

North Gem Elementary Handbook 2025-2026

LET THE LEARNING BEGIN



North Gem Elementary Handbook

North Gem Elementary School will open at 7:55 a.m. Students are expected to arrive at the school **no sooner than 7:45a.m.**

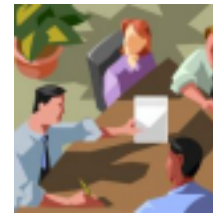
** The Bells at North Gem ring according to the high school schedule and have little to do with the elementary. Class begins at 8:00 a.m. Class is dismissed at 3:55.*

Entering the Building

- Parents or visitors wishing to enter the school are asked to enter in the main entrance and sign in at the office. Your cooperation is appreciated.
- Students may not enter the building during recess without permission from a teacher on duty or the classroom teacher.
- When the bell rings, each student will proceed quickly and quietly to the classroom.
- Students may not enter classrooms unless a teacher is present.
- Students can help keep the building clean by wiping their feet on the mats in front of the doors.

North Gem School District 149 Board of Trustees

- Raini Hayden – Chair
- Brandi Wakley -Vice Chair
- Marc Holbrook
- MaLissa Barfuss
- Paul Curtis
- Krissy LaMont– Board Clerk



School Board meetings are the 1st Monday of each month at 6:30 pm. Everyone is invited. If you want to be on the agenda, notify the district clerk. These community volunteers make difficult decisions and would welcome your attendance and participation at these monthly meetings.

FACULTY

Superintendent/Principal
K-12 Counselor/Federal Programs Director
Curriculum Director
District Clerk/Business Manager
Executive Superintendent Secretary
Jessica McCulloch
Stephanie Christensen
Janet Lish
Kim Lloyd

Kyler Miller
Suzanne Barfuss
Sam Wadsworth
Matt Lovell
Raquel Reed
Kindergarten/Preschool
1st Grade
2nd Grade
3rd Grade



Sam Wadsworth
Alex Sandoval

4th Grade
5th Grade

Parent Teacher Organization

Each year the PTO sponsors a number of activities for the children. Some of those activities include Muffins **with Mom**, **Donuts with Dad**, and **Dr. Seuss Week**. The PTO also supports and recognizes the teachers. Some of the ways they do this is by providing dinner for the teachers on parent teacher conference night, Teacher Angel Tree, and Teacher Appreciation Week. If you would like to help or be part of the PTO please contact Dusti Spencer, Raini Hayden, Alice Egley, or the school.

The PTO does many great things for our school!

Discipline

Discipline is the process of training a child so acceptable characteristics, traits and habits can be developed. At North Gem Elementary, we will discipline with dignity and courtesy. Parents and students are an integral part of our discipline plan. By having a consistent discipline policy, the goal of educating children can be most efficiently reached.

Idaho Code establishes in section 33-1224 the teacher's right to control students as follows: "Powers and duties of teachers. - In the absence of any statute or rule or regulation of the Board of Trustees, any teacher employed by a school district shall have the right to direct how and when each pupil shall attend to his appropriate duties, and the manner in which a pupil shall demean himself while in attendance at the school. *It is the duty of a teacher to carry out the rules and regulations of the Board of Trustees in controlling and maintaining discipline, and a teacher shall have the power to adopt any reasonable rule or regulation to control and maintain discipline in, and otherwise govern, the classroom, not inconsistent with any statute or rule or regulation of the Board of Trustees.*"

WE BELIEVE:

- That *teachers* have the right to teach and *students* have the right to an excellent learning environment.
- That *parents and teachers* should maintain open communication, mutual support, and constructive involvement.
- That parents have a responsibility to *teach their children* basic rules of decency.
- That *all students* are required to behave in a positive manner.

NO STUDENT SHALL INTERFERE IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS, EITHER BY INTERFERING WITH ANOTHER STUDENT'S RIGHT TO LEARN OR BY PREVENTING A TEACHER FROM DOING HIS/HER JOB.

