

Welcome to Northern Elementary School!

I am proud to be the principal and welcome your family to Northern. Roughly 360 students, known as the **Northern Timber Wolves**, comprise our school. We have a dedicated and experienced staff who work very hard to provide children with an excellent education. This introduction is intended to provide you with some general information about our school, our routines, and the experiences available to students. I believe we do our work best when communication is open and frequent. Please reach out to me should you have any questions about programs and opportunities at Northern Elementary School. We are glad you are here!



Amy Worden, Northern Elementary Principal

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Absences - School attendance is a predictor of future success. All schools in Minnesota are required to monitor attendance daily and monthly. If your child will be absent, it is important to call 218-333-3260 and leave us a voicemail with the reason for the absence.

Breakfast - Breakfast is **served daily from 7:30-7:50 and is provided free of charge** to all students in elementary schools. If students choose to eat at school in the morning, they come in from the bus and go to their locker to drop their gear and then to the cafeteria to have breakfast. I encourage your family to take advantage of this option. Students not eating breakfast go to the playground for morning recess. Once students have chosen to go to the playground, they will not have an option to go to breakfast afterward.

Bus Routes - The number for questions about the bus route or bus stops is 218-333-3225. There are currently eight buses that drop off and pick up students at our school. Buses drop off in the bus zone in the morning at 7:30 and pick up beginning at 2:40. Safety is a priority. If you are making an unexpected change in your child's end-of-day plan, please speak to Karin by 2 pm. This change should not be left on voicemail, as the end of the day is incredibly busy in our office.



Communication - Our classrooms utilize planners to support school and home communication. Our office communicates electronically with Skyward/Parent Square. You will generally receive bi-weekly communication from our office. Classroom newsletters and other school information will come in backpacks as available. At times, but not often, we will communicate with you via phone/text. These messages are often time-sensitive and of high importance. **Skyward information needs to be current in order for you to receive information. Please log in and update, or notify the office as soon as your phone or contact information changes.**



Computers/Chromebooks - Students use Chromebooks regularly in class. Internet forms for online permission, including MyView (reading curriculum), will come home for you to sign if not done at our open house. Our technology is intended for educational use only.

Conferences - Conferences are held twice a year in November and March. This year our fall conference dates are November 9-12th. Our winter conference dates are March 8th - 10th. We try to have the book fair open on each of these dates.



Contacting Staff Members - A general rule of thumb is that teachers will not respond to emails or voicemails during the time students are at school. If you would like to contact a staff member with a question, either voicemail or email is a great option. If you call the principal, every effort will be made to return your call before I leave for the day, but you can definitely expect a return call or email response within 24 hours.

Curriculum - Our reading curriculum is called My View. Teachers and students are finding it to be very rigorous. We also use UFLI to teach K-2 foundational reading skills and Functional Morphology in grade 3 to teach advanced word reading and vocabulary. Our math curriculum is called Big Ideas. It focuses on concept development and problem-solving. Memorizing math facts and reading at home each night are great ways to support your child's learning at school.

Daily Routines After School - We want to stress the importance of keeping your child's routine the same every day. We understand that on rare occasions, a change will affect that plan. **An email that we can reply to with a "got it" or a phone call before 2 pm will allow staff to support this change.** For the safety of your child, we cannot rely solely on your child's explanation of a change. A call or a note from the parent is necessary so we are all on the same page.

Drop and Go Zone - The circle in front of the building is a drop and go zone in the morning and a pick up and go zone in the afternoon. Please don't park in this area. Parking is available in the large lot on the north side of the building if you need to help your child with their gear or wish to walk them to the front door. At the end of the day, parents may wait in their car and pick up their students in the circle or park in the lot and walk to the pick-up area. The most efficient and safest manner is to pull into the circle, park diagonally, and wait for your student. Pick-up and drop-off is a very busy time. Please step out of your car when you see your child on the sidewalk and escort them across the lot if you are not parked at the curb facing the building.



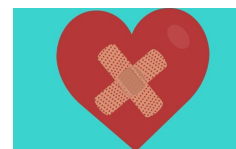
Education Benefits - I encourage all families who may qualify to sign up for educational benefits. For example, a family of three earning less than \$49,303, a family of four earning less than \$59,478, and children who are living with extended family are eligible. Although we have free meals for all at school, our school benefits from a larger state financial allocation that provides resources or staff we need. All information is confidential - classmates and teachers are not aware of any family's status. You may apply online or via paper copy. I am happy to assist in any way.

