



**NORTHSTAR**  
ACADEMY

DISCOVERING  
ABILITIES



**NORTHSTAR**  
CAREER  
ACADEMY

DISCOVERING  
ABILITIES

*at work*

Northstar Academy  
and  
Northstar Career Academy

Student-Parent Handbook  
2021-2022

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[page](#)

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## **Introduction**

### **Welcome From The Head of School**

Thank you for choosing Northstar Academy for your child. We look forward to a productive and successful school year and anticipate many opportunities to partner with you. We have been so very fortunate to serve students and their families in the Central Virginia area for 25 years and look forward to our continued work with your student.

Parent involvement is a key component to your student's success both in and out of the classroom. Schools that forge a strong partnership with parents ensure that their students are more academically and socially successful. We cannot do our work successfully without your involvement. This Student-Parent Handbook is intended to promote student-parent and school communication and increase your awareness and understanding of the supports and opportunities available at Northstar Academy.

We look forward to working with you throughout this academic year and in the future. Together, we can support and challenge our students to reach their goals and aspirations.

Crystal Trent

### **General Information and History of Northstar Academy**

Northstar Academy was founded in 1996 by a group of parents and professionals concerned about educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Originally located at Epiphany Lutheran Church in Richmond, Virginia, Northstar served 14 students in its first year of operation. Today, the Northstar Academy campus is housed at 8055 Shrader Road in Richmond's West End area and can serve 95-100 students. Our student to teacher ratio is 8:1.

The Northstar Academy campus consists of three buildings. The main "train-car" building houses a reception area, administrative offices, library, business office, Lindamood Bell learning labs and classrooms. The STEAM Building houses classrooms, computer labs and offices. The Northstar gymnasium is used for health/P.E. programs, as a dining hall and for larger group activities such as talent show, basketball and dances.

Northstar Academy is central Virginia's premier K-12 independent, not-for-profit school educating students with a wide range of disabilities and intellectual abilities. Northstar is licensed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to serve 12 of the 13 disability categories identified under IDEA. Northstar Academy is accredited by the Virginia Association of Independent Special Education Facilities (VAISEF) and Virginia

Association of Independent Schools (VAIS). In addition to privately placed students, we educate students in elementary, middle, and high schools from many school districts representing the Central Virginia region. While our students come from many neighborhoods and different backgrounds, they share a difficulty with academic achievement and the skills required for successful interaction. They also share a desire to realize their dreams and aspirations, both now and in the future.

Northstar Career Academy was founded in 2014. It is a full – time or part-time program offered through Northstar Academy. It is conveniently located at 8157 Staples Mill Road, Henrico, VA 23228. Career and Technical programs are offered to students 16 to 22 years of age on the first day of school. Students may be current high school students, homeschooled students, high school graduates, or others who have taken different life paths. Specific course or program requirements will be outlined in the course syllabus.

#### 1996 - 1997

- Northstar Academy begins operation in shared space at Epiphany Lutheran Church with 14 students.

#### 1997 - 1998

- Student enrollment grows to 28 and Northstar Academy looks for more space.

#### 1998 - 1999

- Northstar Academy relocated to the Congregation Or Atid on Parham Road.
- Northstar establishes its first basketball team.

#### 1999 - 2000

- Northstar Academy purchases property and moves the school to its current location on Shrader Road.

#### 2000 - 2002

- Multi-purpose Room/Gymnasium designed and built.

#### 2003 - 2004

- Building Blocks campaign raises \$425,000 to build upper school classroom building.
- Verizon Wireless Technology Lab is designed and installed in the new classroom addition.

#### 2004 - 2005

- First Northstar student receives a scholarship to attend a four-year college.

#### 2005 - 2006

- Northstar Academy Golf Classic is held at the Crossings Golf Club raising over \$18,000 for Northstar's student scholarship fund.
- Northstar Academy is licensed to add kindergarten classes.

#### 2007 - 2008

- Northstar Academy was awarded grant to institute a Transition Program for current Junior and Seniors. The students are taught skills needed to search, apply and interview for employment as well as receiving on the job training.

#### 2008 - 2009

- Northstar Academy partners with Kluge Children's Rehabilitation Center at the University of Virginia to design and institute a quantifying Social Skills program

designed to meet each student's individual needs.

#### 2009 - 2010

- First Northstar Academy Special Needs Forum and Compass Awards Dinner developed and organized in conjunction with the Jepson School of Leadership Studies "Leading Change" Class at the University of Richmond.

#### 2010 - 2011

- GRASP funds are raised to provide scholarships to qualifying families and increase enrollment.

#### 2011 - 2012

- Northstar Academy Board of Directors begin a new strategic planning process and website revision project plan.

#### 2012 - 2013

- Northstar Academy implements Lindamood Bell pilot program.
- Northstar implements school wide technology integration by installing promethean boards, Kindles and iPads for student use in the classroom.
- Faculty wide training of the Lindamood-Bell Learning Process.

#### 2013 - 2014

- Northstar Career Academy was founded, domain name registered and licensed by Virginia Department of Education.
- Northstar Academy became a Department of Rehabilitative Services (DARS) vendor.
- APEX Virtual Learning courses offered and teachers trained to facilitate.

#### 2014 - 2015

- Northstar Career Academy opened offering four Vocational/Technical Education courses for full and part-time students ages 16-22.

#### 2015 - 2016

- Through grants awarded to Northstar Academy, the purchase of 2 vehicles afforded the expansion of student-business partnership opportunities for upper school students.
- Northstar Career Academy adds a 5<sup>th</sup> course-Veterinary Assisting Occupations and also doubled their enrollment.

#### 2016 - 2017

- Northstar Academy received NAP credits allowing for the opportunity to increase enrollment by offering scholarships to students who need financial assistance
- Commendation from the Virginia General Assembly in February, 2017.
- Northstar Academy applies for and receives VAIS accreditation in addition to VAISEF accreditation.
- Northstar Academy recognized as a School of Excellence by NASET

#### 2018 - 2019

- Northstar Career Academy began providing job development and supported employment services on a private pay basis.

#### 2020-2021

- Northstar celebrates its 25th year serving students with disabilities.
- Northstar Career Academy became a Department of Rehabilitative Services (DARS) vendor for supported employment services.



## **Northstar Mission, Vision, and Purpose**

### Mission Statement

At Northstar Academy, we promote educational excellence and career opportunities for students with disabilities who have academic, physical or social challenges.

### Vision Statement

Northstar Academy empowers students to develop and value their diverse abilities, chart a successful course for their lives, and create their own futures. We cultivate communities where people of all abilities thrive.

With a strong spirit of community, we develop students with active, creative minds and encourage compassion and a respect and understanding for individual differences and for one another. We present our community of learners with a challenging educational environment, inspiring confident students who are willing to take intellectual risks and meet academic challenges with openness, enthusiasm, a willingness to solve problems and to make thoughtful decisions. Ultimately, we create an atmosphere that addresses the unique needs of our students in a changing society and culminates with their becoming active citizens and responsible stewards of our world.

Northstar Academy admits students of any race, color, sexual orientation, religion or national and ethnic origin to all of the rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its hiring practices, education policies, admission policies, or athletic and other programs.

## **Academics/Instruction**

### **Add-Drop Courses**

#### **Policy**

A student may add or drop a course as follows:

1. A student experiencing serious academic difficulty may drop or add a course no later than the end of the first nine weeks.
2. After the first nine weeks the student is expected to remain in the course for the remainder of the school year.
3. The Head or Assistant Head may change a student's schedule during the school year if there is a need.

**NOTE:** In special circumstances, a teacher may recommend that a student drop a course after the

first semester. In such a case, that recommendation must be made by the end of semester I. If approved, the student will then repeat the course the following year. The Head of School, Assistant Head or IEP/IAP Liaison are the only person(s) who may authorize the dropping or adding of any course.

### **Procedure**

1. The teacher of the course that a student wishes to drop must discuss the request with the student and approve the decision.
2. The teacher of the new course that the student wishes to add will be informed by the Head of School or Assistant Head that the student wishes to join the class.
3. The Head of School or Assistant Head will discuss this change with the parents of the student. If approved, the student's schedule will be changed and records changed to reflect the add/drop.
4. When steps 1-3 are complete the student may attend the new class.

### **Additional Assistance**

All Northstar Academy students may receive extra help from their teachers by appointment. Students should schedule the help session no later than lunchtime with a particular teacher for the next day. Assistance during lunch time is also an option, if agreeable to the teacher. These are also the best times to schedule parent-teacher conferences, upon request and preferably between 3:15 – 3:45 p.m.

### **Advisory Program**

The advisory program at Northstar Academy assigns each student in grades 6-12 to a member of the faculty who will serve as the student's advisor, advocate, and mentor. Advisories meet every other day on a rotating block schedule.

In addition to academic matters, the faculty advisor will counsel and direct their advisees in matters of student teacher, student-administrator, and student relationships.

### **Assessments - Show What You Know**

Assessments are scheduled for grades 6-12. In grades 9-12 mid-term assessments will be given at the end of each semester, as noted on the school calendar. Please encourage your child to begin studying well in advance of his/her assessments and to get plenty of rest during the assessment week. Parents can be very helpful in assisting their students through the assessment period.

At the end of each semester, the school offers 2 review days prior to the assessment period. The semester ends the day before the first review day. As a result, on the review days, no tests or quizzes may be given and no new material will be presented. A schedule will be provided to students and families along with dismissal times.

### **Assessment Schedule**

All assessments will be given un-timed, providing the student is attending to the assessment and has continued to work steadily, even though breaks may have been needed.

Students may bring a snack to eat during the break, but must refrain from eating and drinking during assessments. They will be required to stay in the assessment and are encouraged to bring a book or study material to read if they finish early. **Please plan to pick up your child at the designated dismissal times.**

### **Attendance**

#### **Absence/Illness:**

Monday through Friday school begins at 8:00a.m. and dismisses at 3:05 p.m. **Students are expected to attend school daily and arrive on time.** There are a minimum of 180 school days per year, and attendance is essential for learning to occur. Please know that in the case of absence without a note or email from parent/guardian, the student's absence will be counted as unexcused.

Additionally, students who are absent excessively or who have missed over **15 percent of school hours may not be given credit for the nine weeks, quarter, or year depending on the extent of the absence during the time period.**

- Excused Absence - There are various types of excused absences:
  - Illness counts as an excused absence if the parent calls the school or sends a note on the day the student returns to class. Students who become ill after arriving at school must report to the clinic and the nurse/clinic attendant will determine if the student should be sent home. The nurse/clinic attendant will contact the parent(s) for permission to leave school, and the parent must make arrangements for the student to be picked up. Parent(s) will notify the front desk that they are taking the child home. Student drivers must have parent permission before leaving school.
  - There may be special situations, other than illness, when students may be excused. A written request must be submitted to the Head of School one week prior to the event to qualify for an excused absence.
  - Observation of religious holidays, such as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, are considered an excused absence. While classes continue to meet, students will be given sufficient time to prepare and make up assignments. Each student is expected to work out extensions that are acceptable to both the student and teacher.
  - Full medical leave: When a student is unable to attend school due to medical or psychological reasons, at the recommendation of the student's personal physician in consultation with the school, the administration may grant that student a medical leave of absence.
  - The Head of School, or designee, is responsible for communication with the student's parents and teachers, including the terms of medical leave.
  - During absences, the student is expected to keep up with course content as much as possible. Work assignments will be adjusted to the student's ability to complete the assignment.
  - The school and/or LEA may request a meeting when a student incurs excessive absences.
  - If a student's medical leave precedes or coincides with the exam period, the exam will be rescheduled so that the student may take it at a time commensurate with

his/her stamina and ability to prepare. If a student has missed nine weeks of school because of medical leave, the administration will meet to determine how or whether credit can be earned. Flexibility will be the rule, and time required to accomplish the goals generally will be liberal.

1. We encourage parents to schedule students **dental and doctor appointments** after 3:05 p.m., if possible.
2. Unexcused Absence – In the event that a student is absent from school and returns to campus without a parental/guardian note, that student’s record will indicate an unexcused absence.
3. Notification of Absence – If the parent/guardian is aware that the child will be absent, parents are encouraged to contact Northstar the evening before the absence. Parents may leave a message in the school’s general voicemail box at 804-747-1003 or email the receptionist at [frontdesk@northstaracademy.net](mailto:frontdesk@northstaracademy.net) . A note is required when the student returns to school.

**Note: If a student leaves school grounds without supervision or permission, administrators, for the safety of the child, will be forced to first call the police and then contact the parent/guardian.**

## **Tardy**

**If your child will be tardy on any given day, please call or email the school no later than 8:30 a.m.** A written notice from the parent/guardian will be required each time the student is tardy. Any child who is absent for more than half the day will be counted as absent.

- **Unexcused Tardies** – Five (5) unexcused tardies will count as one (1) unexcused absence.
- Students who miss any part of the school day may not practice or represent the school that day or evening in athletics, or other activities without permission from administration.

## **Calendar**

The current academic school calendar can be found on the website at [www.northstaracademy.net](http://www.northstaracademy.net).

## **Class Preparation**

If a student is unprepared for class (written work not completed or assignment not read), the student will be asked to remain after school or have lunch-time detention to complete late assignments. When a student without extenuating circumstances fails to turn in a major assignment at or by the end of the semester, the student receives an *“Incomplete.”* (Incompletes are only given in cases of illness or bona fide extenuating circumstances.) If the incomplete work is not made up within two weeks, the incomplete may become an *“F”*. It should be noted that such work, even when turned in within the two-week grace period, will still be assessed a penalty for lateness. The point of this policy is to signal in the strongest way possible that Northstar will not permit a student to *“take an F”* on a major assignment and still pass the term or course.

## Curriculum

Northstar Academy's curriculum was designed by experts in the field of special education. Our program is based upon the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) and offers:

- Literature-based curriculum
- Ongoing, informal assessment
- Emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving
- Self-esteem enhancement
- Guided practice and reinforcement
- Social Skills/Executive Function Skills
- Integrated language arts
- Academic skills taught within context
- Real life skills and training
- Multi-Sensory instruction
- Hands-on-activities
- Emphasis on independent functioning
- Lindamood Bell Language Program/Learning Process
- Lindamood Bell On Cloud Nine Math
- Vocational/Technical Courses

Northstar Academy professionals embrace the need for small learning groups (with a low pupil-teacher ratio). They participate in ongoing professional development throughout the school year to stay abreast of current practices to meet student needs. See "Appendix A" for course descriptions at the end of this handbook.

### Program - Grades K-5

Students are placed in small, cohesive groups determined by age, ability, and instructional level and grade. A student may move through the classes depending on academic skill level, and social/emotional development. The Lower School is dedicated to the belief that each child is an important individual created with special gifts and abilities. The beginning years of education, therefore, should mold a student's academic, social, and emotional view of school. It is our goal to provide an atmosphere conducive to this growth and to the development of a love for learning. Because elementary education is the critical beginning of this development, we want our students to be challenged in a way that stimulates their natural curiosity so that learning becomes a process of guided discovery and personal growth. We hope to channel each child's abilities and gifts toward his/her potential.

Education must, however, be a partnership shared by parents, students, and teachers. Communication is an essential ingredient in this partnership. The Student Agenda, which is sent home daily in our Lower School, allows each parent the opportunity to get a glimpse of their child's day. We encourage each family to read the Student Agenda together and discuss with your child about their day. Please do not hesitate to communicate back to the teacher with any questions or concerns. The faculty and administration are here to help the students and their parents.

### Program — Grades 6-8

Grades 6-8 mark the beginning of a more structured academic program. Emphasis is placed on reading and comprehension development beyond simple decoding, however individualized and/or small group instruction will continue to be provided for those students who need remedial reading. Emphasis is placed on critical reading, formal

writing assignments, refining organizational and study skills, preparing for tests and assessments, and developing critical thinking preparation for high school and life.

We help the student grow in personal responsibility and enthusiasm for learning as we recognize the steadily increasing academic and social demands that each student will experience. Social cognition training and development will continue to be integrated into each area of study and serve as the cornerstone of the advisory period.

Career and vocational exploration begin during this time, and students are encouraged to become involved in community service and other outside activities. Students also have the opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports.

We stress the development of character, and students are encouraged to model good behaviors and leadership. The Advisory period gives students an opportunity to work as a group and participate in activities designed to promote responsibility and self-esteem.

