

# SECTION A NAMS CAMPUS POLICY

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## Section A Campus Policy

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| <p><b>Foreword</b> ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">To Students ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">To Parents ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">To Parents and Students ..... A-1</p> <p><b>The Purpose of Northside Alternative Middle School</b> ..... A-1</p> <p><b>People Who Can Help You</b> ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Your Principal ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Your Vice Principal ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Your Counselor ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Your Teacher ..... A-1</p> <p><b>General Information</b> ..... A-1</p> <p><b>Absences</b> ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">State Absence Policy ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Verification of Absences ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Excused Absences ..... A-1</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Unexcused Absences ..... A-2</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Readmission Procedures Following Absences ..... A-2</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Absences and Grades ..... A-2</p> <p><b>Academic Standards at the Northside Alternative Middle Schools</b> ..... A-2</p> <p><b>Assignment Sheets and Progress Reports</b> ..... A-2</p> <p><b>Assignment to the Northside Alternative Middle Schools</b> ..... A-2</p> | <p><b>Counseling</b> ..... A-2</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Philosophy ..... A-2</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Services ..... A-2</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Confidentiality ..... A-2</p> <p><b>Cellular Phone</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Dress Code</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Food Service</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Graffiti/Tagging</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Gum/Candy</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Health Care</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Leaving Campus</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Libraries</b> ..... A-3</p> <p><b>Lost and Found</b> ..... A-4</p> <p><b>Nuisance Items</b> ..... A-4</p> <p><b>Report Cards</b> ..... A-4</p> <p><b>School Day Schedule</b> ..... A-4</p> <p><b>Student Conduct</b> ..... A-4</p> <p><b>Student Mentor Program</b> ..... A-5</p> <p><b>Teacher Conferences</b> ..... A-5</p> <p><b>Textbooks/Curriculum Materials</b> ..... A-5</p> <p><b>Transportation</b> ..... A-5</p> <p><b>Visitors</b> ..... A-5</p> <p><b>Withdrawal From School</b> ..... A-5</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b> ..... A-5</p> |
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# FOREWORD

The Northside Alternative Middle Schools are dedicated to the dual purpose of helping students acquire the skills necessary for success and instill beliefs consistent with making good decisions. This handbook outlines the policies and procedures pertaining to student activities and responsibilities as set forth by the Board of Trustees of the Northside Independent School District and Northside Alternative Middle Schools; however, it is not all-inclusive. The district and campus administration reserve the right to amend or change these policies at any time. Please feel free to contact the administration for additional information.

## To Students:

It is the responsibility of each student to read, understand and abide by the rules and regulations stated in this handbook.

## To Parents:

It is important that the home and school work cooperatively for the maximum development of your son or daughter.

Please make every effort to encourage your student to attend school regularly and punctually. Failing grades and/or irregular attendance can cause your student's placement at the Northside Alternative Middle School to be extended.

You are encouraged to actively participate in your child's education. Conferences may be scheduled by calling the school at 397-6900 NAMS South or 397-2070 NAMS North.

## To Parents and Students:

Questions regarding interpretations of rules and regulations in this handbook should be directed to the Northside Alternative Middle Schools administration.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

The purpose of the Northside Alternative Middle Schools is to provide a positive and disciplined educational setting for Northside middle school students whose unacceptable behavior or involvement with alcohol, drugs or other substances at their regular school warrants removal from their home campus. Northside Alternative Middle Schools offer a supervised, highly-structured educational environment with a supportive counseling program.

## PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

### Your Principal

The principal is responsible to the superintendent of schools for proper administration of the Northside Alternative Middle Schools. It is the principal's duty to organize, supervise and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers and patrons. He/She will be glad to help you with any of your problems.

### Your Vice Principal

The vice principal is responsible to the principal. The vice principal reports to the principal and has full authority in the absence of the principal.

### Your Counselor

The function of the counselor is to provide guidance, not discipline. The Northside Alternative Middle School counselor will be happy to assist you with problems concerning both school and your personal life. Group counseling sessions are also offered to address a variety of issues affecting students placed in an alternative program.

### Your Teacher

Your teachers are specialists in the field in which they teach and are eager to help you get the most out of your classes. The teachers are charged with the responsibility of carrying out the rules and regulations of the Board of Trustees and any additional policies set up by the administration.

Your teachers will be on duty each school day at 8:15 a.m. and will remain after class until 3:55 p.m. for the purpose of helping any student.

