type of medicines and pills unless they are required to do so under the direction of a physician. If they are required to do so, we will need a note from the physician indicating that the student be allowed to carry these item(s) during the school day.

The prescription for the medicine(s) must be on file with the office and must state that the child needs to keep the medicine with them during the school day.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS Each child is required to have an Emergency Health and Accident form on file. This form requires names and phone numbers of two responsible persons 18 years or older who can be contacted in case the parent/guardian cannot be reached. The form was sent in enrollment packets and is available in the office and online under "Forms." Please make sure to keep the information current with the correct contact person(s) and telephone numbers.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES The Front Office staff will attend to the injured child taking all possible measures to comfort and assist. An accident report will be completed at the time of any incident and filed in the school office. Parents/legal guardians are notified of all incidents for which an accident report has been completed.

ALLERGIES *We are an "allergy aware" building, not allergy free.* Please ensure that allergies are listed on your child's enrollment forms. Every reasonable effort is made to make your student with allergies safe at school.



IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS Students entering North Lakes Academy for the first time must have up-to-date immunizations as required by the State of Minnesota before their first day of school. There are additional immunizations that are required at different ages. Please work with your family physician to ensure that your child’s immunization records are kept up-to-date at the school. Immunization record forms were included in the enrollment packet, are available in the office and online under “Forms.”

RECESS & OUTDOOR TIME Elementary students have a scheduled recess and a separately scheduled outdoor time. Playground rules must be followed or the student will risk losing these privileges.

- Students may stay indoors for recess when the outside temperature and/or wind chill is at/or below 0 degrees.
- During winter months, **students are expected to come prepared with clothing appropriate for the weather:** coats, boots, hats or hoods, mittens or gloves, and snow pants as appropriate.
- Notes should be sent with the student to the classroom teacher if there is a valid reason your child should not participate in outdoor recess.
- It is expected that students do go outside unless there is a valid reason.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE Each faculty and staff member of North Lakes Academy who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must, by law, immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency.

DISCIPLINE

NLA distinguishes between three types of behavior, as illustrated below. The behaviors listed are representative of each category, but are not all-inclusive. Students and parents are expected to use common sense when assessing behavior. When looking at these lines, we want to make sure students understand what the proper expectations are. By learning the positive, above the line expectations are, students will create learning experiences that are safe, fun, and impactful for all.

Above the Line Conduct

Respect Safety Responsibility - Courtesy Cooperation - Hard work -Promptness -Initiative

Below the Line Conduct

Sexually suggestive actions - Hurtful gossip - Repeated Dress Code violations- Late work - Disrespect of persons/property - Missing work -Swearing/Inappropriate language - Plagiarism Abusive language -Carelessness - Chronic absences - Defiance -Chronic tardiness –Wasting time - Disruptive behavior – Cheating

Bottom Line Conduct

Weapons Stealing/Theft Vandalism - Drugs Threats Stalking - Bullying - Assault - Harassment - Fighting - Hazing



Students choosing Below the Line or Bottom Line behavior are expected to assume responsibility for their actions and accept the consequences. Consequences may include suspension, expulsion, or police involvement as governed by the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.

TECHNOLOGY USE

Students are to use the technology systems at North Lakes Academy for educational purposes. Misuse of technology -- software, hardware, and internet -- may result in restrictions and/or consequences up to and including expulsion, as well as civil or criminal penalties that may be imposed by law.*

ACCEPTABLE USE

1. For school projects, including research, word processing, etc.
2. For use in support of school-sanctioned extra-curricular activities.
3. For personal research and/or personal goals that fit within appropriate use guidelines, provided the technology is not needed for one of the above activities -- under the direction of the technology coordinator.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

1. Attempting to bypass or alter computer security.
2. Attempting, assisting, or gaining unauthorized access (intentional or unintentional)
3. Modifying computer configurations (at any level, including wallpaper, sounds, etc.) without authorization.
4. Requesting, accessing, transferring, copying or storing inappropriate messages or materials.
5. Using or storing unauthorized programs on school machines.
6. Installing or downloading software, from any source, without authorization.
7. Using technology resources for commercial, personal profit, or illegal enterprises.
8. Impeding the use of technology by North Lakes' students or staff.
9. Damaging technology equipment in any way, including vandalism, graffiti, etc.