All students in grades 6-8 will be issued a Student Agenda on the first day of school. Students are expected to bring it to class each day and record assignments. Parents are asked to assist in seeing that the assignments are completed on a daily basis. **It is understood that if a student does not complete homework assignments or misses classwork, it is the student's responsibility to ask the teacher for missed work and submit it when it's due.**

#### Program — Grades 9-12

The high school years serve as another transition period in which the student is developing intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally into an adult. Grades 9-12 build on those expectations established in grades 6-8.

Academic and behavioral expectations increase, as do responsibilities and privileges. **It is understood that if a student does not complete homework assignments or misses classwork, it is the student's responsibility to ask the teacher for missed work and submit it when it's due. Students in grades 9-12 will earn credits towards their diploma for each course taken. Failure to complete assignments and absences can impact earning credits.**

Students take an academic program to prepare them for further educational opportunities. Career and vocational opportunities are explored along with personal goals.

Sportsmanship and group participation in interscholastic sports is encouraged.

Character development is addressed in all aspects of the student's life at Northstar. It is our goal to prepare young people in their academic, social/emotional maturation and to equip them in such a way that they become independent, self-directed, and responsible.

#### Northstar Career Academy

Northstar Career Academy is a program offering students with disabilities the opportunity to participate in career/technical education courses. Our Career Academy

aims to help student develop self-determination, self-advocacy, job readiness and employment skills. Students may attend one of five programs offered: Business Technology Occupations, Construction and Maintenance Occupations, Materials Handling Occupations, Hospitality, and Veterinary Assisting. Programs are open to students who are 16-22 years of age. Students may be a current high-school student, homeschooled student, high school graduate, or have taken a different life path. Students may attend Northstar Career Academy as part-time students or take a course as part of their full-time Northstar Academy academic schedule. Student’s skills and progress will be assessed using performance and projects.

Northstar Career Academy Career/Tech Ed Courses:

- Construction and Maintenance Occupations
- Business Technology
- Materials Handling Occupations
- Veterinary Assisting
- Hospitality

**Evaluations**

**Middle & Upper School – Grades 6-12**

Progress reports are provided every 4 ½ weeks and report cards every nine weeks, as noted on the school calendar. **Teachers will contact parents of students with a “D” or “F” average, or if a student’s grade has dropped significantly.**

**Faculty Contact Information**

Faculty email contact information can be found on the school website. Faculty telephone extensions can be provided by the front desk or found in the directory when calling school.

**Grading Policy**

Lower School Grading Scale – E=Excellent; G=Good; P=Progress; MP=Minimal Progress

Middle and Upper School Grading Scale:

97-100	A+	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	68-69	D+
93-96	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	66-67	D
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-	65	D-
						64 or below	F

**Grading Policy – Grades 6-10**

It is extremely rare for Northstar teachers to issue a failing grade to a student. However, in a situation where a student does not take responsibility for learning by not studying for assessments, completing assignments or failing to participate in class or excessive unexcused absences, an “F” is the only option. On the occasion that a failed course is required, it must be repeated. In special cases and at the discretion of the Head of School an approved class may be taken at another facility or an elective may be substituted. In all cases, arrangements for making up failed courses must be in writing and approved in advance by school administration.

### **Grading Policy – Juniors (Grade 11)**

Any required course failed as a junior must be made up as a senior or at another facility in a summer session. Credit earned in the latter will carry the transcript notation “Summer School Credit”.

Because a transcript is a complete record of the student’s performance in high school, both original failures and subsequent make-up credits are recorded. This means make-up credit for a failed course does not replace or remove the original “F” on the transcript. It does, however, show that a student has remedied the deficiency. Credit for a high school course (e.g., Algebra I) taken during the middle school years (Grades 7-8) is recorded on the transcript. On the other hand, failures by middle school students attempting high school courses are **NOT** recorded on the transcript.

Sometimes a student may pass a course technically, but his/her degree of mastery of the material is not deemed sufficient to ensure a reasonable chance of success in subsequent sequentially related courses. In which case, a “D” grade does not show adequate understanding to be able to continue to the next level (i.e., a “D” in Algebra I is not a good indication for success in Geometry and Algebra II). In such cases the Administration usually recommends that remedial work be undertaken during the summer or that, if possible, the student repeat the original course. When questions arise concerning a student’s perceived weakness in any subject area, please consult the Head of School for specific recommendations.

**Grading Policy – Participation (all students)** - Northstar teachers may use a participation grade when awarding grades. Participation grades do not make up more than 25% of a student’s grade.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Graduation Requirements for students placed at Northstar Academy are determined by each student’s IEP/IAP and the specific requirements set for each type of diploma established by the placing school system and/or Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) diploma requirements. The graduation requirements listed below are for students entering the 9th grade in the 2018-2019 school year and beyond. Please contact your student’s IEP / IAP liaison for more information about graduation requirements for students who entered the 9th grade prior to this date. Families are encouraged to visit the VDOE graduation requirements page at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/index.shtml>.

### **Northstar Standard Diploma**

Standard diplomas are awarded based on a combination of completed coursework and assessment scores.

#### **Summary of Requirements:**

- 22 Standard Units of Credit (Public & Private)



- Five (5) verified credits - Public
- Two 9th-grade level proficiency assessments - Private
- 1 Career & Technical Education Credential (Public & Private)
- 1 virtual course (Public & Private)
- First Aid, CPR & AED Training (Public & Private)
- Demonstration of 5 C's (Public & Private)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Standard Units of Credit</b>	<b>Verified Credits (Public)</b>	<b>Grade level Proficiency (Private)</b>
English	4	2	9th Grade - Reading
Math	3	1	9th Grade - Math
Science	3	1	0
History	3	1	0
Economics & Personal Finance	1	0	0
Foreign Language, Fine Arts, or Career & Technical Education	2	0	0
Health & PE	2	0	0
Electives	4	0	0

**Career and Technical Education Credential** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013-2014, students must earn a career and technical education credential approved by the Board of Education in order to earn a Standard Diploma. This credential could include, but is not limited to, an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.

**Virtual Course** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013-2014, students must complete one virtual course, which may be a non credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.

**First Aid, CPR & AED Training** - Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED), including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.

**Demonstration of the 5 C's** - In accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate, students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in Virginia's 5 C's: critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

**Northstar Honors Diploma\*\***

Honors or Advanced Studies diplomas are awarded based on a combination of completed coursework and assessment scores. The use of on-line facilitated coursework may be a consideration for certain courses.

**Summary of Requirements:**

- 26 Standard Units of Credit (Public & Private)
  - Five (5) verified credits - Public
  - Two 11th-grade level proficiency assessments - Private
- 1 Career & Technical Education Credential (Public & Private)
- 1 virtual course (Public & Private)
- First Aid, CPR & AED Training (Public & Private)
- Demonstration of 5 C's (Public & Private)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Standard Units of Credit</b>	<b>Verified Credits (Public)</b>	<b>Grade level Proficiency (Private)</b>
English	4	2	11th Grade - Reading
Math	4	1	11th Grade - Math
Science	4	1	0
History	4	1	0
Economics & Personal Finance	1	0	0
World Language	3	0	0
Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	1	0	0
Health & PE	2	0	0
Electives	3	0	0

**\*\* Northstar strongly urges students seeking an Honors diploma to receive a Career and Technical Education credit.**

**Career and Technical Education Credential** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013-2014, students must earn a career and technical education credential approved by the Board of Education in order to earn a Standard Diploma. This credential could include, but is not

limited to, an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.

**Virtual Course** – Effective with the entering 9th-grade class of 2013-2014, students must complete one virtual course, which may be a non credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.

**First Aid, CPR & AED Training** - Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED), including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.

**Demonstration of the 5 C's** - In accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate, students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in Virginia's 5 C's: critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

### **Applied Studies (IEP/IAP) Diploma**

The Applied Studies Diploma is a diploma option available for students identified as having a disability and meet the requirements of their IEP/IAP, but do not meet the requirements for a Standard or Advanced Studies diploma. Successful completion of IEP/IAP goals will satisfy graduation requirements in part for those students who will receive an Applied Studies Diploma.

### **Homework**

Homework is intended to provide reinforcement for automatic performance and to develop the processes for learning that are a part of Northstar instruction. The assignment of homework presents students with the opportunity to work independently and practice known skills.

An additional goal is to establish a routine and expectation that homework is a part of school and home life. Parents should:

1. Establish a regular homework time, since consistency is important
2. Provide a quiet place for the child to work
3. Help with organization and provide study tools (e.g., pencil, paper, etc.)
4. Sign the Student Agenda to indicate that homework and reading were completed
5. Communicate with teachers
6. Offer encouragement and positive feedback

Each student is given a Student Agenda in which homework assignments should be written each day and brought home with the materials needed to complete the assignments. **Parents should monitor homework time and ensure that the assignments are completed.**

**Homework time should not be a battle.** If homework is causing a problem or the child does not seem to understand the assignment, parents are asked to note it in the Agenda book and stop the homework session.

**Homework should not become a power struggle,** however it is a time where the students

should review and independently practice learned skills. The Agenda book can serve as a daily communication log between school and home.

### **Late Paper Policy**

To ensure a uniform understanding about major assignments that are turned in late, all classes will observe the following policy:

- The teacher establishes with the student a non-changeable, yet suitable date for the assignment.
- If an occasion arises when a student feels unable to get the assignment completed on time, they should resolve the problem with the teacher.
- An assignment submitted one day late (with or without extended time) will be penalized one full letter grade.
- For every two succeeding academic days that an assignment is late, an additional penalty of one letter grade will be assessed.
- After three days, the teacher will report the tardy assignment to the Assistant Head of School or the Head of School and parents, and the student will receive no grade higher than a "C".
- All major papers and assignments must be turned in or a grade of "Incomplete" will be recorded. Students will not be given credit for any course that does not have a grade recorded within two weeks after the end of the grading period.
- All papers must be turned in on the due date, whether or not the student is present at school. If the student has received permission for an excused absence, the papers must be submitted in advance.

### **Make up Work**

Teachers will assign make-up work as they deem necessary. Students may be asked to stay after school to complete assignments or for disciplinary reasons.

### **Meeting Rules and Guidelines**

Northstar may refuse to meet with a parent/guardian if a meeting has not been scheduled. Northstar staff upon refusing, will offer other times and dates that are mutually agreeable and would be available for the parent/guardian to return for a meeting.

Northstar does not allow videotaping of parent conferences, IEP/IAP meetings or any other meetings without the express written permission of each individual involved in the meeting. Additionally, a person who is audio recording any Northstar employee during a meeting, conversation, parent conference or an IEP/IAP meeting must inform the Northstar employee prior to the recording and must gain permission to make the recording. If a parent/guardian is recording, Northstar will also record the meeting.

Meeting requirements for Northstar at all times include:

- Maintain a positive manner in tone and language.
- Each member of the meeting will be shown and treated with respect.
- Listen quietly and respectfully when other people talk; let each person finish.
- Only one person should talk at a time.
- Do not interrupt when another person is talking.
- Only discuss the student whom the meeting is about, remain on topic.
- Use of profanity, yelling, name calling will result in termination of the meeting.

- Making implied threats or making threats will result in termination of the meeting.

### **Parent-Teacher Conference (K-12 & Career Academy)**

Parent-teacher conferences may be scheduled by appointment, based on the school calendar. These conferences facilitate an exchange of information about your child: how they have acclimated to the school year, what you see as their needs and interests, and how both school and home can help in generating a happy and productive year.

Additional conferences can be scheduled at any other time during the school year if the teacher or parent considers it desirable. Parent questions regarding a child's well-being or overall progress will always be gladly answered, and if the questions are of a nature and range beyond classroom queries, please do not hesitate to call the Head of School.

### **Report Cards, Interims and Daily/Weekly contact**

Interim reports are provided every 4 weeks and report cards are provided every nine weeks. The report card is individualized for each student and based on the student's Individual Academic Plan/Individualized Education Program. Depending on the individual situation, documents may be mailed or received electronically.

Daily and/or weekly communication to parents are given via the Student Agenda book/Folders. Teachers will communicate with parents concerning recent successes and/or problem areas. Please read and return the Student Agenda daily.

### **Reporting to Parents**

Teachers report to parents each nine weeks. Additional conferences and written communications are scheduled as needed for an individual child. All parents / guardians are strongly encouraged to attend conferences whenever possible. *If parent(s) wish to schedule conferences with teachers at other times during the school year, it is suggested they be scheduled after school, beginning at 3:15 p.m. It is best to schedule the meeting at least three to four days in advance by calling the school office or e-mailing the student's IEP/IAP Liaison .*

### **Social Skills Development**

Students often come to Northstar Academy with difficulties related to a previous school failure, lack of friends, and poor self-esteem. Lessons in Advisory class help students develop the social, emotional, and behavioral skills needed to succeed as members of society. At Northstar Academy, we help students gain a more positive attitude about themselves and others. Individual student goals are based on teacher and parent assessments. Data is collected on individual student goals. Lessons follow monthly themes and are tailored to each student's developmental needs. Social support is woven into the school day with one-on-one coaching available as needed.

### **Standardized Testing**

Each fall teachers administer standardized tests to objectively measure achievement in math and reading progress. The results of your child's standardized achievement will be on file. These

scores provide a framework for interpreting performance in relation to others of your child's age. They also provide a starting point for developing the Individual Academic Plan (IAP) and instruction.

### **Student Records**

A cumulative record is maintained for each student who attends Northstar Academy. This record includes progress reports, aptitude test scores, achievement test results, notable achievements, accomplishments, disciplinary issues, and extracurricular activities. This record is of importance, not only to the individual and to Northstar Academy, but also may be required by future schools to which the student may seek admission. Information received by Northstar Academy and its reports become part of the permanent student file. These records are available for inspection and review in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Requests for records to be sent to another school or agency must be made in writing. **Please allow at least two weeks for the request to be processed, and note that all financial obligations must be met before records can be released.**

### **Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff

and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

[Optional] Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

### **Tests and Quizzes**

Tests and/or quizzes may be given by classroom teachers at their discretion. All full-period test and long-range assignments are announced to the students in advance. In general, we strive to have no more than two tests per day or two long-range projects scheduled for any one student on the same day.

### **Transition**

In preparation for independent living after graduation, Northstar Academy's Transition Services program focuses on developing social thinking skills. Students learn how to make and maintain good relationships with others - whether at school, home, work, or play. Students explore post-secondary opportunities such as college/community college, vocational programs, internships and employment opportunities. Parents must give written consent for the child to participate in "Family Life" instruction.

## **GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Admission Guidelines**

Northstar is Central Virginia's premier nonprofit school for K-12 students (ages 5-22) with a wide range of disabilities. Northstar educates students with 12 of the 13 identified disabilities

such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, Other Health Impairment, Speech-Language Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Traumatic Brain Injury, Orthopedic Impairment, Intellectual Disabilities, Vision Impairments, Hearing Impairments, Emotional Disability (mild anxiety/depression), Developmental Delay, and Multiple Disabilities.

Northstar's mission is to promote educational excellence for students with disabilities who have academic, physical or social challenges. With a strong spirit of community, we provide a challenging and supportive educational environment that addresses the unique needs of our students. Northstar Academy is an educational facility thereby affording the student a least restrictive environment. Northstar does not serve children who demonstrate defiant or aggressive behaviour towards themselves or others. Northstar does not serve students with significant emotional needs who may require a therapeutic environment. Students must be able to navigate the campus safely, engage in the classroom independently, and attend to their personal needs.

Admission to Northstar Academy is based on the Individual Education Plan (IEP), assessments, student records, evaluations and staff feedback after the student's visit/observation days to determine "goodness of fit". Teachers provide feedback based on the student's ability to follow the general structure of the academic setting and the student's ability to meet Northstar behavioral requirements. Once a decision is made by Admissions, the family and/or SPED representatives are contacted regarding acceptance or denial. Parentally placed students who are invited to enroll, receive an acceptance letter and an enrollment contract. When students are invited to enroll from a public school system, a placement agreement is signed between Northstar and the school system. Northstar Academy may, at its discretion, accept children on a provisional basis or request the family or the public school system provide an aide to support the student. If admission is declined, a letter along with information regarding other schools is provided to the parent, guardian and SPED representatives. When a student is accepted, families may apply for a scholarship through FACTS. Once an enrollment contract is signed, parents are required to set up electronic tuition payments through FACTS. Prompt payment is expected according to the admission and tuition payment plan as outlined in the enrollment contract. Northstar Academy, with written parental consent, will request additional records within 5 business days of enrollment.

Upon enrollment, Northstar families are provided information regarding Northstar Academy policies and procedures through access to the annual Student/Parent Handbook located on the school website. Copies are made available upon request. Parents and students submit a signed consent form stating their agreement to follow the guidelines and rules of the Student/Parent Handbook.

