

Nord Country School Parent-Student Handbook

5554 California St., Chico, CA 95973 (530) 891-3138

Kathy Dahlgren, Principal

Junell Lawrence, Office Manager

The Board of Directors and the staff at Nord Country School welcome you and your child to a community where students are educated in a small school environment in close association with caring teachers, staff, parents and community members. This handbook is designed to help you and your student(s) get acquainted with NCS. We hope that it will serve as a useful reference to you while your child is enrolled here.

Arrival

Students can arrive at school at 7:00 am. If you arrive to school between 7:00 and 7:30 students must go directly to the cafeteria. Students are able to go outside to play at 7:30.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential to satisfactory progress. Therefore, we expect that students attend school daily and arrive on time each day. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school of the dates, duration, and reason for each absence.

A student who is absent without a valid excuse for more than three days shall be declared truant and the parents will be notified.

Student tardiness can also be a serious problem. It deprives the student of valuable instructional time and interrupts the teacher and the class. Tardiness is recorded and parents will be notified if it becomes excessive. **New this year:** If you arrive to school after the students have left for class (usually about 8:10 – 8:15 you will need to walk your students in to the office, sign them in and have them take a tardy slip to their classroom. This way, we can make sure that, even though they are late, they will get credit for being here.

Parents may verify absences by phoning 891-3138, or by sending a dated note explaining the reason for the absence within three days. According to California Education Code, students may not be released during school hours for music or dancing lessons or other private lessons.

Back to School Night

At Back-to-School Night, each teacher provides parents with an overview of the material to be covered in the school year and an outline of expectations of student behavior and performance for the year.

Parent involvement in the instructional program is invited and encouraged. Volunteers assist in the classroom, in the library, on field trips, and at home preparing materials for use at school. Parents who are interested in being a volunteer should contact the classroom teacher and fill out paper work.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is available for students on a space available basis. There are a few bus stops in the Chico area. Please speak with the Principal if you are interested in finding out more information.

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Communication/Conferences

We believe that effective communication between the family and the school will enhance the education of each child. There are ways to help make sure you stay informed of school activities and events.

Regularly scheduled parent conferences are held for parents of every student at the end of the first trimester. Other conferences are scheduled as needed. Parents are encouraged to confer with teachers concerning the progress of their children as often as they wish. Please phone the school office in advance for an appointment to insure that your child's teacher will be available.

The weekly Nighthawk Newsletter is our main written communication link with parents. This is sent home with each student every other Monday. The purpose of the Newsletter is to keep parents informed of what is happening at Nord Country School. If you are not receiving your Newsletter on Mondays, please ask your student about them.

From time to time, other notices will be sent home with students. Some will require answers, others will not. Please help us in our effort to impress upon students the importance of taking those notices and bulletins home so parents are informed.

One Call Now and Constant Contact will be used throughout the year to communicate with parents through e-mail and text messages.

Discipline Plan

We feel that every student is entitled to a safe and respectful school environment. In order to ensure a quality learning experience for your child, we have implemented a Positive Behavior Interventions Support (PBIS) program. The main focus of PBIS is to provide a clear system for all expected behaviors. School-wide behavior standards are intended to guide the students towards becoming responsible and productive members of the Nord Country School community. Through our PBIS program we have outlined three overarching guidelines;

be respectful, be responsible, and be safe.

We believe that all of our students can behave in a manner appropriate to school, and that each student will be held accountable for behavior that disrupts or inhibits the educational process. We expect students to:

1. Treat others as you would want to be treated!
2. Treat everyone with respect.
3. Follow staff directions.
4. Use appropriate language.
5. Use equipment and materials properly.
6. Stay in assigned areas.
7. Not to play too rough

Positive reinforcements for good behavior include: golden tickets, monthly behavior awards, special prizes and outstanding Citizen Awards Assemblies.