**Any information stored in, or used on, NLA computers can and may be reviewed or removed by North Lakes Academy personnel.*

FOOD SERVICE

North Lakes Academy participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers nutritional breakfasts and lunches daily for FREE. Meals meet federal and state guidelines for meal preparation and are catered by Lancer Dining Services; no food is prepared on campus. More information about the caterer is available at their website

<http://dining.lancerhospitality.com/>

BREAKFAST North Lakes Academy offers a breakfast program to help students get a healthy start to their day. Breakfast generally consists of cold items such as fruit, yogurt, pastries, cereal and milk. The current breakfast menu will be available on the school's website under "Food Service."

Breakfast prices for 2023-24 school year

Breakfast, including milk: Free

Milk a la carte: \$0.50



LUNCH

North Lakes Academy provides hot lunch (including milk) daily. Milk is available by the half pint. Our lunch program offers healthy choices that meet federal nutrition standards, including strict limits on saturated fats, age-appropriate calorie limits, and portion size. Students are offered fruits and vegetables, proteins and grains, and milk. They are required to take at least one serving of fruits or vegetables. The monthly menu is posted on the school website at the beginning of each month.

Lunch prices for 2023-24 school year

Lunch, including milk: Free

Extra entree: \$4.00

Milk a la carte: \$0.50

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

If your child has dietary restrictions (i.e., lactose intolerance, allergies, intolerances), please contact your Front Office Manager immediately. A written copy of the restriction from a medical professional needs to be on file with the district.

APPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS Each fall every family receives a letter, along with an Application for Educational Benefits, explaining the availability of free and reduced-price meals to families who meet eligibility requirements. The district office processes all applications using state and federal guidelines. Applications and accounts are confidential. Although sent in the fall, families may complete an application for free or reduced lunch and breakfast at any time during the year. Application forms were sent in enrollment packets, are available at the school office, and online at <https://www.northlakesacademy.org/forms> ***We strongly encourage families to apply because the school receives Title 1 funding based on the number of families receiving free or reduced priced meals. Your willingness to participate helps the entire school community.***

Per statute, students receiving free or reduced meal plans may not charge milk if they bring their own lunch.

North Lakes Academy's Hot Lunch Program is operated in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which does not permit discrimination because of race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin.

PAYMENT

We use computerized software to track lunches. Each student is given a Personal Identification Number at the beginning of the school year to track payment and use of the account. PINs are kept confidential and are not to be shared with others. North Lakes

Academy uses a pre-payment system for lunches. Students will be notified when their account balance falls below zero.

Paying for meals can happen one of three ways:

1. Turning money into the office,



2. Giving a check to the lunch monitor as students enter their meal number. Checks should be made out to North Lakes Academy.
3. Using the EZ Pay system on the NLA website.
<https://www.spseipay.com/NLakes/ezpay/Login.aspx>

Money will be deposited to student accounts and debited via a keypad in the lunch line. Money is student specific and cannot be transferred between students once deposited. Due to state guidelines, **money in lunch accounts cannot be refunded**, but can be carried over from year to year, both positive and negative balances.

TRANSPORTATION

BUSING North Lakes Academy's bus transportation is provided by Forest Lake Area School District 831. This is a state-mandated service and NLA pays for the privilege of using ISD 831 bus service. All questions about bus service should be directed to the ISD 831 transportation department at 651-982-8090.

BUS RULES NLA students must obey all rules on Forest Lake buses. The following expectations are to be met at all times.