Students are enrolled at Northstar based on their grade level. They follow a course of studies determined by grade, ability, goals and diploma status. A school calendar and an individual class schedule is provided for each student. Once enrolled, Northstar Academy uses a standardized assessment tool to determine each student's level of academic performance. For parentally placed students, the assessment is used to develop an Individual Academic Plan (IAP), which is created within 30 business days of enrollment. For students placed by the public school system, Northstar implements the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and assessments are administered as directed by the IEP and the school system.



## Admission Process

Northstar Academy recognizes the challenges you may have experienced as you search for the best school for your child. We understand as you begin to explore different educational options, it is important to ask questions and gather facts. Whether you are considering parental placement or placement through a school system, the process towards gathering information and determining goodness of fit at Northstar may include the following steps:

### **Step One: Inquiry**

- Northstar Academy is contacted by interested family and/or school system representatives.
- Appointment is scheduled for discussion and tour with parent(s), guardian and/or school SPED representative.

### **Step Two: Discussion & Tour**

- Tour the Northstar Academy campus.
- Discuss the needs of the student and the benefits of Northstar.
- Family receives a Northstar Academy Admission packet.
- Family and/or SPED representatives provide current IEP, eligibility minutes, evaluations and other required documentation.
- Family completes the online application along with a \$50.00 non-refundable processing fee (no fee required for students placed by school system).

### **Step Three: Observation**

- Northstar reviews documents and schedules observation days if the student meets admission criteria.
- Parents complete and submit a health packet before the student visits.
- The prospective student visits Northstar Academy.

### **Step Four: Consideration & Decision**

- Admission reviews the student application, documents, and teacher feedback to determine if Northstar Academy is the appropriate school for the student.  
The family and/or SPED representatives are contacted regarding the admission decision.

### **Step Five: Enrollment**

- Family is informed of the scholarship process and payment plans (parental placement).
- A placement agreement is signed between Northstar and the school system (public school placement).
- Date of enrollment is set; contract and online enrollment forms are completed and signed.
- Contract and student forms must be completed and submitted before the student enrolls.

In addition to the Northstar Academy Admission process and criteria the following guidelines apply for the Northstar Career Academy.

Students who attend only the Career Academy as part-day students will submit information necessary to conduct an initial assessment of their instructional needs as a part of their application packet. This information will include but may not be limited to previous records, past test scores, copies of eligibility and IEP documents when applicable, records of relevant

medical diagnoses, and vocational assessments. The interview and observation portion of the initial assessment will take place during the tour and student shadowing day. The initial assessment shall gather information about the student's basic academic skills, job-related skills, work orientation skills, vocational interests, and safety skills. If the information gathered during the admissions process is inadequate to create the student's educational plan, follow-up testing shall take place within thirty days of enrollment.

### **Admissions Criteria - Northstar Career Academy**

#### **Step One: Inquiry**

- Northstar Career Academy contacted by referral source (if applicable) and interested family.
- A visit to the school is scheduled.

#### **Step Two: Discussion & Tour**

- Tour the school and grounds
- Discuss needs of student and benefits of Northstar
- Meet with Northstar faculty members to review the application, most recent IEP/IAP, eligibility minutes, and school/independent evaluations and any other required documentation. The student, the student's family members, and referring parties (if applicable) should attend.
- Complete the online enrollment application along with a non-refundable processing fee and submit supporting documents to Catie Huennekens, Career Academy Assistant Director, 8155A Staples Mill Rd., Henrico, VA 23228.

#### **Step Three: Observation**

- The prospective student spends time shadowing the program. Whenever possible, the prospective student spends this time participating in an on-going class.

#### **Step Four: Consideration & Decision**

- Admissions determine if Northstar Career Academy is the right solution for the prospective student based on the goodness of fit between the prospective student's learning needs and vocational goals and the program.
- The prospective student determines whether or not Northstar Career Academy is the right career step for his/her personal and professional goals.

#### **Step Five: Enrollment**

- The enrollment forms including contract, are completed and submitted. ● Family is informed of the scholarship process and payment plans.
- Date of enrollment is set.

For privately placed students, an Individualized Academic Plan (IAP) is developed within 30 days of school. For publicly placed students, Northstar Career Academy collaborates with placing agencies to create or revise student service plans (local education agencies – Individualized Education Program; Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services – Individualized Employment Plan). Services are then delivered and reporting is provided as delineated by these plans

### **After-School Hours**

Students are expected to leave the school grounds at the end of their school commitments or at the conclusion of the extra-curricular activity.

### **Alumni Association**

All former students and extended family members (parent(s)/grandparent(s)) may be members of the alumni association of Northstar Academy.

### **Board of Directors Responsibility**

Directors have the final authority on the operation of Northstar Academy. The prime functions of the board are selection of the Head of School, determination of overall policy and planning for the school's development educationally as well as financially. The board also assists the Head of School with policies, goals and budgetary considerations. The Head of School is an ex-officio member of the Board.

### **Complaint Resolution Procedure**

While we do not anticipate any tension or conflict between Northstar Academy and parents, we do realize that from time to time a disagreement may arise. In the rare case that occurs, we encourage you to first speak directly with your child's teacher. If you feel a need to jointly speak with the teacher and the Head of School, please call and make an appointment. In the event that a complaint cannot be resolved at the school level, a complaint should be filed with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with the Office of Specialized Education Facilities and Family Engagement, Virginia Department of Education, PO Box 2120, Richmond, VA 23218. The process for filing a complaint with the VDOE may be found on their website or in the handbook [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#).

### **Discharge Guidelines**

Students determined to be unsuccessful during the school year will be discharged, or given the opportunity to withdraw, or asked not to return the following year. Through counseling with parents, students, and/or placing agencies, more suitable opportunities will be developed for those students asked not to return, and a list of other alternative schools will be provided.

Northstar reserves the right to terminate a contract mid-year or to not offer a contract for re-enrollment. The basis for such a decision might be any of the following:

- Lack of academic progress
- Poor attendance
- Behavioral reasons
- Lack of demonstrated ability and/or willingness to adhere to safety expectations either on campus or in the community.
- The ability to work with a student and their family is compromised.
- The relationship between the student, the family, and the school has deteriorated to such an extent that the school can no longer maintain a positive working relationship.
- Lack of ability of the family to fulfill the financial obligations of their contract
- A student's health/emotional health poses a risk to the school population

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising is an opportunity to raise additional funds to supplement school-sponsored academic, co-curricular programs and social opportunities for students. Participating in fundraising is optional. Students must have permission from their parents or guardians to participate in Northstar fundraising activities and events.

### **Inclement weather**

Snowfall and road conditions vary widely throughout the Richmond area. The decision to close school is based on road conditions, weather forecasts, and the distance children must travel. School may be cancelled or a late arrival may be issued based on the weather. For this information please listen to **the major television news networks: Channel 6, Channel 8, or Channel 12. Closing information may be placed on the school website, social media, and parents will be notified through a ConnectEd message.**

Occasionally, when a storm is approaching or driving is precarious, parents may choose to pick up children early. Please contact the office if you plan to do so. A student will be dismissed only to drivers designated on his/her emergency form.

If a decision is made to close school early due to weather conditions, parents will be notified by a ConnectEd message. In addition, the early closing will be posted on the major news networks: Channel 6, Channel 8, and Channel 12.

Make up days are notated on the yearly school calendar but may change at the discretion of the Head of School.

### **Individual Academic Plan – (IAP)**

Each year, an Individual Academic Plan (IAP) is developed for all private students in grades K-12. IAPs are developed at the beginning of each year for new students, at the end of the year for returning students, and 30 school days after enrollment for students enrolling during mid-year. A face to face meeting with the family will take place to sign the IAP. This will initiate the implementation of the IAP. During this annual meeting, the parents and IAP liaison will discuss the Least Restrictive Environment for the student.

The student's teacher(s)/parent(s) and the IAP Liaison will develop this plan. This plan will include goals and objectives related to the student's weakness in academic areas and behaviors. Testing and/or observation done prior to the meeting will determine the weaknesses focused on when developing new objectives. Each objective will be dated when it is initiated and mastered.

### **Individualized Education Program – (IEP)**

Each year, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed for all publically placed students with disabilities in grades K-12. The IEP defines the individualized objectives of the student including a discussion of the Least Restrictive Environment. It is intended to help children reach educational goals. It aids teachers and service providers in understanding the student's disability and how the disability affects the learning process. When the IEP team determines it's appropriate, they will consider transition and plan for the student's return to public school.

### **Individual Student Alternative Education Plan – (ISAEP)**

Northstar Academy does not participate in Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAP) or General Education Diplomas (GED) programs.

### **Local Educational Agencies (LEA's)**

On an annual basis an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed for county placed students. Northstar Academy will work with local school divisions in developing and implementing IEPs when the student has been placed at Northstar Academy by the school division. This includes discussion regarding the administration of the Standards of Learning assessments by Northstar Academy and/or the LEA. At the enrollment date, Northstar will ensure the student has a current IEP and that Northstar has received all appropriate evaluation components. Northstar will initiate contact with the LEA and parent, sixty days (60 days) prior to the triennial due date or the IEP due date. Additionally, Northstar will report interim progress, and nine week grades. Staff will also meet with the local school divisions when the student has been unilaterally placed at Northstar Academy by theirparent(s). It is important that parents review their student's Individual Plan (IAP/IEP) in order to increase communication and understanding of their child's progress at Northstar Academy.

### **Parking Lot**

The safety of our children is our primary concern. With regard to transportation, we ask that all drivers exercise extreme caution when transporting students to and from school. Please be careful when passing vehicles that are dropping off or picking up. A carpool line is formed by entering Northstar Academy at the marquee entrance on Carousel Lane. Exit Northstar Academy on Exculpting Lane by Shrader Bowling Lanes.

To alleviate parking lot congestion, parents are encouraged to park in appropriate parking spaces facing Shrader Road in the morning and afternoon during carpool times. A student of good conduct with an appropriate license and permission to drive a vehicle to school may use the school's parking facilities. Parents and persons leaving the premises should drop off students at the front door. Cars needing to wait for a student must pull out of the flow of traffic. Please do not block or park in handicapped parking spaces without prior authorization.

**Do not park in the parking lots of neighboring businesses, your car can be towed. When there is a need for overflow parking, Northstar Academy makes arrangements and informs Northstar families about the availability of neighboring lots.**

### **Physical Entrance Examination**

Northstar must have a current Comprehensive School Physical and an up-to-date Immunization Record on file for all enrolled students. You can obtain this form from the Nurse/Clinic Attendant or on the school's website. A portion of the form must be completed and signed by the student's parent/guardian, the remainder must be completed, signed, and dated by a physician. Please return the form to Northstar as soon as possible, because students may not be allowed to return to school if the form is not received in a timely manner.

A separate form, The Sports Physical (which may be obtained from the clinic Nurse/Clinic Attendant or the website) is required annually for students participating in activities such as soccer, basketball, tennis or pep squad.

### **Promotion/Retention Policy**

Lower and middle school students, who are making satisfactory progress as indicated through curriculum instruction and on their individual education goals, shall be promoted. Students making unsatisfactory progress due to excessive absences or lack of progress in curriculum or individual goals may be retained. This determination will be made on a case by case basis.

Upper school students, who are making satisfactory progress as indicated through curriculum instruction, on their individual education goals, and meet the required number of seat hours to earn course credits, shall be promoted. Students making unsatisfactory progress due to excessive absences, lack of progress in curriculum or individual goals or don't meet the required number of seat hours to earn course credit may be retained. This determination will be made on a case by case basis.

### **Publications**

General information and the school events calendar are sent home to parents. Northstar Academy also maintains regular communications with parents throughout the school year via email, the school website, social media, the school marquee and "ConnectEd."

### **School Property Damage/Property Rental**

Any breakage or damage to school property, accidental or otherwise, will be reported to the parent and will be billed a minimum of \$100 or the cost of repair, whichever is greater.

*Buildings and Grounds* - On occasion the school may rent a part of the facility to parents for special events. Arrangements can be made through the business office.

*Equipment* - School-owned equipment is not available for the personal use of students, and they are not allowed to use school office machines. Equipment issued to students for class work or sports activities must be returned in reasonable condition. Students will be charged for school-owned equipment that has been lost or damaged, with replacement/repair costs assessed after the total amount of damage has been determined.

## Northstar Academy Student Acceptable Use Policy 2021 – 2022

### **Overview:**

Northstar Academy students have access to technology including classroom computers, tablets, and the internet throughout the school day. Our internet uses a firewall with high security, including content, and safety filters. Northstar students have access to email through Google and Google Apps for Education including Google Classroom and other online learning subscriptions. ***These e-mail accounts are set up so that they may only send and receive information within the Northstar network.***

### **What is expected?**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network both in the classroom and while accessing accounts at home. It is expected that users will comply with the student handbook and the rules stated below. The use of the network is a privilege that may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for their actions when accessing and using computer resources.

***Northstar has the right to inspect any school accounts and computers or other electronic devices on the school network and the contents contained, on-demand with or without notice to the user.***

### **Device and Network Use Agreement:**

- I will use all tech tools in a responsible and careful manner.
- I will only access **teacher-approved websites**. The purpose of the internet at school is for education. I will use NSA technology only for **school assignments**.
- I will not use technology to harass, frighten, or bully anyone.
- I will tell a teacher or trusted adult if I see or read something that is inappropriate, dangerous, threatening, or makes me feel uncomfortable.
- I will keep my account secure by only sharing my password with my parents or a teacher.
- I will not give out personal information (name, address, phone, etc.) over the Internet.
- I will obey copyright laws and not take credit for other's work.
- I will follow the **school firewall restrictions**. I will not use unauthorized software/ websites to bypass school filters, send viruses or otherwise damage the network, or make changes to system files.
- I will not change account settings – including personalization settings (desktop background, etc).
- I will not use Northstar's network to access social networking, gaming, or other non-educational sites including personal email accounts.
- I will not view or send material that is obscene, profane, violent, discriminatory or depicts or describes illegal activities.
- I will not use technology in any other inappropriate way. I will follow the Northstar rules when using a school computer or email account.

### **Email Use Agreement:**

- I will only use my NSA email for school assignments.
- I will not use my school email to create or use accounts for social media, gaming, or other online sites.
- I will follow the Northstar technology code of conduct anytime I use school email on or off-campus.

### **What is Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)?**

Northstar students use technology on a daily basis for research, documentation, collaboration, and other technology-related activities. Northstar allows students the option to bring their own devices to school. Northstar has classroom sets of computers and tablets which will continue to be available to students who choose not to bring their own.

### **What are the requirements for BYOD?**

Students may choose to bring a laptop computer, netbook, or tablet without a mobile data plan. This device must have current antivirus software. **Northstar will continue to collect cell phones and gaming**

**devices at the start of the school day. Electronic watches with wifi or data plans should be placed on airplane mode for the duration of the school day.**

**Bring Your Own Device Agreement:**

- I am responsible for arriving at school with my device charged and ready.
- I will access only my own or school-assigned devices. I will not borrow or use devices from another student.
- I will **only store my device at the front desk or in an area designated by Northstar faculty**. I will not leave it in my locker.
- I will respect “OFFLINE” times such as lunch, advisory, and any other times designated by teachers.
- I will **only use the Northstar Student wifi** while on campus. I will not use mobile data such as 3G, 4G, 5G, or LTE coverage.
- I will only use my device for school assignments during teacher-approved times.
- I will **not photograph, video, or record** any event on campus without teacher permission. This includes classes, assemblies, and off-campus activities.
- I will only access **teacher-approved websites**. The purpose of the internet at school is for education. I will use my device only for **school assignments**.
- I will follow the **school firewall restrictions**. I will not use unauthorized software/ websites to bypass school filters, send viruses or otherwise damage the network, or make changes to system files.

**Northstar is not responsible for lost or damaged devices.** Northstar staff will not be responsible for troubleshooting or fixing broken devices. Students are responsible for the care of their devices. Broken devices will be placed in a locked cabinet at the front desk and returned home.

**Recommendations for Families:**

- Clearly label any personal electronics that come to school with the student’s first and last name. Protective cases are also recommended.
- Ask your student to share their Northstar email and Google Apps with you when reviewing their planner nightly. We encourage parents to monitor their student usage when accessing school accounts at home.
- Establish a routine for charging devices each evening.
- Discuss internet safety and digital citizenship. Students will be learning about these topics in their advisory class. Encourage your students to share their passwords and what they learned in class with you.