Your teachers are the classroom leaders and are charged with the responsibility of supervising and teaching the NISD Curriculum and TEKS.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ABSENCES

#### State Absence Policy

By state law (Texas Education Code 21.041) a student may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance at least 90% of the days the class meets. A waiver (for extenuating circumstances) may be granted by a campus attendance committee. Please see section "D" of the handbook for the District guidelines on this policy. Each student's attendance while assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School will be reported to the home school upon that student's return.

#### Verification of Absences

When a student is unable to attend school, the parent is requested to call the office to report the absence before 10:00 a.m. (397-6900 NAMS South and 397-2070 NAMS North).

#### Excused Absences

- a. Parent/guardian notes for less than four consecutive sick days
- b. Religious holidays
- c. Doctor, dentist, clinic or hospital visit
- d. Funeral for immediate family members
- e. Weather or road conditions that make travel dangerous
- f. Documented Court Appearances

## Unexcused Absences

- a. Car trouble
- b. Trips with parents
- c. Baby-sitting
- d. Missed bus
- e. Overslept
- f. Reporting more than 15 minutes late for class

## Readmission Procedures Following Absences

Following an absence, the student shall report to the main office with an excuse from home. Acceptable notes must include the following: date, parent/ guardian signature and phone number, reason for the absence, and the student's name. The student will obtain the blue absence slip from the office staff and have each teacher sign the slip that school day. The last period teacher will turn in the attendance slip to the front office.

Should a student fail to bring a note from home, the student's blue attendance slip will be marked unexcused until the student brings an absence note from home.

Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. must report to the office with the parent or guardian for appropriate admission to class.

## Absences and Grades

Students are encouraged to make up work from all absences, regardless of the reason. If a student has been truant or has been suspended as a disciplinary action, the student shall be expected to make up missed work and may earn a maximum possible grade of 70% as indicated in board policy EIA (LOCAL). If the absence is long-term, parents are encouraged to request assignments through the office. Please see other sections of the handbook for district guidelines regarding make-up work.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS AT THE NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOLS

The Northside Alternative Middle Schools hold high expectations for students. Each student is expected to produce QUALITY work. We believe that high expectations for student performance instill pride and increase student self-concept.

## ASSIGNMENT SHEETS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

To maximize the student's organizational habits and to provide an effective communication process between the Northside Alternative Middle Schools and the home, each student will have a daily assignment sheet. Students will write homework assignments and/or lesson objectives on their assignment sheet each day for each class. The reverse side of the assignment sheet is a weekly progress report. Students will take the assignment sheet home weekly. Parents shall review the assignment sheet and progress report, then sign it and send it back to school with the student.

## ASSIGNMENT TO THE NORTHSIDE ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Students are assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School only after Northside staff has determined the appropriateness of the assignment.

In the case of special education students, an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee is convened at either the home campus or at the Central Office to determine the most appropriate placement.

Students residing in the attendance area for Briscoe, Jones, Jordan, Luna, Pease, Rayburn, Ross, and Vale shall attend Northside Alternative Middle School South located at 5223 Blessing St.

Students residing in the attendance area for Bernal, Connally, Folks, Garcia, Hobby, Jefferson, Neff, Rawlinson, Rudder, Stevenson, Stinson or Zachry Middle School shall attend Northside Alternative Middle School North, located at 11937 IH-10 West.

Students are assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School through the hearing process conducted at the Office of Pupil Personnel. The Hearing Officer determines the initial length of the assignment to Northside Alternative Middle School. Each student must meet the following criteria to be eligible to return to the home campus: complete the time assigned by the Hearing Office, earn passing grades in all courses during the assignment to Northside Alternative Middle School, demonstrate appropriate behavior as determined by the principal, and have appropriate attendance. Any student who is not successfully meeting the above criteria may be extended beyond the original length of assignment as deemed appropriate by the principal or central office hearing.

While assigned to the Northside Alternative Middle School, students must demonstrate their ability to conform to the school rules. Failure to do so may result in a hearing at the Central Office with the recommendation for the student's expulsion from the Northside Independent School District.

## COUNSELING

### Philosophy

Students who violate the district's policies can receive assistance provided by counseling and education offered in a supportive environment.

Counseling is offered for issues such as: drugs/alcohol, persistent misbehavior, anger management, and violence prevention. Counselors will assist students in making decisions with fewer negative and more positive outcomes.

### Services

Parents have the right to temporarily withdraw their child from any part of the counseling program that may conflict with their religious or moral beliefs. Group and individual counseling services are offered and students may be referred for these services by parents, administrators, teachers, and through self-referral. The counselor is available to provide parents/guardians with information, support, and referrals to outside agencies.