North Gem Discipline Plan

It is expected that there will be few serious discipline problems in the elementary. Students are expected to conduct themselves safely and decently at all times. Any deviation from this standard may result in some form of reprimand from a teacher. Any teacher may discipline any child at any time during the school day or during school sponsored activities as per Idaho Code section 33-1224.

Parent Volunteers are not authorized to discipline students in any way and are asked to refrain from doing

so. All discipline issues should be referred to the teacher as soon as possible.

Consequences for breaking rules:

- Generally children are simply asked to change inappropriate behavior. Quite often this is all that is necessary. However, common consequences for breaking rules include;
- Time out
- Written apologies
- Miss recess or other privileges
- Conference with teacher
- Behavioral contract
- Community service
- Phone call or note to parents



Serious Offenses may include: hitting, vulgarity, profanity, defiance and or insubordination to an adult, intimidation of other students, sexual harassment. **Parents, teachers and the Superintendent/principal will be involved in the consequences.**

DRESS CODE

It is the policy of this school district that students shall dress in a manner which is appropriate for an effective educational environment. While recognizing the importance of allowing students to express their individuality through their attire, the school is responsible for ensuring that student dress is conducive to a positive and respectful environment for all students. *All students are, therefore, required to be clean, neat, and modest and to dress in a manner that promotes a safe and healthy school environment, and "is not disruptive of the educational climate and process."*

PROHIBITIONS

The following prohibitions will be enforced when the student is on school premises or at any school sponsored event, regardless of location:

1. Students are prohibited from wearing or carrying, clothing, accessories or jewelry, or displaying piercing or tattoos, which, by picture, symbol, or word, depict or allude to any of the following:
 - a. Drug usage, including alcohol and tobacco;
 - b. Controlled substances of any kind;
 - c. Drug paraphernalia;
 - d. Gangs;
 - e. Violence;
 - f. Sexually explicit, vulgar, obscene, indecent, or offensive material; or
 - g. Illegal acts.
2. Students are prohibited from wearing immodest clothing which reveals a student's breasts or cleavage, abdomen, or buttocks. Shorts and skirts should not be more than 4" above the knees. Tight or sheer clothing or clothing that is low in the back or revealing in any manner is not acceptable. Students should wear clothing that covers the shoulders. No midriff skin should show when a student's arms are raised above his/her head. *Clothing which reveals the undergarments is not acceptable.*

3. Hairstyles, both male and female, that are disruptive to the learning environment, create health problems, obstruct vision, or draw undue attention to the student are unacceptable.
4. Students are required to wear shoes or other footwear in school buildings, unless the building administrator or designee indicates otherwise.
5. As styles and trends in fashion change, superintendent/ principal and teachers ultimately reserve the right and have the discretion to interpret inappropriate dress situations. The building administrator or designee may identify additional dress code requirements to address specific needs within a building or for a specific activity.
6. If a student is inappropriately dressed, he/she will be required to call home to arrange for appropriate clothing.

DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary actions for violation of this policy may include suspension and/or expulsion.

Hats

HATS OFF: North Gem students **will not** wear hats in any North Gem building at any time except high school ball games. Hats **MUST** be kept in backpacks.

DUTIES OF PUPILS RIDING A SCHOOL BUS

1. Board and disembark the bus in a safe, courteous and single file manner at a designated boarding or disembarking location.
2. Upon boarding each student should find a seat, occupy it and remain seated until the bus stops for final disembarking at the school or at the bus stop on its return.
3. **No** dangerous instruments or weapons, including but not limited to a gun, knife or explosives; will be allowed on the bus or on school grounds.
4. No loud noises, obscene gestures, obscene or profane language, or any other conduct which would harass or distract the bus driver will be allowed.
5. Engaging in, encouraging or participating in fighting or potentially injurious conduct will be prohibited.
6. If it is necessary to cross the road after disembarking, cross in front of the bus.
7. Be on time for the bus.
8. Obey the bus driver's suggestions promptly.
9. Keep head, arms and hands inside the bus at all times.
10. Help keep the school bus clean and sanitary.
11. Treat the school bus and equipment with respect.
12. Be courteous to fellow students and the bus driver.



SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Arriving At School

If a student walks to school he/she may not arrive before 7:45, unless special arrangements have been made. Once a student arrives at school, he/she must stay at school unless parents give written permission

to leave. Please see that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather.

After School

Children are not allowed to play outside on the playground, before going home, or to go to the high school to catch the bus. For safety reasons, we ask the children to leave the playground area. There is no supervision after school.

Students must bring a note if they are to be released into the custody of anyone other than custodial parents or anytime there is a change in the person who is to pick up the child.

Leaving School

Students who leave the campus may leave ONLY after parents or an authorized person comes to the school office and signs them out. *Do not go to the classroom*. The teacher cannot sign out your child.

- Students planning to go to a friend's or relative's home (different than the daily routine) need to bring a note to the teacher and/or the bus driver (when a bus is involved). Parents should also notify the office by phone.
- Students returning from a dentist or doctor's appointment must be signed back into school by the parent or authorized person.
- If a student is moving to another school, parents are required to come to the school to check that student out before leaving the community.
- If a student moves to a new location in the district, parents are requested to come in or call the school office with the change of address.

North Gem Elementary Attendance Policy

Poor attendance disrupts the continuity of instruction. Missed work can never be fully compensated for, as the unique value of classroom activities is lost permanently. Classroom participation is a critical component of the educational process and cannot be replicated. A strong correlation exists between attendance and achievement. It is the belief of North Gem Elementary that all students are expected to be in attendance in school, in every class, every day.

*Absences must be verified for each illness, recovery from an accident, required court attendance, professional appointments, death in the immediate family, observation or celebration of a religious holiday, and such other good causes may be acceptable to the Superintendent and attendance committee.

*Absence for such reasons as recreational activities, vacations, non-school activities, or visiting is strongly discouraged. Late night activities that cause a student to be tardy or absent the following day are also strongly discouraged. These absences will not be acceptable to the Superintendent and attendance committee.

Call-In Procedures for Absences

1. Parents are requested to call the school by 9:00 a.m. on each day a student is absent from school
2. If parents have not called by 9:00 a.m., school personnel will call to check on the child.
3. In the event that phone contact was not made by home or school, parents are requested to send a signed and dated note on the day the child returns to school explaining the reason for the absence.

Recording Attendance

- Attendance is recorded twice each day: once in the morning and then again in the afternoon.
- Teachers mark students as either present, absent, or tardy.
- Students are expected to be in their seats ready to begin work at 8:00 a.m. and after the lunch-recess bell.
- Students are marked tardy if they are not in the classroom at the time specified.

Make-Up Work

- When returning from an absence, it is the responsibility of the parent and student to contact his/ her teacher to arrange for make-up work. As a guideline, the student will have one day for make-up work for each day missed.
- Students that know they will be absent in advance should request work at least three days in advance before leaving. All work assigned will be due the first day the student returns to school.

Excessive Absences

Excessive absence from school is defined as seven or more days absent in a semester.

1. Being tardy three times will count as one absence.
2. At 5 and 7 days of being absent, parents or guardians will receive a letter, email, and phone call indicating the total days absent and the total number of tardies recorded.
3. Parents or guardians must submit a written statement explaining the reason for the absences and/or tardies.
4. Parents must retain and provide appropriate medical or other documentation for the purpose of validating the absences with the written explanation.
5. Written statements and documentation will go to an attendance committee composed of Superintendent, teacher, and school counselor.
6. The committee may draft an individual plan to improve attendance. If attendance does not improve, agencies including, but not limited to, the following may be contacted: Department of Human Services, County Attorney, Public Health, family physician, mental Health professionals, Area Education Agency, and Juvenile Court Services.

Ultimately, retention may be considered if the student, due to poor attendance, is unable to meet academic expectations.

Announcements

All announcements and notices from the school will bear the North Gem letterhead. If it doesn't have the North Gem Cowboy on it, it has not been approved by the school. When in doubt, call us.