**Technology Parent Permission Form and User Agreement**

As a parent/guardian of a student at Northstar Academy, I have read and understand the acceptable use policy:



Parent Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please initial to grant your student permission for the following.**

\_\_\_\_\_ My child may bring their own device (computer or tablet) to use while at school according to the BYOD Agreement. I understand that **Northstar is not responsible for loss or damage of personal electronics.**

Type of Device: \_\_\_\_\_

As a student at Northstar Academy, I agree to follow the Student Acceptable Use Policy.

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Students - Be prepared to be held accountable for your actions and for loss of privileges on all computers and school accounts if the rules of appropriate use are violated.**

If you have any questions or concerns about your student accessing the internet or Google Apps for Education including email please contact Wanda Ramsey at [wramsey@northstaracademy.net](mailto:wramsey@northstaracademy.net).

**Prohibited Activities**

The following activities involving Northstar Academy computer resources are prohibited:

1. Using computer resources for purposes other than those for which a student has authorization.
2. Plagiarizing the work of others.
3. Using computer resources for any illegal activity.
4. Harassing other users with unsolicited messages including forwarding of "chain" e-mail.
5. Transmitting, downloading, storing, printing, or distributing information that contains obscene, indecent, lewd, or lascivious material or any material that explicitly or implicitly refers to sexual conduct.
6. Transmitting, downloading, storing, printing, or distributing information that contains

profane language, panders to bigotry, sexism, or other forms of discrimination or tends to degrade other people.

7. Changing or in any way modifying any computer, network system, or security setting (including the downloading or use of unauthorized software).
8. Intentionally damaging or destroying any computer resource.
9. Using another computer user's account or sharing accounts with other user(s) and/or using personal accounts at school without teacher permission.
10. Capturing or guessing another user's password, identifying code, personal identification numbers, or other confidential information without the permission of its owner.
11. Creating, modifying, executing, or re-transmitting any computer program or instructions intended to gain unauthorized access to, or make unauthorized use of a computer resource, software, or licensed software.
12. Creating, modifying, executing, or re-transmitting any computer program or instructions intended to obscure the true identity of the sender of electronic mail or electronic messages, including but not limited to forgery of messages and/or alteration of system and/or user data used to identify the sender of the messages.
13. Making unauthorized copies of software or licensed software.
14. Intentionally destroying or altering software or licensed software.
15. Using computer resources in a manner inconsistent with Northstar Academy's contractual obligations to suppliers of computer resources or with any published Northstar Academy policy.
16. Using computer resources for financial or commercial gain.
  
17. Publishing or transmitting inaccurate or falsified information about oneself, another person, or the school.
18. Accessing/communicating in any way through a social network (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or online gaming such as Steam or Minecraft).

### **Consequences**

Students accused of violating this policy are entitled to due process in resolving the violation:

1. Suspension or revocation of access privileges.
2. Referral to the Head of School, with possible suspension from Northstar Academy.
3. Referral to the Assistant Head of School and notification to faculty and staff of the violation and the consequences.
4. Involvement of state and federal law enforcement authorities if the violation involves state and federal laws.

Internet access generally will be permitted only for class-related activities or assignments. "Surfing" will not be allowed. The school's Internet connections may not be used for commercial purposes including purchasing products or services. Parents/guardians will assume financial responsibility for products or services purchased by their children. Students may not knowingly access material that is obscene or profane, material that advocates illegal acts, or material that advocates violence or discrimination against other people. Students accessing objectionable material should immediately notify a teacher as a protection against a claim of intentional violation of the guidelines.

The use of the school's Internet access is a privilege, not a right. Students may access the Internet only from the school's account; access on family accounts will not be permitted.

### **Violations**

Behavior perceived to constitute harassment will be reviewed by the administration. Those found to be in violation will be subject to appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the school.

### **Transcripts**

Averages are based exclusively on courses pursued at Northstar Academy. For students transferring into our school, averages from prior school(s) will not be "folded in." If a student transfers in at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and graduates from Northstar Academy, the cumulative average on the transcript will not reflect 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Rather a transcript from the former school(s) will be appended to Northstar Academy transcript.

Transcript requests should be made to the School Registrar. Please allow 1-2 weeks to process requests.

### **Transportation**

It is each family's responsibility to provide transportation to/from Northstar Academy. The school helps facilitate carpool arrangements by publishing the Student-Parent Directory early in the school year, but assumes no responsibility for transporting students to/from school.

The school owns and operates mini vans and busses vehicles that are used to transport students to and from field trips, transition work sites and school sponsored activities. Northstar has policy and procedures in place for vehicle insurance, staff/faculty that operate and drive any Northstar vehicle, permission forms and vehicle maintenance. These vehicles are maintained and equipped according to state code and triangular safety reflectors are included as part of their safety equipment. Northstar staff/faculty driving records are reviewed with the Division of Motor Vehicles before being allowed to drive.

#### Behavioral Expectations on Northstar Vehicles

1. At all times, students will follow directions of Northstar staff members.
2. Students are to behave as respectful passengers while traveling in Northstar vehicles. This includes sitting in assigned seats with seatbelts securely fastened, refraining from inappropriate comments or gestures to persons in other vehicles, following directions of the staff members, and in all actions respecting safety as the top priority.
3. Students, regardless of age and independence, will remain with the group when approaching and leaving the vehicle. No student should walk through parking lots or across streets without the direct supervision of Northstar staff members.
4. Students should demonstrate with their behavior that the primary goal of riding in a vehicle is to get to a destination safely. Students should demonstrate patience and flexibility regarding secondary goals such as music selections and seating preferences.

Failure to meet behavioral expectations on Northstar vehicles may result in suspension from Northstar-provided transportation, even if this means that the student will miss out on

important field trips, internships, or job shadowing experiences.

### Carpool – Drop Off

**Parents should not drop off their children before 7:30 a.m.** A Northstar representative must be outside, stationed at their post, and prepared to monitor student arrivals. **Do not drop off a student if an adult is not yet on duty.**

### **Carpool Plan and Contact**

Each family must have a backup transportation plan in place for their child.

1. Emergency phone numbers should be on file with the School.
2. If there are problems, call the school office and let the receptionist know what arrangements you have made. Remember, if the custodial parent is not picking up the student and the student is not going home in the usual manner, then the emergency person on file is expected to pick up the child. Students will not be released to another person without the appropriate arrangements and proof of identity.

Parents planning to change their child's regular transportation must inform the receptionist, as well as the regular driver (in a timely manner). This will help to eliminate confusion with the regular transportation providers. Call 804-747-1003 or email [frontdesk@northstaracademy.net](mailto:frontdesk@northstaracademy.net).

### County Transportation

Communication with your county driver is essential. Miscommunications or delays are not acceptable excuses for tardiness. Be sure to notify County Transportation Departments when schedules change, especially if a child is sick, leaves school early, or is staying after school. It is the responsibility of the parent to communicate with county transportation departments. **The school must be notified in writing or by phone of any changes in transportation plans.**

### Driving Privilege

High school students who have good behavior and are in good academic standing "C" or better grades in all subject areas and who have a valid driving permit are allowed to drive automobiles to school with administration and their parent's permission. Student drivers & parents must complete a Student Driver Authorization Form prior to driving to school. Students are not allowed to go to their cars during the school day. It is also prohibited to give other students rides without written permission (for each occasion) from the student's parents and the driver's parents. Northstar reserves the right to revoke student driving privileges.

### **Tutoring**

Students who are in need of ongoing individualized instruction that cannot be provided at Northstar Academy may hire outside professionals, at the parent's expense, for tutorial help after the school day. Tutors working on the school campus must have permission from the Head of School.

### **Use of Images**

Please be advised that in the normal course of operation, student and staff photographers take pictures of student activities and that these photographic and electronic images may appear in school publications and communications, such as our school yearbook, social media, school brochures, marketing materials, and the school website. A "Student Media Release and Consent" was provided during the registration process for your decision regarding consent to use your child's Student Media Information.

### **Vandalism/Property damage**

Vandalism is the willful marring, defacing, or destruction of school property, including leased property and any employee's or student's property. Writing in books, on walls, taking apart technology equipment, or attempting to cause damage to school property and personal property of others is prohibited.

**Those students found to be responsible for any damage will be held accountable for the material and labor cost of all repairs or replacements. Other disciplinary measures may also be taken at the discretion of administration.**

### **Visitors**

While Northstar Academy is a close-knit community, it is not considered an "open-campus." **While friends and families are always welcome, parents/guardians are requested to contact the Assistant Head of School if they would like to observe, visit or join their child for lunch.** During the course of the school year, many prospective parents and students tour the school. The administration is very careful not to release names of students to visitors for any reason. If your child knows a visitor, we expect them to be polite and to inform you of the meeting the same evening. **ALL PERSONS (PARENTS, GUARDIANS, FAMILY MEMBERS, FRIENDS, ETC.) ENTERING THE BUILDING MUST SIGN IN AT THE FRONT DESK AND WEAR A VISITOR BADGE AT ALL TIMES WHILE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.**

## **STUDENT LIFE**

### **Celebration**

Classroom celebrations are allowed. If students bring a celebratory snack to school, they should bring enough for all their classmates and not exclude others. Notify the Assistant Head of School in advance so other arrangements can be made for students with food allergies. If private parties are scheduled outside of school, the invitations should not be delivered at school, and if possible, the entire class should be invited. Children are very aware and feelings are hurt when they are excluded.

### **Clubs**

Enrichment, cooperation, socialization and leadership training are strong aspects of a whole-child approach to education. Faculty may sponsor student clubs at the discretion of Administration. Parents wishing to organize an after-school club please contact the Assistant Head of School.

### **Dances**

Northstar Academy sponsors dances each year for students, including a Junior/Senior Prom in the spring. Behavioral guidelines for these dances should reflect the standards of conduct established by our school. A faculty chaperone has the authority to enforce the rules and remove any student from the dance if he/she feels the student's behavior is inappropriate.

- A casual dance will follow "non-uniform guidelines." For "semi-formal" events, the dress code will be communicated with the invitation.
- No excessive displays of affection will be allowed.

- Slam dancing, moshing, and other forms of inappropriate dancing are not allowed.

Once a student enters the dance, they are not allowed to leave the building unless they do not plan on returning. Parents must come into the building to pick up their child. Any person suspected of using/having used an illegal substance, marijuana or tobacco products will be asked to leave the school property, and the student's parents will be notified.

### Dress Code/Appearance

Students are expected to dress appropriately throughout the academic school year. Clothing other than what is detailed in the dress code policy is not allowed. Coats are required during especially cold weather. **Please make sure that all personal items are marked with the student's name.**

Northstar Academy operates under the premise that school teaches the skills necessary for the world of work. A student's dress and presentation reflect personal and school standards. Accordingly, we expect all students to come to school ready to work. Distractions must be kept to a minimum:

- Long hair must be pulled back and firmly secured so as not to hang in the student's face
- Facial hair, including long sideburns, is not permitted.
- Distracting hair styles are not permitted. Hair color will only be allowed on pieces of hair, but should not cover the entire head.
- Pierced ears should not be distracting.
- Visible body piercing is strictly prohibited. Students will be asked to remove rings, studs, etc.

Dress requirements are as follows:

- Khaki, black, or navy pants/shorts (no shorter than 4" above the knee) (NO blue jeans)
- All pants/shorts must have belts, unless exempt
- Solid color "polo" shirt (collared), turtleneck or button down solid color shirt
- Socks with tennis-type shoes (Velcro allowed)
- Sweaters, jackets, or sweatshirts.

All students are required to wear athletic shoes for physical education.

Students should wear collared shirts or turtleneck shirts (tucked in); a straight hemmed shirt may be worn outside of pants. **A collared shirt must be worn under pullover sweaters or sweatshirts.** All shirts must have sufficient shirttail to stay tucked in. All pants/shorts must be in good repair (*no cut or torn edges or holes*), ride on the waist, and fit appropriately. Baggy and/or oversized clothing or clothing that is revealing will not be allowed. Sweatpants may be worn for physical education classes only.

The guidelines provided for dress code never outweigh the subjective judgment of the school administrators. The school reserves the right to evaluate a student on a daily basis, and the possibility exists that a student would be technically within guidelines and still be viewed as inappropriately dressed. No aspect of dress should be a distraction. Parents must cooperate in seeing that students are appropriately attired. Students not in compliance with the dress code will be asked to obtain appropriate attire before attending classes. **Note that this may require a special trip to the school by the parent/guardian.** Repeat offenders may be ineligible for

“non-uniform” days.

### Non-Uniform Guidelines

On non-uniform days (Fridays or special occasions as announced) students are allowed to wear long shorts (no shorter than 4” above the knee , weather permitting) or jeans. Students are allowed to wear t-shirts as long as the writing and/or logos are school appropriate.

### Outerwear – All Students

Heavy jackets/coats, lined flannel shirts, hooded sweatshirts, and fleeces (with or without sleeves) should be left in the student’s locker except when the temperature is below 50 degrees. Sweaters, sweatshirts, and lightweight jackets may be worn in the classroom provided they are not oversized and do not provide a distraction. Students may not wear hoods, hats, sunglasses, gloves, etc. in classrooms or in buildings.

### Prohibited Attire – All Students

Students who come to school dressed inappropriately will be asked to call home to obtain an appropriate uniform. Students who are dressed inappropriately will not be allowed to sit with their class, attend field trips, or participate in athletic events.

Unacceptable attire includes, but is not limited to:

- Excessively baggy/oversized clothing
- Tight/form fitting or revealing apparel/clothing
- Jewelry pierced in body areas other than ears
- Above the waist shirts
- Tank tops
- Clothing that is see through, revealing the midriff (while standing or sitting) or resembles undergarments.
- Sandals, bedroom slippers, or shoes with wheels, also known as “Heelys”
- Sleepwear and beachwear (which includes bathing suits, trunks)
- Hats (on heads), hoods, or face masks (that cover more than the mouth and nose) indoors, unless required for religious or medical reasons
- Sunglasses (worn indoors), unless prescribed by a physician
- Wallet chains, spiked jewelry, and items which could cause a student's injury.
- Messaging on clothing, chains, jewelry, or personal belongings that represents alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, drugs, sex, vulgarity, messages that negatively respect a religion, ethnicity, culture, gender, or people, or other offensive slogans/expressions that could cause substantial disruption to the learning environment.
- Cut off jeans, cut off sweat-pants, or torn, ripped, or slashed clothing that reveals undergarments or body parts excluded by other parts of this code.
- Clothing (including bandanas suggestive of gang colors, designs or symbols).

Determination of the Dress Code will be at the discretion of the Head of School or designee.

The Northstar Career Academy dress code expectations will be included in the course syllabus.

### **Enrichment/School Sponsored Activities**

Participation in athletics or other extra curricular activities (e.g. yearbook or other clubs) can

have a positive influence on a child's mental, physical, and social development. Learning the basic skills of various sports and good sportsmanship is the basis for a lifelong participation in healthy physical activity.

Northstar Academy encourages students to participate in team sports. Activities are open to all who wish to abide by team requirements, including: submitting a sports physical and signed contract, commitment to the team, attendance at all practices, an appropriate attitude, and a genuine desire to improve and practice.

Since we participate in an informal league, eligibility for participation is at the discretion of the coach and the league and under the guidelines established by the organization and in consultation with the administration. Our athletes learn good sportsmanship and the value of cooperative teamwork.

All Northstar and Northstar Career Academy staff are First Aid and CPR trained. Therefore, all school sponsored activities, extra-curricular, sports, field trips, etc. will be supervised by a certified staff member. Northstar and Northstar Career Academy do not offer outdoor adventure activities.

### **Integrity**

Northstar students are expected to perform honestly throughout the school day. Students are expected to produce their own work and demonstrate respect for the belongings of others.

The actions below are not tolerated at Northstar Academy:

1. **Cheating** - includes the actual giving, receiving, or use of any unauthorized aid or assistance.
1. **Falsification** - includes the verbal or written statement of any untruth, including the production of forgery or use of forged writing.
2. **Lying** - is communicating something that is not true.
3. **Plagiarism** - includes the copying of the language, structure, idea, and/or thought of another and representing it as one's own original work.
4. **Stealing** - includes acquiring another's possessions without right or permission. The possession of stolen property is considered theft.
5. **Unauthorized use of technology** - and information gained through its use without permission, or using computers or other technology equipment without permission from a teacher or administrator.

### **Lunch**

Students have the option of bringing their lunch to school or purchasing a catered lunch delivered to Northstar Academy each day. Menus will be sent home for parent completion each academic semester. All students not buying lunch should bring a nutritious lunch. Students in K-5 also should pack a healthy snack. Please pack non-perishable food or use insulated containers since microwaves and refrigeration are not available. Please check your child's lunch to ensure that an abundance of sugar-laden foods are not included (especially after holidays, such as Halloween). If your child "forgets" lunch, we will call you and ask that you bring your child lunch.