In the Choices class students will receive information on responsible behavior, drug/alcohol and violence prevention, decision-making skills, positive school transitions, goal setting, and addictions. Parents may view counseling/guidance materials during prep days or by request.

Counseling services may be made available through agencies or organizations outside Northside ISD. These services can be provided with the approval of the Northside ISD Guidance and Counseling Department and the campus administration.

### Confidentiality

Federal confidentiality laws protect students receiving counseling services. Please discuss this further with the counselor.

## CELLULAR PHONE

Northside Independent School District's telecommunication device policy allows middle school students to have possession of a cellular telephone while on school property or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property. Since the Northside Alternative Middle School is an alternative educational program and a disciplinary educational campus for students, possession of a cellular telephone is not allowed at any time.

## DRESS CODE

The district has adopted standardized attire for all students enrolled in the Northside Alternative Middle Schools.

All students assigned to these campuses will adhere to the standardized attire requirement.

This consists of the following:

- 1. Pants: Blue jeans (bottom of leg must measure no less than 14 Circumference); NO SKINNY STYLES, LEGGINGS, or LOW-RISE; no outerwear under jeans (Students are subject to disciplinary action when they do not meet dress code guidelines)**
- 2. Shirt: White polo-style shirt with no more than 2-3 buttons (without logo or emblems)**
- 3. Belt (optional): A belt may be (or required to be) worn to keep pants up**
- 4. Footwear: Socks and Sneakers can be any color, providing they are appropriate for school**
- 5. During colder weather, students may wear a long-sleeve shirt under the polo shirt. This shirt must be white, gray, or black.**
- 7. At the alternative middle schools, additional trousers, shorts or outerwear may not be worn underneath the jeans.**
- 8. School-issued name tag.**

The student's standardized attire must be of proper fit (not to exceed one (1) size beyond the correct size, including length) and proper appearance (not bagging, sagging, tight-fitting, low-rise, having extra pockets or modifications, etc.) or the student will not be permitted to attend class. The outer most clothing must be the pants and shirt as noted above. The shirt must be tucked into the pants at all times. Pants are to always be worn at the waist (not on, or below, the hips). No hats, bandanas or other head gear are permitted. Also not allowed, are bags, purses, jewelry-like items and backpacks. Violations of the standardized attire will result in confiscation for release to parents of the inappropriate clothing item(s). Items left at the end of the school year will be considered abandoned and will be donated to charity. Parents may be contacted if necessary to provide the proper attire should their child arrive at school and not be in compliance with the school's standardized dress code. Students will not be permitted to wear any jewelry at Northside Alternative Middle School. This includes all facial piercings and tongue piercings. Extravagant grooming in the areas of make-up, hair and fingernails is not permitted. This includes spiked, multi-colored hair, unusual hair styles, or fingernail enhancements. The above information is subject to change as new trends in gang-related activities or other societal fashion concerns need to be addressed. Final determination of acceptable dress and grooming rests with the principal and cannot be appealed. The above standardized attire replaces the Northside Independent School District's dress code for the duration of a student's assignment to the Northside Alternative High School or Northside Alternative Middle Schools.

## FOOD SERVICE

Breakfast and lunch are provided through NISD food service on a daily basis in a structured and monitored environment. Students may bring nutritional lunches from home, but they are subject to search. No restaurant food may be delivered to students at the alternative schools. All food brought for lunch is to be consumed during the lunch period in the lunchroom. Any food item brought to school must be in a one-time-use container.

## GRAFFITI/TAGGING

Book covers, folders, assignments, assignment sheets, school property, body parts, and/or personal property or clothing displaying obscenities, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, musical groups, gang related materials or any other design or inscription the principal determines to be unacceptable are not permitted at the Northside Alternative Middle Schools. Tagging of any sort on school facilities is unacceptable and may cause a student to be subject to arrest and expulsion.

## GUM/CANDY

Due to the unsanitary conditions created by the improper disposal of gum and candy, students are not permitted to have it during the school day.

## HEALTH CARE

Students are to report to the CLINIC (secretary's office) immediately if they become ill or injured during the school day. Ill or injured students will be given first aid or other appropriate care in the clinic. If the student requires immediate medical attention or is too ill to return to class promptly, parents, guardian or another alternate adult listed on the medical card will be notified to promptly pick up the student.