Conferences

The staff of our school wants to keep in touch with parents and we often call home to talk about how the

child is getting along in school. If you have concerns, feel free to call us at (208) 648-7848.-The District cannot promise to agree with you, but we will listen and be fair.

Twice a year, time is set aside to conference with each parent. These conferences will be held at the end of the first and third nine weeks.

Field Trips

Students must ride the school provided transportation to the field trip. **NOTE:** A student may only be released to a parent or guardian while on a field trip. Students will not be released to any other person. No exceptions.

How to Make the System Work

- Many problems can be solved by talking them over with the person most directly involved. If you feel that you or your child has been treated wrong- fully, you should make an appointment with that *person* to discuss the problem.
- If the problem cannot be solved in this discussion, you should talk to the teacher or principal. The teacher or principal will talk to the staff member and may ask you to meet with the staff member.
- If this meeting and further investigation by the teacher do not resolve the problem, submit your complaint to the superintendent. The *superintendent* will let you know his decision within a reasonable amount of time or refer your complaint to the school board for a hearing.
- If you feel the superintendent has not helped, you may ask for an audience with the *school board* at the next meeting by contacting the board clerk at the district office.
- In order to be placed on the agenda, you must call the board clerk, one week before the next scheduled meeting.

Desks

Desks may be searched by teachers and administration at any time.

Lunch

A well balanced lunch is offered for K-5th grade students, for faculty, and guests. Students are expected to use their best manners in eating and in behavior while at the cafeteria. Meals should be paid for in advance.

All students are expected to leave his/her eating area clean. Gum should be disposed of before entering the lunchroom. Throwing of food will not be tolerated. Students causing a disturbance may be denied lunchroom privileges.

North Gem School District #149 operates a school lunch program for students. Funding for its operation comes, in part, from the Federal Government (who supplies food commodities) the State Department of Education, and local funds through lunch room sales.

The financial operation of the lunchroom falls under the direction of the Lunch Supervisor who is then responsible to the Superintendent.

Each fall, forms will be sent out to parents so they may apply for Free *or* Reduced Meals. If income status changes during the year, one may apply or re-apply for consideration of those meals. Being granted Free or Reduced status will not be retroactive to reduce an amount owing Parents are encouraged to apply for this program.

To keep sufficient funds on hand to pay obligations it is necessary that students be current in payment of lunch fees. This allows for bills to be paid on time. Services may not be offered to anyone who has a current bill over the cost of \$5.00.

Meals may be purchased daily, weekly or monthly. Cash is accepted for individual lunches.

Medications

No medication will be administered or handled by teachers. An exception for certain medical problems may be made by parents contacting administration, secretary or elementary teacher.

*Prescription medicines may be kept in the school office and administered by the superintendent, secretary, or appointed teacher.

Parents Coming To School

Prudence requires that the office be aware of all people on the premises. Therefore, it is necessary that parents/visitors check in at the office before going to any classroom or to visit with any teacher.

Teachers must not be interrupted during class time. Please call the office to make an appointment. Teachers are usually available between 7:30—8:00 a.m. and 3:55 - 4:15 p.m. Thank You!

Report Cards

Report cards to parents are prepared at the end of every nine weeks. These report cards were designed to give important information to parents in a way that would be clear. Parents are always encouraged to talk to the teacher at any time during the year.

School Records

There are two kinds of school records. Parents have the right to see any records kept. Parents may challenge anything in their child's school record, but the challenge must be made before the student's records are transferred to another school.

1. Student progress records include grades earned, attendance records, health records and test scores. These are called "Cumulative" records.
2. Student behavioral records include any written information on student behavior, records of conversations, personality evaluations, psychological tests, or I.Q. tests. Students who receive special education services will have this kind of record.

Telephone Use

Student use of telephones will be strictly limited to emergency and "very important" situations. Conversely, please limit calling from home to leave messages for students at school to emergency or unavoidable situations.