**\*\*Due to food allergies students are not allowed to share their lunch/food (including gum) with other students.**

### **Positive Behavior Program**

Each student works within a school-wide positive behavior support system and is expected to attempt class work and homework and follow the four basic-school Rules: follow instructions, use materials as intended, use appropriate words, voice volume and tone, and keep a safe body, hands and feet. Students will use a checklist to self-monitor at the end of each class whether they have followed these expectations. Following their own self-monitoring, their teacher will review with the student their observation about the student's behavior. By meeting or exceeding these expectations, students can earn a stamp in their planner in each class daily. Stamps are counted on Thursdays at the end of the day and students with a predetermined number of points are rewarded with a weekly reward on Friday. Additionally, students who maintain these expectations throughout the quarter will be given the opportunity to earn larger rewards.

### **Physical Education (PE)**

The physical education program (including modified instruction) emphasizes the skills necessary for individual recreation and team sports. Our program emphasizes a healthy, active lifestyle and celebrates personal effort.

#### **PE Program — Grades K-5**

Students in the Lower School participate in physical education in the multi-purpose building and outside. The development of gross motor skills is very important. Children are exposed to a variety of activities and should dress appropriately. Students are required to wear tennis shoes and socks, and notes will be sent home if special clothing is needed.

#### **PE Program — Grades 6-10**

All students in grades 6-10 must participate in physical education. Students are required to wear gym shorts/sweatpants, tee shirts/sweatshirts, and athletic shoes. A physician's note is necessary to be excused from "dressing out" for two consecutive days. Any student who fails to bring an appropriate excuse will have points deducted from their grade.

### **Telephones and Cell Phones**

*Students are required to turn in cell phones and other electronics in the morning when they arrive. Electronic watches with wifi or data plans should be placed on airplane mode for the duration of the school day.* Northstar phones are not available to students for social calls. Students may use the office phone for necessary communication with parents after permission has been granted. Emergency messages for students will be given to them in a timely fashion, trying not to interrupt class. Students may not text or use cell phones or electronic watches during school hours. Students may not use personal electronics to take recordings, pictures or videos of other students.

Except in an emergency situation, neither students nor teachers will be called from class or study area to answer the telephone. Parents who wish to leave a message for a student or teacher may call the receptionist who will forward it as soon as possible.

When instructionally appropriate, Career Academy students carry their cell phones with them during the school day and while receiving employment support services.

#### Career Academy Cell Phone Use Guidelines:

1. Student cell phones should be kept turned off and out of sight (in pocket, backpack, purse, or left in the vehicle of students who drive themselves). Teachers may require students to turn their phones in until they are needed in individual classrooms.
2. It is the student's responsibility to keep their phone charged. Students may bring charging cables to school, but should not expect to use school equipment to charge their devices.
3. Students may use phones for instructional purposes only when specifically directed by the teacher.
4. Apps should not be purchased at school on a student device. Students may "try out" apps on school devices. Staff may make recommendations of apps to families who then may choose to purchase and install on a student's phone.
5. Northstar Academy's acceptable use policy applies to use of cell phones. Phones may not be used to make calls, text, send messages, or connect on social media during the school day. Students must have permission to use their cell phones for academic purposes through a signed Bring Your Own Device agreement.
6. Students who violate the cell phone guidelines, acceptable use policy (including on other devices), or other school rules will have this privilege revoked.
7. Cell phones that are used in violation of these guidelines will be confiscated by administration. For the first offence, the device will be returned to the student at the end of the day. For subsequent offences, the device will only be returned to a parent or guardian (including in the case of adult students).
8. Cyberbullying and other forms of harassment using cell phones or social media are unprofessional and unacceptable at Northstar Academy. Students who engage in this behavior outside of school may lose their cell phone privileges at school.
9. School administration may allow exceptions to cell phone use guidelines on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances.

#### **Toys and Sports Equipment**

Northstar Academy has a supply of recess equipment and outdoor equipment. **Toys, games, balls, and skateboards must be left at home.** This policy is for safety reasons and to prevent hurt feelings should something be damaged, lost, or misplaced. Also, the items can be very distracting for the students in the school setting. If equipment is requested for P.E., (e.g., softball mitt), it must be marked with the student's name.

## **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

### **Behavior and Discipline Overview**

Maintaining proper behavior and school discipline is essential to a safe and positive learning environment. Students are responsible for understanding the established rules of the school and for abiding by them in a cooperative manner. **Any conduct that interferes with the maintenance of a proper learning environment is considered a breach of discipline.**

Acts of behavior that are antagonistic to the welfare of other students, the staff, and/or Northstar Academy, will not be tolerated. Disciplinary actions are determined primarily by the type of offense committed. Other factors, such as frequency of the offense and the age of the student, also are considered.

The disciplinary actions listed reflect a progressive disciplinary process; however, not all steps in the action process may be applied or appropriate in a given situation. Offenses of repetitive or more serious nature may result in discipline commensurate with the offense and may justify separation without reference to past reprimands.

Northstar Academy understands that behaviors which occur may be related to the disability. While this will always be taken into consideration, the safety and welfare of the student and other students and staff are our foremost responsibility. Northstar Academy is not a school for children who display serious emotional disturbance or harmful behaviors.

Most importantly, in order to ensure that all students attending Northstar Academy have an opportunity to benefit from their education, the collaborative role of parents is emphasized. Cooperation between school and parents will reduce misunderstandings that can undermine student success in the educational process.

Strip searches and body cavity searches are prohibited at Northstar Academy. Pat downs will only be conducted in an extreme situation involving prohibiting dangerous contraband. In such a rare instance, pat downs will only be conducted by a member of the administrative team (authorized personnel) and will be of the same gender as the student being searched. Pat downs shall be conducted with dignity and in the presence of at least one witness.

### **Conduct and behavioral expectations**

Northstar Academy's Head of School holds the responsibility for providing a safe and secure environment for all students who come to our school. Many of our students have come from environments in which they have been teased, picked on, and ridiculed, while others come with different attitudes. It is important that each student feels safe and secure. There are clear expectations for appropriate behavior. Violations of school rules will lead to direct and immediate consequences.

Northstar Academy aims to develop each student's potential for learning, foster positive interpersonal relationships, and nurture sound decision making. To accomplish these goals, a positive and orderly environment is essential. We expect students, parent(s), and staff to be partners in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere where every individual is valued and respected.

Northstar Academy faculty do not physically restrain students unless in an emergency situation for safety reasons. Northstar does not use time out rooms or seclusion for behavioral reasons. Students requiring time outs, multiple interventions or restraint as a last resort, may be discharged with recommendations for a more appropriate environment as their behavioral needs cannot be met by Northstar Academy.

Students are subject to school jurisdiction and standards whenever they are on the school grounds for academics or extracurricular activities, and when they attend any school-sponsored trip or activity, regardless of location.

Students are expected to respect school property at all times, to be considerate of others, and to conduct themselves with honor and honesty. Specific regulations are addressed under pertinent topic headings; other general rules designed to create a respectful atmosphere are.

- I will follow instructions
- I will use materials as intended
- I will use appropriate words, voice volume and tone
- I will keep a safe body, hands and feet.

If a student violates these rules, teachers will promptly implement the discipline policy in order to promote maximum use of classroom instruction time.

**Please discuss these standards of behavior and their consequences with your child.**

1. **We are courteous and kind to others at all times.** This means that everyone, child or adult, is allowed to work without disruption in the classroom and elsewhere. By implication there are classroom voices, courteous listening, and on-task behavior. **There will be no name calling, swearing, inappropriate language, rudeness, or “put-downs.”** Verbal harassment is treated with the same seriousness as physical harassment. Fighting, hitting, kicking, biting, etc. will not be allowed.

Any physical aggression, fighting, or repeated rudeness will result in an in-school suspension. Repeated infractions may result in out-of-school suspension or dismissal.

2. **We have respect for the person and property of others.** Children are taught to care for school equipment and materials. They are expected to pay for any property that has been defaced or lost.
3. **Parents help by reinforcing self-discipline and teaching problem-solving skills.** An essential component of high self-esteem and resilience is the belief that one has some control over what is occurring. To acquire this attitude of ownership, children need experiences in which they can learn and apply decision-making and problem-solving skills. This can be accomplished by involving children in discussions of how best to solve particular problems, or enlisting their input in the development of rules and consequences that affect their lives at home and at school.

### Consequences

Consequences for inappropriate conduct and behavior are noted below, in order from the least to the most severe consequences. A teacher/administrator may use discretion as to what consequences are appropriate in a given situation.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Verbal reprimand</li> <li>2. Removal from the classroom</li> <li>3. Lunch Detention</li> <li>4. In-School Detention (<i>after 3 lunch detentions</i>)</li> <li>5. Parent-Teacher conference</li> <li>6. Behavior contract</li> <li>7. Head of School/teacher/parent conference</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. In-school suspension</li> <li>9. Suspension from school-related activities</li> <li>10. Out-of-school suspension</li> <li>11. Referral to local agencies</li> <li>12. Long-term suspension</li> <li>13. Expulsion</li> </ol> |
|---|--|

<b><u>LEVEL FOUR OFFENSES</u></b>	<b>Consequences</b>
<p>Behaviors that are intended to, or have the potential to, cause another individual physical or mental harm and or are illegal. These behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Possession or use of weapons including fire arms or explosive devices</li> <li>2. Intimidation, extortion, threats, repeated harassment (Middle and Upper School)</li> <li>3. Felony theft</li> <li>4. Fighting, assault, or battery of any kind</li> <li>5. Hitting, biting, kicking with intent to cause physical harm</li> <li>6. Gross disrespect toward an adult or student (cursing, name calling, etc.)</li> <li>7. Possession, sale and/or use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and/or drugs</li> <li>8. Sexual harassment of any kind</li> <li>9. Arson</li> <li>10. False alarms (fire and bomb threats)</li> <li>11. Criminal vandalism</li> <li>12. Leaving school grounds without permission</li> <li>13. Inappropriate use of a motor vehicle</li> <li>14. Gambling</li> <li>15. Defamation, harassment, libel or slander of any kind, including information placed on social media, internet or e-mail.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Minimum</b> Office referral with “out-of-school suspension,” days to be determined</p> <p><b>Maximum</b> Expulsion and/or law enforcement involvement</p>

<b><u>LEVEL THREE OFFENSES</u></b>	<b>Consequences</b>
<p>Behaviors that occur outside the classroom, not intended to cause physical or psychological harm, and are not illegal (does not meet the definition of Level 4). These behaviors may include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intimidation (Lower school level)</li> <li>2. Cheating</li> <li>3. Disruptive behaviors in the hallway, lunch area, at school-sponsored activities before- or after-school activity</li> <li>4. Skipping class</li> <li>5. Truancy</li> <li>6. Being in the hallway without a pass</li> <li>7. Inappropriate display of affection</li> <li>8. Inappropriate literature (drawings, photos, text which could be offensive to others, including computerized materials)</li> <li>9. Habitual dress code violations</li> <li>10. Inappropriate use of equipment (e.g., technology)</li> <li>11. Disrespect or defiance toward an adult or student</li> </ol>	<p><b>Minimum</b> Verbal reprimand.</p> <p><b>Maximum</b> Out of school suspension – days to be determined.</p>

<b><u>LEVEL TWO OFFENSES</u></b>	<b>Consequences</b>
<p>Behaviors occur in the classroom and disrupt the learning of other students. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Talking at inappropriate times</li> <li>2. Blurting out</li> <li>3. Horseplay</li> <li>4. Disturbing another student in any way</li> <li>5. Being out of seat without permission</li> <li>6. Not following directions</li> </ol>	<p><b>Minimum</b> Verbal reprimand.</p> <p><b>Maximum</b> Removal from the classroom/ conference with parents and Administration.</p>

<b><u>LEVEL ONE OFFENSES</u></b>	<b>Consequences</b>
<p>Behaviors that occur in the classroom and interfere only with the learning of the student who demonstrates the behavior. Such behaviors can usually be corrected without disrupting the learning of others, and the teacher should not stop the learning activity to correct the behavior. These behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not having appropriate equipment, supplies, materials</li> <li>2. Sleeping</li> <li>3. Being off task, but not disrupting others</li> <li>4. Failing to turn in homework/failing to complete</li> </ol>	<p><b>Minimum</b> Verbal reprimand.</p> <p><b>Maximum</b> Removal from the classroom/ parental contact if habitual.</p>

assignments 5. Failing to participate or dress out for Physical Education 6. Tardiness 7. Dress code violations	
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**Disruptive Behavior**

1. Any event, action, or statement that relies on chance for the monetary advantage of one participant at the expense of another, is gambling. This violation includes exchanging items of value as well as currency, and extends to keeping score for a later settlement. Gambling is not allowed on school grounds or any school functions on or off campus.
2. The possession of literature or illustrations which are obscene, violent, inappropriate, or significantly disruptive to the educational process, is prohibited.
3. The use of any type of unauthorized electronic or mechanical device is prohibited during the school day. This includes but is not limited to, cellular phones, electronic watches, handheld game devices, laser pointers, etc., and the representation thereof. Improper use of these items will result in their confiscation by the administration, where they will remain for the duration of the school year.
4. Cursing, threatening, or using abusive language or remarks intended to demean a person, including language related to race, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or intellectual ability, will not be tolerated. This includes action, displays, or written material of an obscene, violent, or inappropriate nature. Wearing of inappropriate jewelry that conveys violent or sexually suggestive messages, offensive statements towards school personnel and/or students, or vulgar language is prohibited.
5. Failure to appropriately respond to written or verbal directions given by school personnel, chaperones, or volunteers is considered insubordination.

**Fighting/Assaults and Threats**

1. Fighting involves two or more parties in a conflict when they are striking each other for the purpose of causing harm or injury. This action is extended to mutual shoving, wrestling, or other aggressive actions which may result in danger, harm, or injury to a party, bystander, or school property.
2. Actions, comments, or written messages intended to cause others to fight or which may result in a fight is prohibited.
3. Intentionally hitting, shoving, scratching, biting, kicking, blocking the passage of, or throwing objects at a student is prohibited.
4. Conveying by gestures, notes, or verbal comments the intent to cause bodily injury or to deprive a student of his/her rights is prohibited.
5. Any physical aggression directed toward any employee of Northstar Academy is not allowed and will result in an immediate recommendation of expulsion.
6. Any inappropriate behavior which is of a sexual nature including, but not limited to touching of sensitive and private areas of a person's body is not allowed.
7. Unsafe conduct which endangers either oneself or others is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to bullying, teasing, or other acts of intimidation.

### Personal Harassment

Personal harassment is the verbal or physical abuse of any member of the school community. Physical abuse is injury that is intentionally inflicted on another. Verbal or emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to another that results in an observable and material impairment in another's growth, development or psychological functioning. Personal harassment may easily be identified as acts of verbal or physical abuse, or it may take on more subtle yet equally damaging acts, such as rumor mongering, stereotyping, or abusive shunning.

### Racial/Ethnic Harassment

Racial/ethnic harassment is any abuse—physical, written, or verbal (including “humor”)—directed towards an individual or group on the basis of race or ethnic heritage. Racial/ethnic harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Demeaning graffiti
2. Epithets based on race or ethnicity
3. Racially/ethnically stereotyped remarks or “humor”
4. Insensitive comments in or out of class

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is illegal\* and is defined, in part, as unwelcome and unwanted sexual advances of a physical or verbal nature directed at another person. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Coerced sexual relations (rape)
2. Uninvited pressure for sexual activity—real or implied
3. Obscene, insensitive, stereotypical, or suggestive remarks, including jokes, insults, or verbal remarks of a sexual nature. This would encompass sexual comments about a person's clothing, body, or behavior.
4. Unnecessary touching in any form
5. Display of explicit, offensive, or demeaning materials, including photographs, inappropriate written communication.
6. Leering at a person's body
7. Sexual abuse is any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between a student and an adult or between two students. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the desires of the adult or the other student.

### Neglect

Neglect is the failure to provide for a student's basic needs or failure to protect a student from harm.

### **Bullying/Harassment Policy**

Northstar Academy is a community which recognizes individual differences in culture, race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. In order to provide a positive environment for the mutual respect of one another, certain guidelines for appropriate behavior need to be recognized by each student. Inappropriate behavior, either verbal or physical, directed towards a person which disregards their feelings and is demeaning. It includes unwelcome physical advances, unwarranted verbal remarks, and derogatory or discriminatory statements.