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Students who violate the school-wide rules and policies will receive a “referral”. Referrals are used as a means of communicating what happened to parents. They are categorized as “minor” or “major” referrals. Referrals are due back to school the following day with a parent signature. Consequences for receiving referrals start with time outs, loss of recess, notes & phone calls home and, if further referrals are received, may include suspensions, dismissal and/or expulsion from school

Dress Guidelines

The Board of Education recognizes the need for students to dress appropriately for school. Inappropriate apparel includes clothing that compromises safety or is disruptive and/or distracting to the school environment and instructional process. The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the students and the Board believes that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. Our dress code is simple.

No bare midriffs.

No undergarments showing

No spaghetti strap tops or dresses – straps should be a minimum of 2” wide

No short shorts – shorts should not be shorter than arms length to the fingertips.

No clothing that contains inappropriate graphics or messages.

No flip-flop sandals or sandals that leave most of the foot exposed.

High heeled shoes are strongly discouraged.

No sagging pants that expose underwear.

The school will inform parents in the event that a student's dress or grooming is not appropriate for school. They will be asked to either take the child home to change or bring a change of clothes for him/her.

Emergency Information

In case of illness or injury to a student, every effort will be made to contact the parent by telephone. It is important that your home and business phone numbers, and emergency numbers be on the student record card kept in the school office. A new emergency card is sent home every year on the first day of school for you to fill out.

Please report changes of phone number or address immediately to the school office.

It is important to tell your child when he leaves in the morning if you expect to be away from home for any length of time during the school day. Please see that the office has a number to call in emergencies when you cannot be reached.

If you need to contact your child or take him from school during the school day, please come to the school office to sign him out. We will not release any student to anyone except the parents or legal guardian or emergency contact persons listed on the student's emergency card. The office manager, Mrs. Lawrence will ask for identification if they do not know the person asking to sign out a student.

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Homework Policy

Homework is defined as: Any work assigned by or recommended by the teacher to be done outside of class. The purpose of homework is for the;

1. Practice and reinforcement of skills or concepts already presented in class.
2. Preparation of reports, speeches, or classroom oral presentations.
3. Practice of creative writing.
4. Completion of work not finished in class.
5. Completion of assignments missed as a result of student's absence.
6. Reading practice and reinforcement
7. Master good study habits, including management of time, concentration on the task at hand, taking responsibility for completing work assigned, and being accountable for the quality of work.

The role of the parent in homework is to provide home conditions conducive to learning, and to show a genuine interest and a positive attitude toward the student's work. The younger student needs help in developing a routine and in choosing a quiet, well-lit place to complete the assigned task. As students grow older, they need the ongoing parent support and recognition of the importance of schoolwork.

The role of the teacher is to assign appropriate homework in relation to the needs and abilities of the student, to assign work that is in direct relationship to work being covered in class, and to evaluate assignments returned by the student.

Instructional Program

Nord Country School operates on a traditional schedule. Classes are self-contained and organized on a graded structure, with one grade per classroom. The curriculum in all areas is defined and taught in a systematic and sequential manner. Emphasis is on developing mastery of basic skills, creating a warm and supportive atmosphere and providing every child with opportunities for success. We help each child develop a realistic and positive self-concept, a sense of individual and social responsibility, a positive attitude toward learning and an understanding of the world in which we live. Problem-solving and thinking skills are addressed on a daily basis as well as developing leadership skills. We also strive to make our bodies healthy through nutrition and physical education.

Lost and Found

Small items of value, such as glasses, jewelry, money, etc., should be taken to the office when found, and may be claimed there upon identification.

Other articles such as clothing, backpacks, etc., are taken to the cafeteria where students may look for and claim them.

Students' names should be written on or sewn in articles to enable prompt return to the rightful owner.

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Unclaimed clothing is bagged up and sent to social agencies at the end of each grading period. Please check the lost and found occasionally.

Meals

The Nord Country School cafeteria serves breakfast daily for \$1.50 and lunch with milk daily for \$2.60 and milk only for \$.30 per day. Students and/or parents may pay in the school cafeteria. Information on the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program is sent home with each student on the first day of school and is available from the school office upon request.

