



NorthStar Community Charter School

N14463 Hwy 53, Minong, WI 54859 Ph: 715-466-2297

Student and Parent Handbook

Thank you for joining the NorthStar Community Charter School family. The enclosed materials explain our school and its mission. These materials are designed to contribute to the creation and maintenance of an environment that supports academic and social success. As we strive to provide an outstanding academic experience, we will continue to meet the primary goal of our mission statement, which is to provide Northwood area students in grades 4-8 with an innovative, world-class learning experience based on place, people, projects, and performance. To achieve this ultimate goal, parents, guardians, caregivers, and NorthStar must work together as a team to motivate, stimulate, and encourage our students to be the best at what they endeavor to achieve.

The Family Handbook explains in summary form, NorthStar's expectations for the following:

- NorthStar Values
- Attendance Policy
- Enrollment Windows
- Academic Plan
- Exit Plan
- Controlled Substance
- School Technology
- Personal Use Technology
- Clothing
- Weapons

Please review the handbook. All students are required to adhere to the policies outlined therein. All other Northwood policies will still be enforced. NorthStar Community Charter believes it takes a partnership of parents, guardians, caregivers, educators, volunteers and experts to academically and socially prepare our children for today's world. The administration of NorthStar wishes everyone a safe and successful school year.

NorthStar Values for Lifelong Success

At NorthStar we have the opportunity to develop a close knit learning community consisting of a wide range of ages and learning styles. The Core Values we emphasize are a very important part of the NorthStar education. Students attending Northstar are expected to understand, learn, and demonstrate they can exist in a learning community that places high regard on personal integrity, and responsibility. The following list represents values that NorthStar Community Charter students should be able to demonstrate during their time at this school.

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Personal Responsibility
- Quality
- Respecting Others
- Care and respect of school property
- Trust
- Service
- Punctuality
- Attendance
- Positivity
- Family/Community Engagement
- Effort
- Pride in one's work
- Self Respect
- Team Work
- Participation
- Accountability
- Courtesy
- Independence

Attendance

NorthStar Community Charter School is a school of choice. As a charter school we provide a project based curriculum centered on the natural world. As such our students need to be present and be on time in order to get the maximum benefits from our school.

Attendance is an important factor affecting student achievement. If students are present, they have the opportunities to learn. There are other schools in our district that offer excellent educational opportunities in both elementary and middle school. NorthStar Community Charter School enrollment is limited to the number of students that it can accept per year and we feel these students need to be aware that they have a very unique and valuable opportunity to attend school here. Good school attendance is critical to being successful in school.

Attendance Policy

1. NorthStar has many learning opportunities that take place off school grounds that cannot be made up, therefore attendance is crucial. Students are expected to be here every day, on time, and prepared to learn, work, and be part of our school community.
2. Parents are required to notify the school in the event of a student absence.
 1. Per Northwood policy, a phone call or email message to the office is all that is needed. Notification should be made on the day of absence, preferably before school starts.
 2. If the student is absent and the office has not been notified, the school will attempt to contact a parent/legal guardian at home or work to notify them of the absence.
3. Wisconsin Law dictates all parents/legal guardians are able to excuse their child from school for a maximum of 10 days each school year (five days per semester) provided the following is done:
4. All school work must be arranged to be completed before or after the absence
5. After the parental excused days, or if the above conditions are not met, the Dean of Students determines the validity of the excuse.
6. If a student is going to be absent for more than one day, a *Prearranged Absence Form* should be completed and filed with the office three days prior to the absence.

Definition of Absences

1. Excused
 - A. Dentist/doctor's note
 - B. Death in the immediate family
 - C. Legal Obligations
 - D. Approved School Activities
 - E. Religious Obligations
 - F. Special circumstances approved by the Dean of Students or designee
2. Unexcused
 - A. Late or lack of a call or note for authorized absence.
 - B. Excess of 10 days (five days per semester) of parental excused absences
 - C. Late to school and reason is not authorized

Habitual Truancy

Parents/legal guardians will be notified by the school once their child has three unexcused absences. Truancy papers will be filed with the Washburn or Douglas County District Attorney's office after five unexcused absences occur. Students and parents/legal guardians may be issued citations and need to appear before the county judge for unexcused absences.

For any school activities that run beyond the typical school day, NorthStar may make adjustments in the calendar to balance the time students spend at school.

Entering NorthStar Community Charter School

Enrollment in the NorthStar Community Charter School is open to all students in grades 4-8 in the Northwood School District or those applying under the State of Wisconsin's open enrollment program. New students will only start in NorthStar at the beginning of each semester. Applications are available from the Northwood School District website or the district office.

For planning purposes, it is recommended that applications be submitted in the spring for the following school year. If applications exceed enrollment limits for the following school year, a lottery will be held by the Governance Council on the third Friday of May.

Applications received after the end of the school year through the second Friday of fall semester (after the first student contact day) of the following school year, will be accepted on an individual basis, in the order they were received.

Should seats still be available at semester, the procedure for the summer will be followed on a first come, first served basis up until the first student day of school at the start of second semester.