The parent/guardian is responsible for furnishing ALL emergency information on the student's medical card including alternate adults and current phone numbers. TO ENSURE THE STUDENT'S SAFETY, ONLY PERSONS LISTED ON THE MEDICAL CARD ARE ALLOWED TO SIGN A STUDENT OUT OF SCHOOL. In the event the designated persons are unavailable, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to make arrangements for the student to be picked up and to notify the school as to the person picking the student up. IN EXTREME EMERGENCIES, E.M.S. WILL BE CALLED. PAYMENT FOR THESE SERVICES IS THE PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY.

## LEAVING CAMPUS

Students who need to leave school during the day should submit a parental note to the office.

If parents need to take their child out of school during the school day, they must come to the office to check the student out of school.

All students are to remain on the campus once they arrive. Students leaving or returning to school during the day must check in/out with the school secretary. Unauthorized departure from the campus will result in additional consequences, up to, and including, a central office hearing or law enforcement intervention.

## LIBRARIES

Each campus library supports the curriculum and provides a wide variety of materials suitable to the interest and abilities of students. Other approved on-line resources may be used within the classroom in support of the curriculum. Home access to the online card catalog is available at <http://webcat.nisd.net/>.

Lost and Found

IF YOU FIND ANY ARTICLE THAT DOES NOT BELONG TO YOU, TURN IT IN TO THE OFFICE OR A TEACHER IMMEDIATELY. The school assumes no responsibility for lost articles. The students are urged to take every precaution to protect their possessions. Students are not to bring expensive or valuable items to school, including electronic devices. Students are to carefully label each article, such as clothing, books and supplies, in order that each may be easily identified. Should you lose something, check in the office.

## NUISANCE ITEMS

Items such as balloons, flowers, games, electronic devices, excessive cash, etc. are not allowed. These items cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere, and they can be easily lost or stolen. Students are permitted to bring ONLY a house key. Any other item will be confiscated. Inexpensive items, such as, gum, candy, make-up, etc. will be thrown away. More expensive items will be returned to the student or parent when the student is withdrawn from Northside Alternative Middle School.

## PARENT INFORMATION

Students will bring home a parent contact sheet each week; this includes a progress report. Parents are expected to review and sign this paper so the student can return it to the campus. Parents can also use the "Parent Connection," which can be accessed from the district's home page or <http://www.nisd.net/parent-connection>. Please call the school if you have any concerns or questions.

## REPORT CARDS

At the end of each grading period, report cards will be sent home to parents. Academic grades, citizenship, attendance and teacher comments may appear on the report cards.

## SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

The school begins at both campuses at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:40 p.m. Northside Alternative Middle School does not have provisions to supervise students on the campus prior to 8:15 a.m. Bus service is available to all students. Buses deliver students to school between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m. and leave school to return students home between 3:40 and 3:50 p.m. For morning pick-up, students should be at the bus stop in enough time to catch the bus (15 minutes before and after scheduled pick-up time). A return bus will not be sent for students who arrive late at the pick-up point.

## STUDENT CONDUCT

The Northside Alternative Middle Schools require reasonable order and proper student behavior throughout all classrooms, hallways, restrooms, physical activity areas, buses and office areas. All students are responsible for their conduct while at school and in transit to and from school. Disruption of the school environment or to the teaching/learning process is not acceptable.

The Northside Independent School District's Student Code of Conduct is in place at the Northside Alternative Middle Schools. For additional information about the Student Code of Conduct, please refer to section "C" of this handbook.

The Student Code of Conduct is supplemented by the following rules.