*Cyberbullying* – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:

- Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
- Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
- Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
- Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
- Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person’s willingness to participate.
- Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying.

**If a student feels they are being harassed, the student is encouraged to take the following steps.**

1. Let the offending person or group know that you want the behavior to stop. Firmly say “NO” or tell them to “STOP.” Directly look at them with a straight face and give them a clear message about how you feel.
2. Keep a record about when, how, and by whom you were mistreated. Evidence of abuse is important and may include written communication, witnesses, and direct quotes.
3. Report the facts of the incident immediately to a teacher or administrator.
4. The family should also promptly contact the appropriate administrator, Head of School, or teacher.

Students must not engage in defamation, harassment, libel or slander of any kind. This includes information placed on non-school property, such as social media, internet or e-mail.

### **Nonviolent Crisis Intervention**

The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention program is a safe, non-harmful behavior management system designed to help service professionals provide for the best possible CARE, WELFARE, SAFETY and SECURITY for all individuals. The training provides nonverbal and verbal techniques used to de-escalate behaviors and prevent acting out behaviors. Physical interventions are used only as a last resort when the acting-out student is a danger to self or others. If trained staff are required to use physical restraint with a student the administrator in charge will determine if there is a need to call for assistance from local law enforcement. If necessary, a police report will be filed.

### **Other Serious Offenses**

The following conduct is considered a serious offense at Northstar Academy. Involvement with

any of the following could result in suspension or expulsion:

1. Disrespect toward faculty or other adults
2. Profanity, obscenity, lying, stealing, cheating, and fighting
3. Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, or drugs
4. Possession of weapons
5. Deliberate defacing of lockers, textbooks, desks, or other items
6. Tampering with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or other school property
7. Possession of and/or accessing internet pornographic material
8. Sending viruses or otherwise damaging the school network
9. Derogatory actions/comments of a sexual or racial nature directed towards another person
10. Inappropriate behavior at assemblies and/or field trips
11. Inappropriate sexual behavior.

### **Suspension & Dismissal**

When the alleged misconduct becomes known, the Head of School will inform the student of the intention to suspend, the reasons for, and duration of the intended suspension.

Within twenty-four hours, the Head of School will notify the parent(s)/legal guardian/LEA of the student of the suspension, the reasons, durations, and whether the suspension will be served at school or out of school. Such notice may be oral or written. Reasons for suspension will be recorded in the student's school files. A conference may be required before returning to school.

Northstar Academy adheres to local education agencies' policies and procedures as it pertains to Manifestation Determination hearings.

### **Dismissal**

Prior to any dismissal, the Head/Assistant Head of School will notify the parent/guardian of the intention to dismiss. This notice will include the reasons for the dismissal before it takes effect. Such notice may be oral or written. If a meeting is requested, the time and place will be scheduled immediately and the meeting must take place quickly. Northstar Academy may require that the student be kept home until the meeting has occurred. Reasons and circumstances will be recorded in the student's school files.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Clinic**

Northstar Academy has in place certain procedures and forms for communicating with parents and faculty, regarding student health issues. Health information must be communicated to the clinic annually for completion regarding a student's current health. The nurse/clinic attendant will follow-up with all parents/guardians monthly regarding any changes. Any noted changes will be communicated to appropriate staff members. Parents requesting feedback on medically fragile students should contact that student's IEP / IAP Liaison to complete the necessary paperwork for requested feedback. All other medical/health issues should be directed to the nurse/clinic attendant or an Administrator.

If a student has a medical condition requiring attention during the day, the parent/guardian will complete the Medical Consultation Form to allow the administration and/or nurse/clinic attendant to consult with the medical provider. The parent/guardian agrees to pay all costs incurred for the consultation and provide any needed equipment, medication and supplies.

Students should not be in school when ill and/or have the following:

- A fever of 100 degrees or greater before taking a fever-reducing medication.
- Vomiting or diarrhea because of illness.
- An unknown rash or possible contagious condition.
- Are unable to focus due to: pain, chronic health condition and acute illness.
- Flu-like illness (with or without fever) - headache, fatigue, cough, aches, weakness and sore throat.

Please be prompt when picking up your ill or injured child in order to minimize his or her chance of spreading or acquiring a contagious illness.

A child should be free of symptoms of contagious disease (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, suspicious rash, etc.) for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please refer to our School Reopening Safety Plan for our sick policy related to COVID.

### **Child Abuse**

Child abuse is strongly forbidden and shall be investigated thoroughly and confidentially. Any faculty member who witnesses an incident of child abuse or receives a report of child abuse is obligated to report it to the Head of School immediately. Northstar Academy prohibits the neglect, abuse or mistreatment of all students and complies with all state and local laws and regulations in regard to child abuse such as mandatory reporting to Child Protective Services.

### **CONCUSSION**

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury and is defined by the 4th International Conference on Concussion in Sports (2012) as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain and induced by biomechanical forces. Several common features that incorporate clinical, pathologic, and biomechanical injury constructs that may be utilized in defining the nature of a concussive head injury include the following:

- Concussion may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck, or elsewhere on the body with an "impulsive" force transmitted to the head.
- Concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurologic function that resolves spontaneously. However, in some cases, symptoms and signs may evolve over a number of minutes, hours, or days.
- Concussion may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute clinical symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than a structural injury with no abnormality seen on standard structural neuroimaging studies.
- Concussion results in a graded set of clinical symptoms that may or may not involve loss of consciousness. Resolution of the clinical and cognitive symptoms typically follows a sequential course. It is important to note, however, that symptoms may be prolonged in some cases.

Appropriate licensed health care provider means a physician, physician assistant, osteopath, physician, or athletic trainer licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine; a neuropsychologist licensed by the Board of Psychology; or a nurse practitioner licensed by the Virginia State Board of Nursing.

Cognitive rest means limiting cognitive exertion and careful management of neurometabolic demands on the brain during recovery. Return-to-learn refers to instructional modifications that support a controlled, progressive increase in cognitive activities while the student recovers from a brain injury (i.e., concussion) 4 allowing the student to participate in classroom activities and learn without worsening symptoms and potentially delaying healing.

Return to Learn: In the past several years it has become more evident that cognitive rest in addition to physical rest is important after a concussion. Just as physical exertion can exacerbate and prolong symptoms of a concussion, cognitive exercise can have the same effect.

Following a concussion, students may have difficulty in school, which could last from days to months. Families should work with the case manager, school nurse and the student's doctor to determine appropriate accommodations for the school environment based on the individual needs of the student. It is expected that the teachers will provide appropriate accommodations for the student.

Because concussion symptoms usually worsen with the increased cognitive strain of school, returning to school is not recommended until the symptoms are mild or absent at rest. Return to school should be done as a progression of gradually increasing periods of time. When necessary, accommodations should be made to assist the student in completing homework, tests, and/or projects. The treating physician in consultation with the school nurse will determine when the student can resume a full academic workload. The student may require rest periods if the symptoms become worse throughout the day. Avoidance of areas or times of extreme noise or overstimulation should be encouraged.

Because the concussed individual may appear normal, it is important that all school faculty understand the effects of a concussion as well as the management concerns. Typically teachers are the first to notice behavioral changes, therefore are a vital part of the progression back to normal daily activity. Faculty should notify the school nurse and family of any noted changes.

### **Contraband Items**

Any sharp object (such as a knife, razor, cutting tool, etc.), any item which could be used as a potential weapon, fire, or explosive (such as a lighter, match, bullet, BB, firecracker, gun, etc.), or any projectile (such as a slingshot, handmade shooting device, etc.) is not allowed in the possession of students on the school premises or on school trips.

### **Contingency Plan**

Northstar Academy has established a plan to address unforeseen crisis should they arise. In the event that circumstances require an evacuation from the school premises, students and staff will relocate to a designated location to provide safety and will provide communication as appropriate. Please note that the ConnectED automated system will be used in the event of a

loss of utilities. Northstar staff have been trained in CPR and emergency First Aid.  
\*NOTE: Contingency Plan Addendum.

### **Crisis Plan**

Northstar Academy maintains a Crisis Plan in every room on campus. Faculty and staff are trained annually in the use of the Crisis Manual. Northstar Academy's Policy Manual is updated and approved annually by the Board of Directors. A copy of the Policy Manual is maintained on the shared drive of the computer network for immediate access by faculty and staff. A paper copy of the Policy Manual will be provided upon request.

### **Medication**

If your physician decides it is necessary for your child to receive medication including Cannabidiol (CBD) during the school day, specific instructions must accompany the medication. The nurse/clinic attendant will administer medication. At **NO** time should the student take medication on their own. All medication will be secured in the nurse/clinic attendant's office. **A COMPLETED MEDICATION FORM MUST BE ON FILE FOR ALL OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION AND/OR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION. PARENT/ GUARDIANS MUST BRING MEDICATION TO SCHOOL. AT NO TIME SHOULD A STUDENT HAVE MEDICATIONS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS. THIS INCLUDES OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION.**

The medication authorization form is available from the office or on the website. The following guidelines must be followed:

1. The bottle must have the child's name clearly marked.
2. The current correct dosage must be clearly marked
3. The medication must be in a prescription bottle.
4. Medication will not be given unless all paperwork is completed.
5. Changes in long-term medications require a new written order by the physician.
6. Faxed orders are permitted.

**NON-PRESCRIPTION (OVER-THE-COUNTER) MEDICATIONS** such as aspirin, cough syrup, Tylenol, cold medicine, Benadryl, or CBD products must also have a form signed by the parent.

1. The physician may either complete and sign the medication form, or write a prescription to label the medication.
2. The parent must fill out the top of the medication form.
3. If the over-the-counter medication is not prescription labeled, the parent must label the medication. Please remember that this is a service provided by Northstar Academy but determined by state law and the above requirements must be followed.

### **Pandemic**

Please refer to our [School Reopening Safety Plan and Reopening Plan](#) for information specific to the COVID pandemic.

In the event of a pandemic event, the administrator or designee, will contact the local health department for guidance. The students and staff will be instructed by the nurse/clinic attendant on the importance of hand washing, coughing/sneezing into the elbow, using tissues and

disinfecting areas of use. Students and staff will be monitored by the nurse/clinic attendant for signs and symptoms. If present, the student/staff member will be sent home with information on when they may return to school. They will be separated from others and given a mask to wear. Communication will be sent to the parents via email on recommendations for students attending school during this event. The custodial staff will disinfect and sanitize all surfaces commonly touched (phones, door handles, desks, table tops, water fountains etc). The custodian will work with IT/technology teacher on the best way to disinfect electronic devices. If a student is absent for an extended period of time, the student will be sent work home and/or may be able to attend class virtually. After the event, the nurse/clinic attendant will continue to monitor for illness. A “return to learning” program will be initiated to help students get back on track and counseling will be provided as needed.

The Head of School shall immediately report any unusual occurrences of infection or contagious diseases, epidemic outbreaks, poisoning or other occurrences (such as mumps, head lice, scabies and bed bugs) which present a direct threat to the welfare, safety or health of any student, faculty, or staff to the licensure office, local health authorities and the student’s family.

Instances of chronic communicable diseases among Northstar Academy staff will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the staff member currently poses a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves and/or others in continuing to perform essential job functions, with or without reasonable accommodations, and whether that staff member should be permitted to continue working at the school without restrictions, work under specified restrictions and conditions, or be excluded from school.

### **Safety**

During curricular activities, teachers adhere to the following safety plan. This plan applies to all curricular activities that could pose a risk to students including but not limited to vocational education.

#### **Safety Plan**

1. Prior to using any equipment or substances that could pose a risk to students (e.g. tools, chemicals, heated surfaces, etc.), students first receive instruction in the associated risks. Students must demonstrate comprehension of both risks and procedures to remain safe before engaging in high-risk activities. Students may demonstrate their comprehension verbally, in writing, or with gestures in accordance with their learning needs.
2. Students must be closely supervised during any instructional activity that involves significant risk for students. Teachers may make arrangements for additional supervision before these activities.
3. Students will learn to identify and will use appropriate safety equipment such as gloves, masks, safety glasses, and weight belts.
4. Students will identify and will use appropriate safety procedures such as hand-washing, maintaining appropriate body space/distance, asking for help, and lifting techniques.
5. The school will maintain an inventory of necessary safety equipment and will check the items for proper functioning before use. The school will periodically check equipment used for instruction for safety and proper functioning.

6. Signs concerning critical safety hazards and procedures will be posted in critical locations.

**Staff members will be regularly trained in emergency procedures and will have access to First Aid supplies in the classroom.**

### **Staff Training**

Northstar Academy will have adequate faculty/staff who are trained in CPR, First Aid, Epi-Pen and AED procedures on campus during school hours and while out on school sponsored activities.

### **Student Accidents**

Northstar Academy assumes no financial responsibility for medical expenses resulting from injury suffered by a student at the school or while involved in a school-sponsored activity. Any accident should be reported to the nurse/clinic attendant who will then report it to the Head of School. Parents will be notified immediately. A written report will be maintained on file.

### **Substances – Unlawful**

Virginia Law prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages and marijuana by persons under the age of 21 and prohibits the consumption of illegal drugs by all persons, regardless of age. Criminal sanctions apply to any transactions involving alcohol and other drugs, and driving while under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or certain other drugs (illegal or not). These laws recognize, among other things, the social and health hazards from substance abuse and the devastation caused by combining drinking and driving.

Northstar Academy agrees with the public policy embodied in these laws and is unequivocally committed to supporting them, both on and off campus. The school reiterates its strong opposition to the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and drugs at parties whether or not they are Northstar functions.

Northstar Academy recognizes that the primary responsibility for a student's off-campus activities rests with the student and the parents. It is not the school's intention to intervene in that relationship. Northstar Academy does, however, encourage and support a commitment to social activities that conform to the law.

### **Work Experiences**

Many of our students gain their first work experiences working while at Northstar Academy. These experiences may be as part of a class' curriculum or a social activity. Whenever students work at Northstar Academy, these work experiences are designed to be components of the student's instructional program and serve to help the student make progress toward educational goals. Northstar Academy does not use student labor for the benefit of itself as an institution. All experiences involving student work maintain compliance with Child Labor Laws.

## **PARENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Parents Rights**

Parents have the right to:

- Request to arrange a time to examine their child's data notebook and student records including clinic record.
- Request a time to meet with their child's teacher or other Northstar employees interacting with their child at school
- Be notified when medical services are being offered to their child.
- Be notified if their child has been involved in a behavioral incident (victim or perpetrator) or broken school rules.
- Expect an educational environment that is safe for their child.
- Expect an educational environment that respects their religious freedoms and beliefs.
- Decline involvement in school fundraising activities.
- Be notified when their child will be leaving campus for field trips, work internships or community based instruction.
- Be notified if their child is absent from school or classes.
- Have the opportunity to volunteer at school sponsored events.
- Receive written notice and have the option to opt-out of instruction on topics such as sex education and sexual orientation.
- Additional rights include those spelled out in the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education "Parental Rights in Special Education".

### **Parents Responsibilities**

Parents expect quality education from Northstar and in order to provide that quality, Northstar asks the following from parents:

1. **Prompt delivery and pick-up of children.**

School starts promptly at 7:50a.m. and is dismissed at 3:05 p.m. **Students should arrive no earlier than 7:30 a.m. and should be picked up no later than fifteen minutes after dismissal.** Children work hard all day; they are tired by dismissal time, making prompt pick up important. Carpool arrangements are the responsibility of parents involved. School personnel must be informed in writing of changes.

2. **Send your child to school well rested.**

A child with learning differences often has difficulty "tuning in" and paying attention. Those difficulties are compounded when the student is not well rested, sometimes leading to increased educational *and/or behavioral problems*. *When a child is tired, they are more likely to respond impulsively, strike out at imagined wrongs, quarrel, and misbehave. Teachers need well-rested, cooperative children to provide the quality education expected of Northstar Academy.*

3. **Provide your child with a balanced, nutritious diet - including breakfast.**

A child is better able to concentrate and learn if they follow a proper diet. A good breakfast and pleasant morning are essential to beginning a productive school day, and a nutritious lunch (and mid-day snack for younger students) helps them maintain



attention through the day. Check with your child to determine the right amount of food they require, and monitor changing needs throughout the year.

**4. Encourage regular student attendance.**

Children with learning differences lose more than one day's learning when their routine is interrupted. Consistently arriving late or leaving school early affects children's progress and growth. They also miss the opportunity to socialize with their friends, and then play "catch up" all day, which often leads to disruption in class and frustration. Every effort should be made to be on time. If a student arrives late, they must check in at the front desk before being admitted to the classroom. If a parent must pick up a student early, they must come to the front desk. A student will not be released directly to parents from the classroom, lunch, or recess. The receptionist will call a student for early dismissal. These policies are designed to ensure the safety of all children.