- Obey the driver at all times, without argument.
- Remain seated at all times.
- Keep hands and feet in the seat area, out of the aisles.
- Talk quietly; do not use profanity.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- No roughhousing and fighting.

Bus drivers will report inappropriate or unsafe behavior to the Campus Director. Bus privileges may be revoked by North Lakes or by the transportation office for egregious or repeated offenses.

Students wishing to ride home on a bus other than the one to which they are assigned must bring a signed note from a parent to the office **before school on the day of the change**. He or she will receive an official pass to give to the driver of the bus to be ridden that day. Drivers will not accept original notes from parents. This is a policy of the transportation department and is fully supported by North Lakes Academy.

Buses load and unload directly in front of the main entrance to the school. When unloading, students are to exit the bus and proceed directly into the building through the main doors. When loading, students must stay on the sidewalk until the adult monitors indicate it is safe to board the bus.

MORNING BUS We request that students be at their stop or outside their home at least 5 minutes before scheduled arrival times. During inclement weather it can be tempting to stay inside until the bus is spotted, however students running toward a bus as it is attempting to stop in icy or wet conditions is unsafe and harrowing for the drivers. Please extend them the courtesy of being outside and ready for pick-up.



Buses cannot wait for students who are late to the bus stop as it will slow down the rest of the route. If students miss their morning bus, their families are responsible for transporting them to school. The bus will not loop back to pick up students who missed the bus. Students arriving late to school because they missed the bus will be recorded as having an unexcused tardy.

If students are late to school in the morning because the bus was late, they will not be marked as tardy. This includes when their families have to drive them to school because the bus was running abnormally behind schedule.

AFTERNOON BUS

Tracking down missing students is the most common reason for delays in bus departure. In order to keep the buses on schedule we are not able to wait for missing students. This makes the bus late and negatively affects every other family on the route. ***Parents/ guardians are expected to be on time to the Renovation and Cowboy Church bus stops as there will be no one there to supervise your student and the bus must depart to finish it's route.***

BUS TRANSFERS– FOREST LAKE BUSING Because District 831 provides transportation for such a large geographic area, they operate their routes using a transfer system.

Morning - During morning routes all buses bring students to FL Middle School. Students then transfer to “shuttle buses” that go to their specific school building. At this transfer, all NLA students will get on the NLA shuttle buses. All buses park in the same spot each day to make the navigation of the transfer routine for students.

Afternoon - During afternoon routes, the process happens in reverse and all NLA shuttle buses bring students to FL High School. Students then transfer to their home buses that take them to their afternoon bus stop. Again, all buses park in the same spot each day to make the navigation of the transfer routine for students.

MISSED TRANSFER OR MISSED STOP If a student misses their bus transfer, they will be taken to either the FL Middle School office (morning) or the FL High School office (afternoon). The office will contact the family to make arrangements for immediate pick-up of the student. Please make sure your contact information is kept up-to-date with the district office.

If a student misses their afternoon stop they will be taken to either the FL Bus Garage or FL High School and their family will be contacted for immediate pick-up of the student. Please make sure your contact information is kept up-to-date with the district office.

LATE BUSES Please factor an additional 10-20 minutes into bus times during the first 3 weeks of school. It is normal and expected for buses to occasionally run late for the first few weeks as drivers learn their routes and students, families, and the school settle into a routine. Families are advised to arrive at their stops at the normally scheduled time and asked to wait the additional 15-20 minutes if needed. If a bus is running extremely late, North Lakes Academy will alert families via email, text, or phone call through our automated system as soon as we are notified by District #831. Parents should make sure their contact information is current.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP Drop-off and pick up zones are clearly marked at the K-8 building; see the diagram below. Cars should drop off and pick up at the north side of the building, between the playground, parking lot and crosswalk. All traffic is one direction in the parking lot—enter and circle



past the parking on the east side of lot, then queue along the sidewalk next to the playfield. Only when you reach the designated drop-off / pick-up zone between the playground and parking lot should you allow students to enter or leave the vehicle.