1. Upon arrival at school, students will line up for check in and will be dismissed to breakfast and class.
2. Students will always walk from one area to another in an orderly fashion, without talking or making physical contact with other students.
3. During the changing of classes students are not to enter a classroom until directed to do so by the teacher.
4. When students enter a class, they shall follow the teacher's instructions, go to their seats, take out their assignment sheets and be prepared for class to begin.
5. Student talking is at the teacher's direction and limited to class discussion. Students must have permission to speak at any time.
6. All assignments are to be completed as assigned.
7. There are no lockers at the Northside Alternative Middle Schools. All personal items are to remain at home.
8. Students will speak to all staff members in a courteous and respectful manner at all times.
9. Students must obtain permission prior to using the restroom. Restroom breaks are upon arrival in the morning, following lunch, and immediately after school.
10. Students may not use tobacco at school. Tobacco, matches, lighters, breath mints, cologne, eye drops, etc. are not allowed on the school bus or at school.
11. The Northside Alternative Middle School's students are prohibited from visiting any other school at any time. Participation in extracurricular activities is not permitted. Northside Alternative Middle School students found on any school district properties are subject to arrest for trespassing and expulsion from Northside School District.
12. The Northside Alternative Middle Schools have a different dress code than the home campuses. Rules concerning standardized attire will be discussed at enrollment. The Northside Alternative Middle School administrator will make final decisions on acceptable attire. The principal's decisions cannot be appealed.
13. All consumption of food shall be done in the lunchroom. Students are to refrain from talking in the lunchroom.
14. Students are responsible for obtaining their parent's/guardian's signature on the assignment sheet and weekly progress report.
15. Students will be treated with respect at all times.
16. Should a student not ride the Northside Independent School District provided transportation for three consecutive days, the student's parent/guardian is to contact the Northside Transportation Department at **397-0870** to re-instate transportation.
17. Fighting, bullying, gang-related activity, and any dangerous activity (including throwing objects) will not be tolerated on the NAMS campuses and busses. Anyone who engages in these actions is subject to disciplinary action which may include recommendation for an expulsion hearing.
18. Students referred to the office for misbehavior are subject to extension of their assignment to NAMS.
19. Students who continue to misbehave persistently may be referred to a more specialized program on the NAMS campus. This program is designed to provide more structure and opportunity for success. The campus principal will contact the parent if the child is eligible. All students who continue to engage in persistent misbehavior while assigned to the alternative middle schools are subject to expulsion and extension of their assignment.
20. Student schedules are subject to change at any time, depending on campus and student needs.
21. Students who display inappropriate or disrespectful behavior toward any adult will be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents and students are asked to read and sign the rules for the Northside Alternative Middle Schools and the Notice of Student Code of Conduct to signify awareness of the expectations at the Northside Alternative Middle Schools. Please contact the campus staff for questions about discipline, academics, or campus procedures.

## Student Mentor Program

The Northside Alternative Middle Schools have entered into partnerships with businesses and universities to provide adult mentors for our students. Mentors work with our students on academic study and tutorials, hobbies and projects, reading materials of interest, through friendly, positive interactions. If you would like to have your child considered for the mentor program please contact school personnel for details.

## TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents/guardians may schedule appointments with teachers by calling the school at 397-6900 for NAMS South or 397-2070 for NAMS North. Conferences will be scheduled at a time convenient to both the parent/guardian and the teacher.

## TEXTBOOKS/ CURRICULUM MATERIALS

State adopted textbooks and other curriculum materials are available to students at the alternative schools. In some cases, coordination with the home campus is necessary to fulfill the requirements of courses.

## TRANSPORTATION

The Northside Transportation Department provides students transportation to and from school. Students using the bus service are to be at their designated bus pick up point 15 minutes before the designated time and are required to stay at the bus stop for 15 minutes after the pick-up time. If a student is not going to ride a bus home after school due to an appointment, the parent must sign the student out. Unless the student has been removed from the bus, he/she will be placed on the bus after school in order to insure the student will have transportation home.

1. Students will sit in ASSIGNED SEATS and remain in their ASSIGNED SEATS at all times while on the bus.
2. Students will be waiting on the curb in the morning for the bus. Otherwise, the driver will not stop.
3. Students will not talk, scream, use profanity, yell out the windows, or make obscene gestures while on the bus.
4. While on the bus, students will keep all portions of their body inside the bus windows.
5. Students will not eat, drink or chew gum while they are on the bus.
6. Students will not bring any electronic devices on the bus.
7. The Northside Alternative Middle Schools students will comply with all other TRANSPORTATION POLICIES as stated in Section "D" of this handbook.
8. Bus disciplinary referrals may result in the loss of bus privileges and/or loss of the criteria to return to the home campus.
9. Students will maintain the school dress code requirement while riding the district school bus to and from school.
10. Severe disruptions of transportation may result in police intervention.

## VISITORS

For the security of our students, all parents and visitors are required to register in the Administrative Office and indicate the reason for visiting the campus. They are also required to sign out prior to leaving the campus. Upon sign-in, all parents and visitors should receive a Visitor's Pass.

Parents and other community members are welcome to visit our school; the District encourages such visitation. Visits to a specific classroom or program must be scheduled through the principal's office and must not interfere with the instruction or discipline managed by the teacher.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Students must meet criteria based on attendance, behavior, and grades in order to complete their assigned placement at the alternative school. Verification of successful performance in these areas is the responsibility of NAM's administrators. On the day a student is being withdrawn, the student will receive his/her withdrawal form to take home to the parent. The parent should contact the home campus several days in advance to schedule a re-entry conference so that school is not missed.

## CONCLUSION

The Northside Alternative Middle Schools have been established to guide students in their decision making. In coordination with families, feeder campuses, and community resources, our aim is to help students make improvements in academics and positive behaviors.