**5. Cooperation in setting and monitoring a nightly homework and silent reading time.**

Northstar Academy requires each student to read at home each night to strengthen their skills. Occasionally there also will be special projects that will require your help. Homework assignments are carefully planned to enhance skills, but because the process for learning is as important as the product, outside work is limited. Review and initial the daily homework log in the Student Agenda book each night.

**6. Pay tuition promptly.**

Northstar Academy is a non-profit organization that maintains the lowest possible tuition. Payments must be paid on time in order for your child's continued enrollment. Arrangements for exceptions must be made with the Director of Finance and Operations.

**7. Communicate with the school regarding any medical, educational counseling, or special services your child is receiving.**

In this interdisciplinary field, close communication and exchange of information between the professionals involved is imperative, allowing for better service to your child.

**8. Adhere to oral medication policy.**

Medication to be administered at school must be accompanied by a completed authorization form that is signed by the parent. This applies to prescription as well as over-the-counter medications. Please notify the office if your child is using special medications, even those that are not administered at school. Also please refill prescriptions promptly so that there is no lapse in administration at school.

**9. Maintain realistic expectations for your child.**

Your child needs to feel that they are successful in your eyes.

**10. Contribute your time and talents to Northstar Academy.**

We encourage you to take advantage of all that Northstar Academy has to offer students and their families. There are many volunteer opportunities to get involved as a room parent, chaperone, club sponsor, library aide, fundraiser, and more. Please contact Administration for more information.

**11. We encourage parents to assist with field trips, special events, and in the library, Northstar is grateful for parent involvement. Younger siblings, particularly those of**

preschool age, should not attend these functions whenever possible.

12. All students and teachers work to help keep the school building and grounds clean during the school year. In addition to the daily custodial service provided by the school, students, parents and teachers may take on special projects from time to time to clean, maintain, and improve our school environment.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Business Office Procedures**

Any inquiries concerning tuition, scholarship, fees, account balances, etc. should be directed to the Director of Finance and Operations. No student will be allowed to begin school unless all previous financial obligations to the school have been paid in full/met. Students will not be permitted to begin school unless the first payment of the selected payment options has been made.

Cooperation in making payments on time is expected and appreciated because we count on tuition payments to meet our obligations.

### **Business Office - Hours of Operation**

Regular School Year - Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. or at the discretion of the Director of Finance and Operations.

Summer - Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### **Financial Assistance**

Applications are available for scholarships. A limited number are available, and awards are based on need. Scholarship recipients are determined by the scholarship committee, which includes the Head of School, Director of Finance and Operations, and other appointed members. Students who receive scholarships from the school are not eligible for any other tuition discount. Students who have received financial assistance/scholarships must display upstanding school citizenship including good behavior and grades equivalent to ability level.

### **Student Accounts**

The business office maintains financial records for each student. Questions regarding student accounts and other financial matters should be directed to this office. **Students' grades, comments, transcripts, or diplomas cannot be released until accounts are paid in full. Students whose accounts are in arrears may not be allowed to attend school.**

### **Tuition**

Annual tuition at Northstar Academy varies based on grade level and enrollment date. Northstar updates its Private Tuition Rate sheet annually containing student enrollment fees, book & supplies costs, Tuition Reimbursement fees and options as well as payment options. The Private Tuition Rate sheet is included with the re-enrollment contract, in the admission packets and available upon request anytime from the Business or Admissions offices.

There is no blanket ruling concerning tuition as a Federal Income Tax deduction. Tuition that is

paid by another person specifically for the use of a specific student is NOT considered a donation to the school and is NOT tax deductible. If you have questions, please consult your tax advisor.

Inquiries regarding tuition, financial assistance, fees, account balance, etc. should be directed to the Director of Finance and Operations.

### Tuition Refund

In accepting a child for enrollment, Northstar Academy assumes expenses which are not reduced by the child's withdrawal during the school year. For this reason the school cannot refund full tuition or cancel **unpaid obligations when a child is absent, withdrawn, or dismissed for any reason except as provided by Virginia law.**

### Tuition Payment Options

Outlined below are the available options for tuition payment. Cooperation in making your payments on time will be much appreciated since we count on your payments to meet our obligations. Once the payment is received for the agreed upon payment option, your student may begin school. There are two options available.

Payment plans are set up through the electronic FACTS Tuition Management System.

A Payment in full by August 1: Deposit due on signing of Contract.

Participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is recommended. I understand that Student may not start classes until tuition has been paid in full.

B Installment Payment Plan: Deposit due on signing of Contract. The remaining payments are due as agreed to with FACTS. A payment plan with FACTS must be set up prior to August 1 of the school year, or if the student is enrolling after August 1, within one week of signing the contract. Students may not start classes until a FACTS account has been established. All Tuition and fees must be paid in FULL prior to May 31 of the current school year.

Once signed by the appropriate parent(s)/guardians and Northstar Academy, the enrollment contract is in force as a binding agreement, unless withdrawn prior to the commitment date specified on the contract. The parent(s)/legal guardians are responsible for making tuition payments on a timely basis, consistent with the payment option selected. Northstar is entitled to retrieve all legal fees incurred if legal action becomes necessary to collect tuition owed.

Ancillary charges for such items as book fines and athletic equipment must be paid on a timely basis and may be added to the student billing accounts also. Payments for these fees are due to Northstar Academy as billed. Final transcripts/records to colleges or any other school (should a student transfer) will not be released until outstanding bills are satisfied. Transcript/records requests should be made in writing two weeks in advance to the Registrar.

Once the payment is received for the agreed upon payment option, your student may begin school. Students are not permitted to attend school if there is an outstanding financial obligation to the school. If you select any payment option other than the Single Payment Plan you must set up an account with FACTS Tuition Management.

Monies for all activities of Northstar Academy should be forwarded to the Business Office at

8055 Shrader Road, Henrico, VA 23294. Please identify the purpose of the payment on the memo line of the check with a note accompanying the payment. Questions or concerns regarding student billing accounts or other related financial matters should be directed to the Business Office at (804) 747-1003.

A reservation deposit must accompany the enrollment contract. The remaining tuition is billed as scheduled on the enrollment contract. Textbook costs and incidentals are extra and are payable upon receipt of statements at the beginning of the school year or at other times students begin new classes.

#### Tuition Reimbursement Insurance

Northstar Academy offers a Tuition Reimbursement Insurance Plan. This plan (subject to its terms, conditions, and limitations) may provide reimbursement of unearned tuition due the school in case of illness, injury, death of a parent or student, required withdrawal for scholastic failure, transfer of family, etc. If you choose to pay tuition by Payment Plan B, participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is mandatory. You may call the Business Office for additional information.

#### Veteran Tuition Benefits

Northstar Academy accepts Veterans Educational Benefits for any individual who is entitled to educational benefits under chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, or chapter 33, Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. Northstar permits any covered individual to attend or participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to the educational institution a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 31 or 33 (a "certificate of eligibility" can also include a "Statement of Benefits" obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) website - eBenefits, or a VAF 28-1905 form for chapter 31 authorization purposes). Northstar Academy will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual's inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under chapter 31 or 33.



**TO BE COMPLETED ELECTRONICALLY DURING THE REGISTRATION PROCESS IN THE ACHIEVE PARENT PORTAL.**

**HANDBOOK AGREEMENT/SIGNATURES PAGE  
2021-2022 STUDENT & PARENT SIGNATURE FORM**

My child \_\_\_\_\_ and I have read the 2021-2022 Northstar Academy Student-Parent Handbook and agree to the rules and policies set forth by Northstar Academy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Please print)

## **APPENDIX**

### **Course Descriptions for all Students**

- **Seeing Stars: Symbol Imagery for Phonological and Orthographic Processing in Reading and Spelling.** The Seeing Stars program develops symbol imagery: the ability to visualize sounds and letters in words for both phonological and orthographic processing. Students move through a series of steps – from single consonants/vowels to multisyllabic and contextual reading – to develop the imagery-language connection for competency in written language.
- **Visualizing and Verbalizing for Language Comprehension and Thinking (VV)**  
The Visualizing and Verbalizing program develops concept imagery for both oral and written language. Through a series of steps, students learn to create an imaged Gestalt (whole) and integrate that imagery with language as a basis for language comprehension and thinking.
- **Visualizing & Verbalizing Fundamentals (VV Fundamentals)**  
Students receive additional reading reinforcement using Lindamood-Bell Visualizing and Verbalizing Comprehension strategies in a small group setting.
- **Math Resource**  
Students receive additional instruction on basic math skills, reinforce mastery of IEP and IAP goals and further prepare for SOLs. *This course is offered as an elective, and is not a math credit.*

### **Lower School Course Descriptions**

Students will receive instruction in classes with no more than an 8:1 student teacher ratio.

Instruction and activities outlined will be obtained from the Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The Standards of Learning will identify content for essential components of curriculum at elementary grade levels for the following subjects listed.

**Mathematics** Students will focus on the basic development of number and operations, measurement, algebraic thinking, geometry, data analysis and probability. Students will be exposed to age appropriate math instruction while mastering the skills at their instructional level as well as their individual goals.

**Science** In this course, students will analyze matter, life processes and systems, resources, interrelationships in earth/space system, earth patterns, cycles, and change. Students will familiarize themselves with common materials, objects, and living things. Questioning and hypothesizing will become a more

important stressor as the student prepares for middle level curriculum.

**English** Students will receive direct instruction on oral language, reading, and writing as well as understanding basic phonetic principles, demonstrating that print makes sense, and comprehension of fiction and nonfiction. Lower school English classes are multiage with emphasis on exposing students to appropriate grade and age appropriate instruction, but providing opportunities for remediation.

**Social Science** This course will focus on what it means to be an American and will develop an appreciation for those individuals and civilizations who have contributed to the diversity of America. Students will explore the contributions of Greece, Rome, Mali, American Heritage, Virginia Geography, Early Virginia History, Revolutionary Period, Nineteenth Century, and Twentieth Century.

**Social Skills** This course is to help prepare students to integrate with their peers at school and in the community and to develop social competence. Students will work on their individual social goals in the following areas: exploration of self and others, emotions, relationships, communication, social exchange, social language, and peer issues.

### **Middle School Course Descriptions**

Students will receive instruction in classes with no more than an 8:1 student teacher ratio. Each educational course will follow appropriate curriculum as provided by the Virginia Department of Education. The descriptions distinguish the fundamental content implemented for the individual courses.

#### **Mathematics**

Students will be exposed to age appropriate math instruction while mastering the skills at their instructional level as well as their individual goals. The curriculum is based on the standards and philosophy of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Math 6- Skills in mathematical understanding will be developed. Students will engage in activities based on the essential components of the mathematics curriculum at the sixth grade level to include transformations, geometric relationships, symbolic rules, angle measurements, graph predictions and comparisons, prime numbers, and square roots. Activities involving computers and calculators will be integrated into the classroom.

Math 7- Students will investigate and solve practical problems involving volume and surface area of rectangular solids. An understanding of scientific notation will be developed and an emphasis on linear and algebraic formulas will be recognized. Students will compare area models and organized lists as well as use probability to make predictions.

Math 8- This course will focus on concepts of arithmetic and introduce the student to algebra and geometry through real world applications. The student will demonstrate

knowledge of the connections between mathematical patterns and algebraic expressions. Students will demonstrate the skills on how to use functions on a calculator.

On Cloud Nine Math (OCN)- The On Cloud Nine Math (OCN) program stimulates the ability to image and verbalize the concepts and processes of math. Concept imagery and numeral imagery are integrated with language to improve math computation and problem solving. *Participation in this course is limited to one year.*

## **Science**

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

Discovery Science 6 - The course will emphasize data analysis, experimentation, and content related to Discovery Science. Students will recognize relationships and patterns in Earth and Space systems. The concept of change will be explored through the study of transformations of energy and matter. Students explore concepts such as force and motion, and a detailed understanding of weather, water, and living systems becomes a focus of instruction.

Life Science 7- Students will concentrate on content related to Life Science. The student will develop basic science concepts, and complete basic units of study supported by conceptual themes such as photosynthesis, zoology, and botany. This course shows a more complex understanding of change, cycles, patterns, and relationships in the living world. Students will explore cellular organization and the classification of organisms, in addition to the ever-changing relationships among organisms, populations, communities, and ecosystems.

Physical Science 8- Major areas of focus include the organization and use of the periodic table; physical and chemical changes; nuclear reactions; temperature and heat; sound; light; electricity and magnetism; and work, force, and motion. An understanding of the nature and structure of matter and the characteristics of energy will be stressed.

## **English**

The skills of oral language, reading/literature, writing, and research will be emphasized to help the student master basic skills and proceed to the next level of instruction. Curriculum will contain instruction and activities outlined by the Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. Emphasis will be on grade and age appropriate instruction with remediation of skills when necessary.

English 6- English 6 encourages students to share personal opinions, understand varying perspectives, and distinguish between fact and opinion. Students will read a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts and will use these texts as a means to study word origin and grow vocabulary. Narrative compositions will be planned, drafted, revised, and edited; and students will focus on sentence formation, usage, and mechanics.



English 7- Further development of oral communication skills are the main goal of this course, with students identifying the roles of verbal and nonverbal behaviors in communication. Through activities with fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, as well as an emphasis on figurative language, students will continue to enhance spelling, grammar, and vocabulary.

English 8 - Students will learn techniques to conduct their own interviews, which they will use to develop and present orally in groups and individually. Students will further develop communication skills by demonstrating the correct use of language, spelling, and mechanics to produce media messages. Generalization of reading and writing skills across subjects is a focus, as well as utilizing these skills to critically analyze literature.

## **Social Science**

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All social science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

US History to 1865- Concepts of civics, economics, and geography will be continued throughout learning United States history from the Pre-Columbian times to the middle of the Reconstruction Period. Students will strengthen their skills in using maps and globes and organizing events in a chronological order. The outline of this course will cover: United States History to 1865, Pre-Columbian America, Early Exploration, British Colonial America, The Revolutionary War, The Early Republic, Antebellum Period, An Expanding Nation, and The Civil War.

US History 1865 to Present- Students will continue to sequence events and demonstrate their knowledge of geography. There will be more of an emphasis on vocabulary acquisition and factors of causation in this course. Students will be able to label oceans, continents, and find locations given longitude and latitude. The outline of this course will cover: United States History from 1866 to present day, Reconstruction period, The Gilded Age, Expansion, Imperialism, World War I, The Great Depression and Roaring 20s, World War II, The Cold War, and The Civil Rights Movement.

Civics & Economics-8<sup>th</sup> - This course will use a variety of primary sources and emphasize discussion and stimulation. Students will be exposed to current events while taking a look back at the events that shaped the United States government. This course will emphasize personal and civic responsibility while learning and understanding events such as: Foundations of Government, Foundations of American Government, Framing of the Constitution, Rights, Politics, and The Court System.

## **Physical Education & Health**

Students will combine fundamental skills into more complex movement forms in units such physical fitness and conditioning. Students will experience recreational and team sports activities. Students will learn the fundamentals of a health issue including nutrition, diseases, personal growth, personal health, safety, first aid, consumer health, body systems, and substance

abuse. Students will recognize healthy lifestyle choices, interpret health information and begin to set goals that promote good health.

### **Social Skills/Advisory**

The middle school social skills curriculum focuses on acquiring basic skills and understanding of social skills and concepts. Through whole-group, direct instruction, small-group role plays & practice and structured conversation with peers, students work on identifying emotions, learning how to ask for help, understanding personal goals, and begin to work on problem solving and conflict resolution skills.

## **Upper School Course Descriptions**

Students will receive instruction in classes with no more than an 8:1 student- teacher ratio. Each educational course will follow appropriate curriculum as provided by the Virginia Department of Education. The descriptions distinguish the fundamental content implemented for the individual courses. Occasionally, virtual/online courses may be offered through an accredited provider. All online instruction is supported by a classroom teacher.