Things Not To Bring to School

There are some things which must NOT be brought to school because they are dangerous to you and to

others. There are other things which interfere with the rights of others to learn or they may be expensive and pose a risk of damage or loss. Some of these are:

- Hard balls,
- Matches
- Pills and medicine*
- Pets
- Radios
- Stereos
- Skateboards
- Pocket knives
- Toys
- Electronic games**

Student cell phones are not allowed to be used during class time or in classrooms during school time. Cell phones are to be out of sight and silenced while school is in session. This includes the gym and auditorium as a classroom for assemblies and other events. Students who are found using their cell phones during class time or in a classroom will be expected to surrender the cell phone at the request of a staff member, teacher, or administrator. Failure to surrender the phone will be considered insubordination and subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the student handbook. Students can use their cell phones during lunch and passing time. See Policy 3265

**ANY ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL IN VIOLATION OF THIS RULE WILL BE
CONFISCATED.**

* Sometimes a teacher may give special permission to bring pets or games on certain days for "Show and Tell" etc. Check with the teacher if there is a question.

Vehicles near the Elementary Area

Many parents make arrangements to pick up children after school in the front parking lot. Please be aware of speed limits and of small children particularly when backing up. Also, please report any unsafe acts or suspicious behavior immediately to the office.

Visitors

Friends and visiting relatives may not attend classes with students and may not be on the play- ground (for insurance reasons) with their friends at recess.

Fees

Activity card.....\$35.00 (optional)

In addition to the elementary fee parents are charged for damaged or lost library books.

*Students whose parents have not paid for damaged or lost books will not be allowed to participate in the end of year activities such as the elementary field trip.

LET'S HAVE A GREAT YEAR

GO COWBOYS!



North Gem School District #149

STUDENTS

3265

Student-Owned Electronic Communications Devices

The Board adopts this policy to regulate the use of student-owned electronic devices within North Gem School District schools. Excessive use of cell phones and social media has been linked to potential detriments to students' physical and mental health. The North Gem School District prioritizes maintaining an environment where students are engaged in learning without distractions.

Objectives

This policy seeks to:

1. Align with State Department of Education guidance on cell phone use.
2. Promote student safety.
3. Support staff in maintaining a focused and distraction-free learning environment.
4. Reduce distractions during instructional time.
5. Improve academic outcomes.
6. Foster responsible technology use.
7. Prevent cyberbullying.
8. Address privacy concerns associated with personal electronic devices.

This policy applies to any non-District-issued electronic device capable of accessing the internet, sending electronic messages, or causing a disruption or distraction to the learning process. Including but not limited to smartphones, tablets, laptops, e-readers, smartwatches, headphones, and earbuds.

Restrictions on Use

Students must keep their devices completely silenced (not making notifications, alerts, or vibrations), out of sight, and not on their person (e.g. in their pocket) while on school campuses or at school activities for the duration of the school day. The only exception is that high school students may use their devices during their lunch periods at school.

Containment of Devices

Students may keep devices in a backpack, bag, locker, etc. but the device must not be seen or heard.

This prohibition does not extend to district-issued devices in educational settings. Students may use district-issued devices (i.e. Chromebooks) or pre-approved personal devices, such as headphones, for education purposes during the school day.

Exceptions

1. IEP and 504 Plans: Students may use electronic devices as required by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.
2. Emergencies: In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians will be notified through the district notification system.
3. Parent/Guardian Contact: Parents or guardians needing to contact a student during restricted times may do so by calling the school office. Staff will relay the message or bring the student to the office to communicate directly.

Acceptable Use

1. Devices must be used in compliance with Policy 3270P, Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks.
2. Students may only access the internet through the District's filtered connection using District-sponsored devices.
3. Use of cameras or recording devices is prohibited in locker rooms, restrooms, and classrooms unless explicitly authorized by a certified District employee. Permission must also be obtained before taking or posting images or videos of individuals.