Students in the 6th grade classroom are selected to help in the cafeteria on a rotating schedule. Student helpers receive lunch on their workday.

Nord Country School operates a closed campus, which means that students stay on campus during the lunch period unless a parent comes to sign them out.

Minimum Days

The fourth Tuesday of most months is a minimum day (please check the school calendar). School is dismissed for all grades at 12:50. The After School Program takes over at that time. On minimum days, you may pick up your child/children at 12:00 when lunch starts if you would like. If your child is not signed up for the After School Program you need to pick them up by 1:00. Due to staff development time, there will be no supervision after 1:00.

The bus runs at the normal time on minimum days.

Rules for Behavior at Nord Country School

****HANDS TO YOURSELF AT ALL TIMES****

Cafeteria Rules:

1. Stand in line quietly while waiting to be served.
2. Talk quietly at your own table.
3. Keep hands, feet and objects to self.
4. Raise hand to be excused.
5. Clean up your area when you are excused.

Playground Rules:

1. Walk on the sidewalks and blacktop area. Running is ONLY allowed on the grass fields.
2. Contact games are not allowed. (No tackling, wrestling, piling on, riding piggy back, or other dangerous activities).
3. Team games may not be locked unless each team contains the legal number of players for that game: Basketball - 5; Football - 11; Soccer - 11; Kickball - 12; and Softball - 12.

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4. Non-team games may not be locked (i.e. four-square, two-square, jumprope).
5. Pupils may not climb trees, poles, backstops, backboards, drainpipes, or any section of the fence.
6. Ask teacher for permission to leave playground to retrieve a ball. Please use the gate.
7. Balls are not to be kicked on the blacktop area.
8. Play equipment must be used in a safe and appropriate manner.
 - a. Bars: Students must always have two hands on the bars. No trick which involves leaving the bars during the trick may be done.
 - b. Slide & Playground Structure: Slide down on bottom, feet first. Be patient. Take turns.
 - c. Swings
 1. Remain seated in swing.
 2. Keep both hands on chain.
 3. Swing forward and back. (Never sideways)
 4. Jumping out is prohibited while swing is in motion.
 5. When waiting a turn, count to 100, using a 4-syllable word before each number (alligator-1, alligator-2, alligator-3, etc.)
 6. Always consider SAFETY FIRST and SHARING.
9. **FREEZE WHEN BELL RINGS**

Bicycle/Skateboard Rules:

1. Students who ride their bicycles/skateboards/in-line skates to and from school must obey all traffic laws. Helmets are mandatory.
2. All bicycles must be parked in the bike racks. Please make arrangements with your teacher regarding boards or skates.

Restroom Rules:

1. Pupils may not play, loiter, read, study, eat lunch or snacks, or do school work in the restrooms.
2. Pupils should take care not to waste paper supplies in restrooms.
3. Only three pupils may be in any restroom at one time.

Other General Rules:

1. Students may arrive at school no earlier than 7:00 a.m. At dismissal time, students are to go directly home unless they are going to the After School Program..
2. Students must have an office pass to go to the office.
3. The office phone is for school business only. Social arrangements must be made at home the day before.
4. Students are to WALK from classroom to bus or to crosswalk. Bus students wait quietly in their line until their bus arrives and loads up.
5. Students may not leave the school grounds during the school day without permission from the school.
6. Students may not enter a classroom unless a teacher is present.
7. Shoes must be kept on at all times unless students are directed to remove them by a

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- teacher.
8. Chewing gum is not allowed at school.
 9. Morning snack will be eaten in designated areas. No other food is permitted on the playground at any time.
 10. Cursing, swearing, or using other abusive language or gestures is not permitted at any time.
 11. Spitting spreads disease and is not permitted at any time..

Speech

Nord Country School has a Speech Therapist available one day per week. Students are referred for screening by the classroom teachers. A meeting with the Speech Therapist, the general education teacher, the principal and the parent(s) will occur before their children are included in this program. The Speech Therapist is available for a conference by appointment. If you have any questions, please call the school office at 891-3138.