Emergency info - We collect emergency information in our health and main office. **Please keep us up to date on changes as they may arise throughout the year.** If you cannot be

reached to pick up a sick child, the adults you have noted on the emergency form/card will be contacted and are the only ones permitted to pick up your child without your verbal consent.

Food Service - One meal is provided at lunch each day at no charge. Extra parts of a meal may be purchased if children have funds in their lunch account. Milk may be purchased without a lunch for \$.75 currently. Payments may be made to meal accounts for à la carte items using your credit/debit card online with Skyward Family Access. A minimal fee is charged to cover the cost of this convenience. You may also mail payments to the district office or send them to school in a sealed envelope labeled with your child's name and PIN. Personal checks should be written to ISD #31.

Health Office - **Students may visit the health office for assistance** as needed. Our school nurse, Jenny Workman, is available throughout the day. All medications and allergies should be discussed with the school nurse upon enrollment. The health office calls parents to report injury or illness that occurs while at school. We are especially careful with head bumps!



Kids and Company- **Kids and Company is an after-school program that is offered at our site.** Families can utilize this program by registering with the **Kids and Company** Main Office at 218-333-3184. Register early! There is commonly a waiting list.



Lunch and Recess- **The lunch and recess block is 55 minutes** each day, with about 25 minutes for children to eat. This should be plenty of time, but we do find that children who enjoy socializing as they eat may find the time is tight. We encourage families with younger children to practice mealtime routines at the table, without TV or leaving the table during the meal in preparation for lunchtime success at school. Our priority is to get children outside to run and play and feed them a healthy meal each day!

Mornings - **Students should not be dropped off before 7:30.** The building is closed, and staff are not available prior to 7:30 for supervision. Please arrive at 7:45 if you can, and your child does not eat breakfast at school. Kindergarten and first grade students enter at the front door, and second and third grade students may enter at the bus door (Door 5) until **7:45 am.** **At 7:45, all students will enter through the front door.**

Parent Teacher Organization - PTO meetings take place monthly at school. We tentatively plan to meet the first Monday of each month at 7 pm. **Your participation and involvement are encouraged!** For more information, follow us on Facebook - Northern Elementary PTO.

Recess - **We go outside every day it is not raining or below -5 degrees** air temperature or wind chill. There is no option for students to stay inside without a note from a physician. Our staffing levels do not allow for supervision of students inside while others are outside unless it is medically necessary. Appropriate outdoor clothing is a must each day. Please label every piece of clothing you possibly



can, especially black jackets and snowpants. Try tying a colorful ribbon or yarn to a zipper or buckle to help kids distinguish their gear. We donate many bags of unclaimed clothes and outerwear each year. That is not our goal!

Report Cards - Report cards are completed four times a year, in November, January, March, and May. Report cards are sent home to families with students. Quarterly grades can also be viewed using Skyward Family Access.



Safety—Our students and staff complete 5 fire drills and 5 lockdown drills each year to help your child know how to be safe in an emergency. We do 1 tornado drill in April. Fire and police observe our drills to give us feedback. You will be called in an emergency, but not for a drill.

Security - Our school campus is a secure site. Adults who are visiting must register in the office upon arrival and have coordinated the visit in advance with the classroom teacher. If you need to speak to your student directly, we will be happy to call them to the office to see you.

School Supplies - A list of school supplies needed for the classroom can be found on our website, or a hard copy can be picked up in the office.



Snacks - Many classrooms have a designated snack time each day. This could be in the morning or the afternoon. **We ask that you provide your child with a healthy snack option.** Candy and pop cannot be consumed in classrooms during the school day or at lunchtime. Please contact your child's teacher for more information about snack time.

Specialist Classes - Students have physical education daily and an additional block of art or music. Children visit the media center each week to check out books. Reading is our goal!

Sanford Health - Counselors can help connect families to needed health supports, such as Kids Closet, health insurance and care, mental health support, housing, and more. **Contact Principal Worden for more information.**



Treats - Kids may bring birthday treats for their class if they choose to. There are great non-food ideas on the internet for families to consider. In any event, smaller is better. Items like large, frosted cupcakes are usually only partially consumed by students in the time they have to snack. Any food items shared with others at school must be store-bought and remain packaged.

WAY of the WOLVES - Our student climate is guided by four core values. We call them the "Way of the Wolves". **Our Northern students work to be SAFE, RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, and KIND every day.**