There is a bus zone with designated signage and curb markings for bus drop-off and pick-up. Cars should not stop or park in the bus zone. For car riders, the drop-off and pick-up zone is on the north side of the building between the grade 3-5 play area and the parking lot. See the diagram below.

Morning Drop-off The front doors to the school will open at 6:15am for those in Connections Care; and at 7:20am for those being dropped-off for school. Students who aren't in Connections Care can gather in the cafeteria until 7:30am when teachers will open their classrooms for morning work. School starts at 7:50am.

Afternoon Pick-Up—Grades K-3

Students will be released at 2:18pm for afternoon pick-up. At Back to School Day, **each student in will receive a laminated card with their afternoon transportation information to pin to their backpack.** This is helpful for both staff and students to help establish routine in the first weeks of school.

At the Back to School Event, **parents and guardians of car riders will be issued a card to hang on the rearview mirror of the car being used during pick-up (K-3 students only).** Your card is your security; staff will release students only into cars with that student's card. This is especially important for the first few weeks of school as staff and families get to know each other better. Families are issued the first two placards for free, if families require more placards for multiple drivers, they are \$5/ea and can be paid for and picked up in the office.

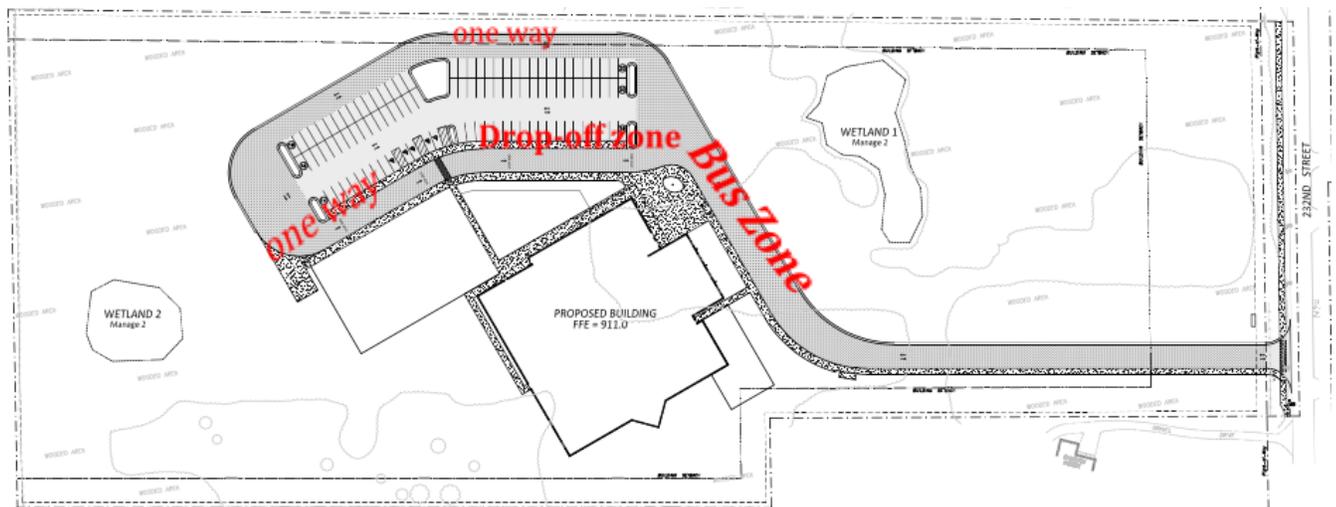
Changes to a student's routine

If your student's routine varies one day (going home with a friend, being picked up instead of taking the bus, etc) please let your student's teacher know as soon as possible. Email is best. For last minute changes the student may be unaware of, call the office no later than noon of that day so staff has time to coordinate with your student.

Courtesies for pick-up and drop-off: Buses leave NLA promptly at 2:18pm, **cars should stay parked at the curb of the drop-off/pick-up zone and follow the buses off campus.** Please do not attempt to pass the buses from behind; they may not see you as they merge into the lane.