Student Health

Illness or Injury: Children should not be sent to school if they appear ill, have a temperature, or have other symptoms of illness. Children should remain at home until their health permits them to participate in all school activities.

The school has no way of caring for an ill or injured child other than to provide necessary first aid and an area where an ill or injured child may wait until his or her parents arrive. Our school Health Aide handles first aid and will be calling you if your child is ill or injured and needs to go home. She is not qualified to make diagnoses or to treat injuries that might happen at home.

Our health services are supervised by a school nurse who screens students in kindergarten, 2nd and 5th grades for hearing and vision problems.

Please make sure that the emergency contact form you filled out at registration is kept current. We will always try to contact parents first and then those noted on the emergency contact form. Please make sure that the people listed are available to come and get your child if we have to call them.

Medicines: Medicines, whether they be prescription or over-the-counter, may not be brought to school without a Medicine Authorization Form completed and signed by a physician. School staff cannot be responsible for dispensing any medication, even aspirin, without this form. If your child must take medication during school hours, it must be brought to the office in the original container, with the signed form from the prescribing physician. A form must also be signed by the parent.

Nutrition In order for your children to learn as best they can each day, they require a nutritious, well-balanced diet. Please make every effort to feed your child a nutritious breakfast each day before school. NCS provides a healthy snack to all our students during the first recess. Sharing of food is not allowed. Gum is also not allowed at school.

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Sleep: It is very important for your child to get the appropriate amount of sleep. As active, growing individuals, children require anywhere from 8 – 12 hours of sleep nightly. A routine is often helpful in making sure children get enough sleep. Please set a regular bedtime for your child and enforce it consistently, even on the weekends. Help your child get the best amount of sleep each night.

Immunizations: To ensure a safe learning environment for all students, NCS strictly follows and abides by the health standards set forth by the State of California. The immunization status of all students will be reviewed periodically. Those students who do not meet the State guidelines must be excluded from school until the requirements are met.

Suspension, Dismissal and Expulsion

The following behaviors may result in immediate suspension, dismissal or expulsion:

- Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical harm to another person.
- Fighting and/or biting
- Disrupting school activities
- Defying the valid authority of a teacher, administrator, or other adult at the school
- Stealing or attempting to steal school or private property.
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Sexual harassment or other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

If a child is suspended, the parent/guardian will be called and a letter will be sent home with the child stating the violation and where the suspension is to take place.

Textbooks

Textbooks are provided free on a loan basis. Students will be held accountable for their care and return. If a book is lost or damaged, the student is responsible for the book. All books are accounted for at the end of the school year or when a student transfers. Textbooks are expensive, most are in the \$50.00-\$120.00 range. Students are encouraged to take very good care of their books.

Visitations

Parents are encouraged and welcomed to visit their children's classrooms. There are many opportunities to volunteer in class, at recess, in the library or in art. Please talk to your child's teacher to arrange visits and volunteering. All visitors and volunteers must come to the office to sign in and obtain a visitor badge before visiting a class. Parents or volunteers should not bring infants or toddlers into class when volunteering in the classroom.

Children of friends or relatives visiting your home are not permitted to attend school or visit classrooms during school hours.

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What Not To Bring To School

KNIVES, GUNS, OTHER WEAPONS: It is against the law for students to bring these items to school.

TOYS/PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT: Toys are out of place in the classroom and should be left at home, unless they are brought for sharing with the consent of the teacher. If your child brings a toy for sharing it should be kept in a safe place by the teacher and not played with on the school grounds.

ELECTRONIC GAMES, MP3 PLAYERS, CELL PHONES: These items are expensive and easily broken. They also can become a source of dispute or conflict. Their use has no place in the classroom or playground. If brought to school they may be taken and held in the school office to await parent pick-up.

PLAY EQUIPMENT: The school has a supply of play equipment which should be adequate for student use. Please don't bring their own from home, as it causes problems on the playground.

Nord Country School is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

Please don't hesitate to call or come by if you have any questions regarding this handbook.