### **Mathematics**

Students will be exposed to age appropriate math instruction while mastering the skills at their instructional level as well as their individual goals. The curriculum is based on the standards and philosophy of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Algebra I The goal of this course is to give students a gradual introduction to understand algebraic concepts. Students will participate in activities that apply mathematical concepts and skills used for problem solving. The course will emphasize the structure of algebraic expressions and use statistics and geometry to study linear expressions. *This course can be offered over a two-year span, as Algebra I – Part I, and Algebra I – Part II.*

Algebra II A deeper emphasis on algebraic concepts will be an important focal point in this course. Advanced algebraic concepts will be explored through a study of equations, functions, inequalities, systems of equations, polynomials, rational and radical equations, complex numbers, and sequence and series. Students will demonstrate the knowledge of linear and quadratic forms, powers and roots, logarithmic functions, and polynomial functions. Real world situations will be used as a modeling tool to emphasize these concepts. *Completion of Algebra 1 and Geometry required.*

Algebraic Functions and Data Analysis (AFDA) - This course is designed for students who would benefit from additional instruction in algebraic concepts prior to taking Algebra II. Students will analyze function families and their characteristics, examine data and generate formulas, using previous knowledge of transformations to write equations. The student will evaluate probabilities and analyze the normal distributions. The course will emphasize the collection of data and how to design and conduct an experiment. *Completion of Algebra 1 required.*

AWOW - Algebra for the World of Work focuses on teaching algebra concepts such as one and two step equations, working with positive and negative numbers, fractions

and percentages. The course is designed so that the students will be exposed to the algebra they will need for everyday activities without the complicated equations or graphs they may never see again. AWOW focuses on the use of manipulatives and concrete materials to introduce math concepts. *This course is offered as an elective, and is not a math credit.*

Geometry - This course emphasizes the skills developed in identifying coordinates, transformational geometry, measurements, theorems, and formal definitions of geometric terms. Students will use their knowledge to discover relationships between angles, solve real world problems using the Pythagorean Theorem, verify characteristics of polygons, and computer formulas to find coordinates. *This course can be offered over a two-year span, as Geometry – Part I, and Geometry – Part II.*

Trigonometry- An understanding of circular and triangular functions will be developed in this course. Students will be able to define the circular and triangular functions of an angle, use their knowledge to find angles in a unit circle, and use the inverse trigonometry function to find angle measurements. Study will emphasize solving real-world problems using triangles. *Completion of Algebra II required. One semester course, offered in conjunction with Algebra II review or Pre-Calculus.*

Personal Finance and Economics- The goal of this online course is for students to gain a basic knowledge of economic concepts. Students will show an understanding of the role of producers and consumers in a market economy, price system, income, the nation's financial system, and taxes. The course will provide students with the resources on how to manage a budget, obtain credit, and compute taxes.

Pre-Calculus- Concepts that will be focused on this course are: polynomial and rational functions, composite functions, and logarithmic and exponential functions. Students will engage in activities to help gain further knowledge on how to formulate, investigate, and describe the concepts of these functions in problem solving. Students will practice the use of matrices to organize data and then solve equations using those matrices. *Completion of Algebra II required. One semester course, offered in conjunction with Trigonometry.*

Life-Skills Math - This course is focused on the real world application of mathematics knowledge, and includes hands on practice and written scenarios. Concepts taught include: money, both paper and digital; budgeting and life planning; time and time management (e.g. reading a schedule); measurement; and fractions related to daily living (e.g. cooking). *This course is not a substitute for Personal Finance & Economics. This course is offered as an elective, and is not a math credit. Participation in this course is limited to one year.*

## Science

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

Earth Science/Earth Science Concepts- This course connects the study of the Earth's composition, structure, processes, and history. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of plate tectonic movement, the rock cycle, and identify renewable and nonrenewable resources. This course further studies the features of the ocean floor, compares and contrasts physical and chemical changes, and relates the material to our planet Earth. Other concepts reviewed in this course are: meteorology, oceanography, freshwater studies, astronomy, and geology.

Biology/Biology Concepts- This course's focus will be to provide students with a detailed understanding of living things. The history of biological thought and the evidence that supports it will be explored to provide the foundation for investigating biochemical life processes, molecular biology, heredity and evolution, organisms, and population. Students will observe cell division and the development of organisms, the role of biology in society.

Chemistry/Chemistry Concepts- This course is designed to provide students with a detailed understanding of the interaction of matter and energy. Students will explore laboratory techniques, problem solving applications, and the manipulation of chemical quantities. Concepts such as the periodic table and atomic structure will be discovered through the use of visuals and the idea that science can provide explanations about nature will be explained.

Environmental Science- The student will explore human influences on the environment, both positive and negative, as well as tools to work with the environment and keep it healthy and productive. The relationship between living things and the environment will be studied. Other basic units of study in this course will include: plants, animals, ecology, and the change of populations through time.

Physics - This course is based on a conceptual approach to physics. Through a historic and hands on philosophy, students learn the basic and essential mechanisms and rules of nature as they apply to our everyday lives. Typically, the course begins with traditional Newtonian physics, with the second half of the course dedicated to 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century topics such as electromagnetic induction and energy conversion efficiency.

## **English**

The skills of oral language, reading/literature, writing, and research will be emphasized to help the student master basic skills and proceed to the next level of instruction. Curriculum will contain instruction and activities outlined by the Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. Emphasis will be on grade and age appropriate instruction with remediation of skills when necessary.

English 9/ English 9 Concepts- This course is focused on students studying world literature and mythology, critiquing poetry, and analyzing the use of diction and identifying types of figurative language. Students will learn how to plan an oral presentation while researching information to present. They will evaluate the clarity and accuracy of the information found in text.

English 10/ English 10 Concepts- Students will participate in small group learning

activities to interpret writings and further develop communication skills. Students will identify and use grammatically correct language for various topics, audiences, and purposes. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the different characteristics between poetry, drama, short stories, nonfiction, and legends.

English 11/ English 11 Concepts- Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature of the United States through discussion. Writing instruction will focus on evaluating informative and persuasive presentations, analyzing informational materials, and defining poetry vocabulary. In preparation for the SAT, students will expand their vocabulary and grammar.

English 12/ English 12 Concepts- Students will demonstrate their understanding of British literature through a chronological approach. Vocabulary study as well as correct language usage will be stressed. This course will encourage students to analyze printed and electronic resources, develop a research paper, and generate both expository and persuasive writings. At the end of this course students will organize and perform a formal presentation.

## **History & Social Science**

Students follow instruction and engage in activities featured by Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The curriculum will outline content for essential components of the Standards of Learning. All social science classes will be taught with interactive instruction with an emphasis on individual goals.

World History I/ World History I Concepts- This course focuses on the exploration of human civilization through the Renaissance. Students will study the curriculum in a chronological and geographic manner to gain a perspective on the development of relationships globally. Maps, texts, charts, and diagrams will be used to explore and compare geography, philosophy, religion, and contributions of past societies to our own.

World History II/ World History II Concepts- Expanding on concepts learned in World History I, this course follows the exploration of human civilization from the Renaissance era through the present day. Students will study the curriculum in a chronological and geographic manner to gain a perspective on the development of relationships globally. Study will emphasize geography, political change and theory, and the impact of past conflicts on events in the modern world. Students will also build on their history analysis skills by examining cause and effect, comparing and contrasting various nations and political systems, and exploring reasons for change throughout time.

U.S. History/ U.S. History Concepts- Students in this course will examine the exploration and colonization of the United States past from the late 1970s. Students will demonstrate knowledge of past wars, social movements, arguments, and institutions that have shaped our country from its founding. Instruction will examine trends and patterns that have shaped modern America and will challenge students to analyze the nation's past.

Government- This course is designed to give an understanding of American political and constitutional principles. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the influence of

important documents such as the Magna Carta, the English Petition of Rights, and the English Bill of Rights. Students take a deeper look on the origins of the American Government and how the Constitution was framed. The concepts of a democracy and the different political philosophies will be examined. At the end of the course, students will demonstrate skills on how to be a responsible citizen.

### **Physical Education & Health**

Students will further develop skills that promote lifetime personal fitness and sports skills. Students will experience recreational and team sports activities. The health component of these courses will further expand upon nutrition, diseases, mental health, substance abuse, body systems, personal health, personal fitness, first aid, and preventative measures that promote lifelong health & fitness.

P.E. & Health 9—Students will participate in team sports to include basketball, volleyball, kickball, and soccer. Health content will include consumer health, first aid, alcohol and other drugs and disease prevention.

P.E. & Health 10—Students will participate in fitness activities, team and individual sports and conditioning. Health content will summarize all topic areas covered from middle school through high school with the goal of promoting lifetime habits that support physical and mental health.

### **Social Skills**

The upper school social development program emphasizes performance and fluency levels of social skills development. Through whole-group, direct instruction, small-group practice & role play and structured conversation with peers, students work on refining their individual social function. Emphasis is placed on personal responsibility, the importance of effective communication, coping skills, and self-advocacy. Transition topics are also included.

### **Electives & Enrichment**

Students are provided with exposure to art, music and technology in lower, middle and upper school programs. Additional elective courses are offered for upper school students to meet diploma requirements.

Art - Students participate in hands-on production of a variety of art forms to include drawing and painting, sculpture, pottery, silk screening, set-design, and craft activities adapted to developmental level. Students explore the role of art in world cultures and contemporary life. Art appreciation is emphasized. Thematic activities emphasize student art including a yearly theme, the Winter Show, and the Talent Show.

Computer Technology - Lower school students visit the computer lab to learn basic computer skills. Elective classes are offered for Middle and Upper School students.

Foreign Language - Students are able to learn Spanish beginning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Students are initially introduced to Spanish language and culture with primary emphasis on listening and speaking. As skill develops, reading and writing in Spanish are

introduced and a greater emphasis is placed on grammar.

Music/ Chorus - Weekly participation in music activities is provided to all lower school students. Beginning in middle school, students are offered the opportunity to participate in the school chorus. The group performs at school programs such as the Talent Show and the Winter Show.

Intro to Coding & Robotics - The objective of this course is to introduce the student to basic programming as well as problem solving strategies. Students will work hands-on in teams to design, build, program and document their progress. Topics may include motor control, gear ratios, friction, program loops, logic, and decision-making. Our ability to function and progress in the modern age is dependent on electronics and robotics technologies. This course provides a depth and breadth of the basic skills required in today's automated manufacturing environment. Students will explore careers, build circuits, and use principles of physics to analyze basic electronic and robotic components.

Computer Science Foundations - This is an introductory course designed to engage students in computational thinking and practice. The course focuses on both computer science and content and computation practice. We use the Exploring Computer Science curriculum which consists of 6 units: Human Computer Interaction, Problem Solving, Web Design, Programming, Computer and Data Analysis, and Robotics. Throughout these units, students will discuss the ethical and social issues in computer and careers in computer. Topics such as responsibility of software users and developers, intellectual property rights, software failures, piracy of software, and open-source development will be explored. Students will also identify and describe careers in computing and careers that employ computing.

Family Life - Family Life is offered annually in same-sex groups with the objective of teaching students how to make healthy choices for their futures. This includes, but is not limited to, instruction in family living and community relationships; the value of family relationships; human sexuality; human reproduction; characteristics of abusive relationships; and mental health education and awareness. *Parents and/or guardians have the opportunity to opt students out of receiving Family Life instruction.*

### **Career Academy Course Descriptions:**

#### **Hospitality**

**Course Description:** This course covers 4 main roles of the hospitality industry. This includes the roles of a Front Desk Representative, Guestroom Attendant, Kitchen Cook, and a Restaurant/Banquet Server. Students will learn an overview of the necessary skills for pre-, during and post- shift requirements for each section to prepare them to enter into successful employment in the hospitality industry. All lessons will be taught via a combination of hands-on experience in the classroom and at weekly worksite internships.

## **Business Marketing and Technology**

**Course Description:** This course is designed for students to develop the basic skills necessary for working in an administrative support role such as typing, filing, scheduling, and organizing materials. Students will explore words processing, spreadsheets, database, telecommunications, desktop publishing, and financial records management. This course is the equivalent to 2 36-hour courses: Computer Information Systems, and Entrepreneurship Education. Units will be individualized to challenge students who already have strong basic skills in place. Job shadowing will be ongoing throughout the year and will support classroom content. Software and Operating Systems to be explored include but are not limited to: Microsoft progressWord, Power Point, Excel, Typing Agent, and Google Chrome. Students will gain a solid foundation for how computers function in the workplace. Students who make optimal progress will be eligible to sit for a Microsoft Certification test.

## **Construction and Maintenance**

### **Course Description:**

Construction and Maintenance introduces students to skills in residential and commercial construction. This course serves as an introduction to the skills necessary to pursue a career in construction or maintenance fields. Emphasis is given to safety as students build their competence on discrete tasks. Specialized trades (Electrical, Plumbing, and HVAC) are explored in a survey format. A combination of the courses Building Trades I and Building Management I are equivalent to two 36-week courses. Students wishing to complete a specialization may take additional courses appropriate to their career pathways.

## **Materials Handling**

### **Course Description:**

This course is designed for students who grapple with multiple learning challenges and barriers to employment. Students will develop skills necessary for stocking goods, managing materials, maintaining a hospitable workplace, using a teamwork approach, and providing good customer service. Students will learn how to present themselves professionally and use good communication skills. Job shadowing experiences are an integral part of the educational experience.

## **Veterinary Assisting**

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to skills in the areas of working as a veterinary assistant. Students learn animal science and the care of animals, including the fundamentals of companion animal species and breeds, behavior and training, body systems, nutrition, and safety. Students develop basic skills and techniques for assisting the veterinarian/technician in the following areas: handling companion animals and other small mammals, grooming animals/caring for coats, feeding small mammals, and maintaining equipment and facilities.



## Addendum A

### Contingency Plan

Northstar Academy has a contingency plan that is outlined in the Crisis Plan Handbook in case of emergencies requiring CPR or Emergency First Aid or emergencies involving injury, illness, fire, violent or threatening behavior or illegal activities. In order to keep our students safe, each Northstar Academy employee reads and is familiar with the Crisis Plan Faculty Handbook which is a written emergency preparedness and response plan. Employees must follow the steps outlined in case of an emergency. In cases where 911 must be called, the call should be placed by a Northstar Academy administrator. The Northstar ConnectEd system allows Northstar to connect with parents in a timely and efficient manner.

Emergency Situation	Contingency Plan
Severe Injury/Severe illness	Administer first aid by trained staff, call 911, contact parent
Fire/Explosion	Evacuate to safe place, first aid, call 911, execute dismissal plan
Severe Weather- Earthquake	Staff remind students to stay in the room, drop and crouch under desks/tables. Use strong objects such as textbooks to protect heads if immediately accessible, do not delay taking cover.
Severe Weather-Tornado/Severe Thunderstorms	Staff should move students to designated safe area. Call code secure.
Severe Weather- Floods	Evacuate students and staff to designated safe area. Have students & staff drop into "safe" position away from metal objects and/or electrical equipment.
Kidnapped/Lost/Runaway Student	Immediately after it has been determined that a child has been lost/kidnapped, call 911.
Hazardous Materials	The Head of School is immediately notified or other administrative personnel if Head is not available. Code Shelter will be announced. Go to an uncontaminated area.
Intruder or Unauthorized person on campus	Notify Head of School/Administration to follow Crisis Plan Protocol.
Active Shooter/Intruder/Hostage/Riot/Weapon Threat	Determine location of intruder. Use Floor Plans To Assist First Responders. Document description of intruder (See Witness Description Form 5.0)
Bomb Threat	Listen carefully to the caller to gain as much information as possible. If the call appears to be a credible, ask the staff and admin to survey their instruction area and nearby restrooms carefully.
Loss of Utilities	Notify Head Of School/ Building Manager
Nuclear Incidents	Notify Head of School, ensure that everyone remains calm,
Off-Campus Serious Medical Emergencies	Assess student to determine severity of illness or injury.
Staff/Student Loss of Life	The Head Of School will be immediately notified in the event of the loss of life of a student or staff member.
Student Evacuation	Students accounted for, provide assistance to students

	requiring additional help, take student to designated meeting point
Acts of Terrorism	The Head Of School is immediately notified that an incident has occurred and that the Crisis Plan is in effect. Northstar Admin will call 911 to notify emergency services
Transportation Incidents	Stop the vehicle immediately and check to see if anyone including yourself, your students, or anyone in another vehicle is injured. If able, move to a safe location such as the side of the road.
Evacuation Procedure	Teachers and staff account for all students. Ensure any students / staff needing assistance are accounted for according to list
Shelter Procedure	Teachers and staff account for all students. Ensure any students / staff needing assistance are accounted for.
School dismissal not at regular time/school closing	Connect-Ed, E-mail, notify TV stations, website
Illegal Activities	Notify administration, administration will take appropriate action, police and parents notified
Emergency Situation – communication with off campus class in the event of a facility-level emergency on campus	Building administrator will communicate with off-campus faculty and provide direction for class (i.e. shelter in place, return to campus, or return to alternative site).