Please wait in the pick-up line and **do not attempt to pass cars still waiting for their students.** Staff will be directing students to cars with tags as quickly as possible and you won't have to wait long. This is for the safety of everyone.

Those **drop-off/ pick-up zone instead of parking in the lot.** The foot traffic in crosswalk while cars are trying to move forward slows the pick-up line, and frustrates everybody. ar and doesn't see a parent or child walking out into the lane toward the parking lot.



OTHER INFORMATION

CLASSROOM PLACEMENTS

It is school policy that we do not accept family requests for particular teachers or classmates. Teachers work diligently to place all students in a classroom, which will be beneficial to their needs and learning styles. The staff regards the annual assignment of students to classrooms to be a very important process and task. Some of the factors considered in classroom placement include:

- range of academic abilities
- special needs
- social and emotional development
- learning styles

Final approval of class lists rests with the Campus Lead. Families/students are informed of classroom placements in August.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO) NLA has an active PTO. The PTO exists to help foster the link between school, parents/legal guardians, and the community. By sponsoring different school events, these three elements are brought together to help students see school as a vital part of their lives in and out of the classroom. PTO also coordinates the raising of needed dollars for additional academic activities. As a school parent/legal guardian, your involvement in the PTO will be for the good of the whole school community. Please reach out to Elise Johnson (ejohnson@northlakesacademy.org) - K8 Front Office Manager - to inquire about PTO.

PHOTOS: PERMISSION FOR USE/ OPT OUT Parents/guardians give permission for us to use photos of their child(ren) in our school publications and on our website. Our website and written communications will not combine an image of a minor (student) with his/her last name. We are committed to our families, the privacy of their child(ren), and the right of privacy throughout our publications and communications. If you would not like your student (s) photo published in any of our publications, please fill out the form available in the office or online

under "Forms." Election to opt out must be completed each year you choose not to include your student(s) photo in school publications.

SECURITY All doors will be locked between 7:50am-2:15pm except the front entrance of the school. Access at the front door requires visitors to ring the bell to be allowed entrance. All visitors must check in at the office. To ensure all our students' safety, a visitor or volunteer tag is necessary beyond the office area.

HALL PASSES Students are expected to remain in classrooms during class time, and be prepared with all materials. Students are expected to have a pass in their possession when leaving class.

STUDENT SHADOWING Students from other schools who are considering attending NLA in the future are welcome to visit North Lakes Elementary and shadow for a limit of two hours. Students who visit NLA to shadow must be prospective students who have filled out registration paperwork. Families should request permission for a student to visit through the Campus Lead. Due to academic schedules, students may not request to shadow during September, May, June or during state or district testing periods.

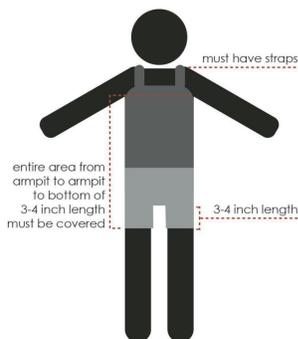
SCHOOL PICTURES School pictures are taken at the beginning of the school year. All students have their picture taken whether or not a package is purchased.

EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN or 1st GRADE Students entering kindergarten must be five years old prior to September 1 of the enrollment year. Students entering 1st grade must be six years old prior to September 1 of the enrollment year. ***NLA does not have an Early Enrollment Program.***

TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER SCHOOL MATERIALS

It is the responsibility of North Lakes Academy students to return textbooks, computers, classroom library books and any other school materials at the end of the school year in good condition. Parents/legal guardians must assume responsibility for damage to or loss of any textbooks, classroom library books, audio/visual equipment or other school materials used by their student(s). Replacement costs and/or damage fines will be assessed for any lost or damaged materials. These fines must be paid in full before a final report card will be issued.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS Once a student is enrolled in the school, you do not need to reapply for your student to return the following year(s). If you are withdrawing your student from school, please call or come by the school at least one week prior to the withdrawal date. Please note the last day your student will attend. This will give ample time to complete the paperwork and return all school materials.