Students currently enrolled in NorthStar are assumed to be in attendance for the following year. NorthStar is also a school that promotes parent involvement and parents will be strongly encouraged to help with projects, field studies, attendance at Coffee Connections (if available), parent/teacher conferences, etc.

Exiting NorthStar Community Charter School

While attending NorthStar is a choice, it is also a commitment that you make between the school, teachers, governance council, students, and parents. If for some reason, your child wishes to exit NorthStar, a meeting will be scheduled between all parties involved.

NorthStar Academic Plan

Students not making adequate academic progress at NorthStar Community Charter may be subject to the following policies:

- A student showing inadequate progress on a project will need to meet with the advisor/proposal team to develop a progress plan.
- If insufficient progress is made during the specified timeframe, a parent/student/staff conference will be held to develop an improvement plan.
- At the conclusion of the improvement plan period, a conference will be held to determine the suitability of the NorthStar Community Charter project-based philosophy for that student's education. If at least 75% of the goals have been met, a new plan will be developed to address the remaining goals. If the goals remain substantially unmet, the discussion will center on determining the best educational environment for the student, which may include student transfer to the Northwood School or other school setting.

A Traveling School

Students attending NorthStar have a very unique opportunity in that they get to travel a great deal more than typical schools. Students are required to participate in a wide variety of field studies which may be during regular school hours, extended days, or overnight trips.

Field studies are an essential part of the student's learning experience at NorthStar Community Charter. Some examples of opportunities NorthStar students may participate in are:

- Museum trips
- Trips to business and industry
- Trips to study areas
 - Wisconsin Natural History Areas
 - County Parks
 - State Parks
 - Private Land
 - Lakes and Rivers
- Outdoor Recreation
 - Camping
 - Canoeing
 - Hiking
 - Cross Country Skiing
 - Water Safety Training
 - Biking
 - Geocaching
 - Ice Fishing

Students and parents are asked to fill out our emergency forms, travel permission forms, and contact forms to assist us in implementing a flexible and mobile learning environment. On occasion, parents may be asked to share part of a trip cost.

Controlled Substance Policy

NorthStar is a school of choice. No student is required to attend this charter school. Since NorthStar is a charter school, all students who are here have chosen to be here. All students also have other school options. Therefore, because it is a personal and family choice to attend NorthStar, and we want to maintain the highest levels of safety and a positive learning environment for all students, we have a zero tolerance for any drug, alcohol or tobacco use or possession by students.

While on NorthStar School grounds and on all trips students are subject to search per the Northwood District Policy if there is any suspicion of a violation of the controlled substance policy. All student storage, backpacks, bags, clothing, and vehicles can be searched at any time by school personnel.

Any student who violates the zero tolerance policy in any way will be subject to discipline within NorthStar and will mirror the Northwood School District Policies.

Equipment and Technology Use

All students and parents will be asked to read, understand, and sign the computer and technology check out agreement. Students have a very unique opportunity here to be issued

items such as laptop computers, GPS units, digital cameras, and other technology. Technology use is a privilege and should be accompanied by a very high level of care and responsibility on the student's part. All school issued equipment must be cared for in the instructed manner and used for school related purposes only. Students who violate the technology use and care agreement can lose their privilege and be held monetarily accountable for repair or replacement.

Personal Electronics Use

It's the 21st century and we realize that in many cases our students will have personal electronics. Given our unique school situation, it is not a bad idea to be able to communicate with home when necessary. However, when we are in session we require all personal electronics to be off unless otherwise approved by staff. Parents can contact NorthStar Community Charter School at any time at 715-466-2297 or via the school sponsored communication app. School staff have cell phones on during the school day and on trips.

Clothing

At NorthStar students are involved in a wide variety of activities both inside and out. It is essential that students have proper clothing for our activities. The rule of thumb is; dress for Wisconsin weather. Students should have proper footwear for hikes, and other outdoor activities. Clothing for active outdoor pursuits should also be considered throughout the year. It is always better to be warm and dry.

We ask that students refrain from wearing any clothing that has logos, pictures, sayings, or advertisements that relate to alcohol, overt sexual content, tobacco, or drugs. If a student arrives with such apparel they will be asked to change or turn the item inside out.

Weapons

No weapons allowed. The NorthStar staff reserves the right to make all decisions regarding the disciplinary status of any student found to be in possession of a weapon of any kind.



We, the undersigned, acknowledge that this handbook contains important information for parents, guardians and students. We acknowledge that we have received a copy of the NorthStar Community Charter School Family Handbook.

We are aware that this handbook contains information and policies for review. We have reviewed the information and policies contained in this handbook. We understand that the school policies as they are set forth in this handbook are part of a contract that exists between NorthStar and the parent/guardians and students. Therefore, to ensure that all parties have read the policies and agree to abide by them, **please sign the acknowledgement below, tear out this page, and return it to the school.** We are aware the NorthStar Community Charter School reserves the right at any time to amend or to add to the policies, regulations, and Code of Discipline Conduct contained in this handbook.

Print Name of Student_____
Signature of Student_____
Print Name of Parent/Guardian_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian_____
Date_____ Home Phone_____
Cell Phone_____
Parent/Guardian Email_____