Disciplinary Procedures

If a student's device is visible, stored on their person (e.g. in their pocket), or is found to make a notification, during the school day, the device will be confiscated by a District employee and may be retrieved from the school's front office at the end of the school day by the student on the first offense. For any following offenses, the student's parent/guardian may pick up the device from the front office. Administrators may utilize Policy 3340 and Procedure 3340P Corrective Action and Discipline to address repeat offenders.

Appeals can be submitted in writing to the principal within five school days or to the Superintendent if the decision was made by the principal.

Implementation and Review

The Superintendent or designee will:

1. Inform staff, students, and parents about this policy and its implementation.
2. Annually report the policy's effectiveness to the Board and recommend changes as needed.

Cross References: 3270P
Procedure
3340

Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks
Corrective Actions and Punishment

Legal References: Executive Order 2024-11
Phone Free Learning Act

Policy History:

Adopted on: July 7, 2025

Revised on:

Reviewed on:

North Gem School District

Student/Staff Calendar

2025-2026

August 13-14	Staff Orientation / Professional Development
August 18	First Day of School
September 1	Labor Day – No School K-12
September 2	First Day of Pre School
September 19	Professional Development
October 16	End of First Quarter
October 23	Parent Teacher Conferences
November 14	Professional Development
November 26–27	Thanksgiving Holiday – No School K-12
December 18	End of Second Quarter
December 22–January 1	Winter Break – No School K-12

February 6	Professional Development
February 16	President's Day – No School K-12
March 5	End of Third Quarter
March 12	Parent Teacher Conferences
March 23-26	Spring Break– No School K-12
April 3	Professional Development
May 20	Graduation- Last Day for Seniors
May 21	End of Fourth Quarter- Last Day of School
May 22	Professional Development –Teacher Check out
May 26	Teacher Check Out
Quarter 1 – August 18th - October 16th = 35 days	*144 student days
Quarter 2 – October 20th – December 18th = 34 days	* 8 PD Days
Quarter 3 – January 5th – March 5th = 35 days Hours	* 1008 Instructional
Quarter 4 – March 9th – May 21st = 40 days	

PERMISSION TO USE LIKENESS

I hereby authorize North Gem School District permission to use my likeness in a photograph, image, motion picture, video recording, and/or sound recording, for use in any and all of its publications, including website entries, social media or to otherwise publish, circulate and disseminate said photographs, images, motion pictures, video recordings, and/or sound recordings or any duplication or facsimile thereof for any lawful purpose they deem proper. I recognize and consent that a name may or may not be attached or utilized in relation to the publication of any such photograph, image, motion picture, video recording, and/or sound recording and consent to the same.

By making such authorization, I hereby relinquish and assign to North Gem School District all right, title and interest I may have in the photographs, images, motion pictures, video recordings, and/or sound recordings, negatives, reproductions or copies, including, but not limited to, the right to copyright the same used by them. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written or electronic copy, wherein my likeness or voice appears; and waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of such photographs, images, motions pictures, video recordings, and/or sound recordings.

I understand that North Gem School District and their respective employees, agents, officers, and owners cannot warrant or guarantee that any further dissemination of my image or voice will be subject to control by North Gem School District. I hereby hold harmless and release and forever discharge North Gem School District and their respective employees, agents, officers and owners, from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons action on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have by reason of this authorization.

I am 18 years of age and am competent to contract in my own name. I have read this release and assignment before signing below and I fully understand the contents, meaning, and impact of this release.

_____ (signature) _____ (date)

_____ (printed name)

If the person signing is under age 18, there must be consent by a parent or guardian, as follows:

I hereby certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of _____. I have read the foregoing release and assignment before signing below and I fully understand the contents, meaning, and impact of this release, and do hereby sign and authorize said release and assignment on behalf of the minor child named above.

_____ (Parent/Guardian's Signature) _____ (date)

_____ (Parent/Guardian's printed name)

_____ (Student's printed name)

No, I don't give permission to use my student's _____ (name) likeness.

Parent (Guardian) Name _____ (printed)

Parent (Guardian) signature: _____ Date _____