DRESS CODE Policy 301 The purpose of the dress code should facilitate participation in learning as well as health and safety of students and the adults that supervise them.

Students in all grades must meet the following minimum requirements regarding the structure of their clothing choices.



1. Clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to approximately 3 to 4 inches in length on the upper thighs (see image).
2. Tops must have shoulder straps.
3. Rips or tears in clothing should be lower than the 3 or 4 inches in length.
4. Shoes must be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment (bedroom shoes or slippers shall not be worn, except for school activities approved by the administration).
5. See-through or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of the dress code.
6. Headgear including hats, hoods, and caps are not allowed unless permitted for religious, medical, or other reasons by school administration.
7. Sunglasses may not be worn inside the building without administration approval.
8. Clothing and accessories that endanger student or staff safety may not be worn.
9. Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear.

All students in all grades at North Lakes Academy must also meet these additional requirements regarding the content and messaging of their clothing choices.

- Clothing may not depict, imply, advertise, or advocate illegal, violent, or lewd conduct, weapons, or the use of alcohol, tobacco, vaping, marijuana or other controlled substances.
- Clothing may not depict or imply pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Clothing may not display or imply vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene language or images.
- Clothing may not state, imply, or depict hate speech/imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.
- Apparel, jewelry, accessories, tattoos, or manner of grooming that, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark or any other attribute, denotes membership in a gang that advocates illegal or disruptive behavior is prohibited.

The administration at each school reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress. Students who do not adhere to these guidelines will not be allowed to attend class. Parents will be called if appropriate clothing is not available or the student refuses dress-code appropriate clothing.

ENFORCEMENT OF DRESS CODE Violations of the dress code shall be handled at the school level. If the Building Lead or their designee determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the dress code, progressive discipline shall be used to address the violation. Methods of discipline shall include, but are not limited, to the following:

- A. The student shall be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school.
- B. Appropriate clothing may be provided for the student to wear during the school day.
- C. A parent conference shall be held.
- D. Other means of discipline shall be carried-out as necessary.



E. Repeat offenses may result in the student being sent home.

INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS Students are not to bring to school any items that would be considered distracting or harmful to others, or targets of theft. Such items include but are not limited to weapons, pocket knives, squirt guns, lighters/matches, fireworks, stink bombs, water balloons, latex balloons, electronic toys, fidgets (unless approved by admin or part of IEP), laser pointers.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION Public displays of affection distract from a focus on learning and are therefore prohibited. Staff will speak to students about distracting behavior and notify parents/guardians to ask for support in helping students understand behavioral boundaries at school.

PETS Pets are not allowed in the building.

TENNESSEN WARNING FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Students attending school at NLA will be asked to supply information to school personnel. Examples of such information requests include homework assignments, test questions, and questions during the course of classroom activities.

This information will be collected by NLA in order to evaluate the student's current level of performance with respect to his or her education program, to maintain discipline within the school, and to determine the student's needs and preferences relating to his or her education program.

Students are not required by any law or regulation to supply data. However, NLA expects and requires that students participate fully in their educational program by completing homework assignments and tests. Moreover, the student's refusal to supply data may prevent the school district from assessing the student's needs and incorporating the student's preferences into the educational program. Refusal to supply information used to evaluate a student, including homework assignments and tests, will result in a failing grade being given for the assignment. Continued failure to supply information will result in a failing grade for a particular course and a failing grade for the year. Refusal to supply information to an NLA employee investigating an alleged rule violation may result in action being taken without benefit of information the student could have provided.

Data collected will be provided to school personnel having a legitimate educational interest in obtaining access to the data, and to state and federal authorities having statutory rights of access to the data.