

Northwoods Elementary School

95 Academy Lane NW
Hutchinson, MN 55350

It is the mission of the Northwoods SDA Elementary School to provide a Christ-centered Christian Education based on mutual respect and high academic standards.

Northwoods Elementary School is part of the Educational Ministry of the:

Hutchinson Seventh-day Adventist Church
820 Main Street North
Hutchinson, MN 55350
320-587-6054

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Table of Contents

- I. *Goals and Objectives* (3)
- II. *Admissions* (3-4)
- III. *Curriculum* (5)
 - A. Instructional
 - B. Gymnastics
 - C. Music
- IV. *Operating Authority* (5)
- V. *Discipline* (6)
 - A. Guidelines for Student Conduct (6)
 - B. Undesirable behavior requiring disciplinary measures (6-7)
 - C. Dress Code (7-8)
 - D. Radios, CD Players, Cell Phones, Toys etc. (8)
 - E. Weapons (9)
 - F. Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment (10-11)
 - G. Bullying (11-12)
- VI. *Attendance and Health* (12)
 - A. Length of School Day (12)
 - B. Attendance & Punctuality (13-14)
 - C. Illness (14)
 - D. Medication for Students (14)
 - E. Bad Weather Arrangements (15)
 - F. Visitors (15)
 - G. Volunteers (15)
- VII. *Communications* (15)
 - A. Report Cards (15-16)
 - B. Parent/Teacher Conferences (16)
 - C. Home and School Association (16)
 - D. Parent-Teacher Relation/Grievance Policy (16-17)
- VIII. *Miscellaneous Items* (17)
 - A. Books (17)
 - B. Lunches (17)
 - C. Field Trips (17)
 - D. Telephone Use (18)
 - E. Bicycle Safety (18)
 - F. School Insurance (18)
 - G. On Campus Transportation (18)
 - H. Asbestos Notification (18)
- IX. *Financial Information* (19)
 - A. Tuition Rates (19-20)
- X. *Administrators/Teachers* (20)

I. Goals and Objectives

The Hutchinson SDA Church, parents/guardians, students, and staff pledge to promote an ongoing, cooperative learning environment that maximizes academic achievement and the growth of Christian character. Our objectives are:

1. Lead students to a knowledge of God.
2. Assist students in the development of a Christian character.
3. Develop student's thinking and doing skills in the areas of accuracy, decision making, and sound judgment.
4. Promote a sense of responsibility and social awareness in each student.
5. Develop positive attitudes toward the use of talents, interests and leisure time.
6. Learn the skills necessary for good management of money, property and resources.
7. Maintain a desire for learning, now and in the future.

II. Admissions

Northwoods Elementary School (NWE) is an educational institution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which operates the largest Protestant school system in the world. Students who come from non-SDA backgrounds regardless of race, color, or creed, will be accepted if space is available, and they pledge to respect the standards of the SDA Church while enrolled in the school. Admission is based on the following criteria:

1. Any student applying for admission to Kindergarten must be five years old by September 1. Students applying for Pre-K must be four years old by September 1. A birth certificate, which is needed for school records, should be presented at registration.
2. The State of Minnesota requires students to have all immunizations up to date with a physician-signed document certifying that this is so. This record must be presented at registration or no later than the first day of

school. Any student not having immunization records and school cumulative records on file by the first day of school may be dismissed until the records are received.

3. All new students must submit a medical report from a family physician. Any special conditions, which would exclude a student from normal activities, should be stated.
4. Final action on all applications for admission will be taken by the School Board following a recommendation by the faculty.
5. All students enrolled must have their school records from a previous school on file.
6. New students entering NWE will be placed in a grade level based on standardized test results, physical and mental maturity, as well as age. The faculty will do this evaluation.
7. No child will be accepted as a student in this school unless his/her account of the previous school year is paid in full at the time of registration, or a satisfactory arrangement has been made with the school board.

Northwoods Elementary School strives to be inclusive in its admissions decisions; however, it is limited by the equipment and staff size to meet the needs of every student. Therefore, students who have serious academic, physical, social, or emotional needs may not be accepted at NWE.

There will be a thirty-day probationary period for all new students in order to ensure that:

1. The staff is able to meet the needs of the student.
2. The student has been properly placed academically.
3. Student and parental participation are in accord with the goals and objectives of the school.

III. Curriculum

A. Instructional

Northwoods Elementary School is fully accredited by National Accreditation for Private Schools and the North America Division of Seventh-day Adventists. To insure a Bible based curriculum, reflecting Christian morals and values, textbooks for subjects such as Bible, Reading, and Science, are produced by the Seventh-day Adventist Office of Education. A Christian produced handwriting and Science series is also used. Textbooks for subjects such as English, Math, and Social Studies are produced by industry textbook publishers and are similar to many used by other area schools.

B. Music

Music will be offered on a weekly basis for students in grades 1-8. A music teacher leads out in each separate session. Private music lessons are also available.

IV. Operating Authority

The School Board is responsible for interpreting and enforcing school regulations. All regulations adopted by the faculty or School Board and announced to the students shall have the same validity as those printed in this handbook.

V. Discipline

Since no list of rules can be all inclusive, students are expected to understand the governing principles of acceptable behavior.

A. Guidelines for Student Conduct

1. Respect God and His Word.
2. Respect and obey those in authority.
3. Respect the rights of others.
4. Practice the Golden Rule.

5. Dress modestly, neatly and appropriately.
6. Keep a clean mind and body.
7. Be prompt in attending classes and appointments.
8. Be friendly and considerate.
9. Be consistent and use common sense in daily decisions.

B. Undesirable behavior requiring disciplinary measures

Students will be disciplined by their classroom teacher when any of the following infractions occur:

- Tripping, shoving, or any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces a staff member or student
- Disruptive noises or talking without permission
- Defacing or destruction of school property
- Using school property without staff approval
- Unacceptable language (verbal abuse, name calling)
- Being out of assigned area
- Gambling or betting
- Lying

Students will be disciplined by the faculty or School Board, and may be immediately suspended from school for the following reasons:

- Possession or use of alcohol
- Possession or use of tobacco products
- Possession of weapons
- Possessing, handling, or furnishing illegal drugs
- Use of profane or sexually explicit language
- Destruction or defacing of property
- Disrespect to staff
- Physical fighting
- Cheating
- Stealing
- Persistent or chronic violation of school rules
- Inappropriate social sexual behavior
- Possession of pornographic material
- Willful deception

- Any act deemed major and agreed to by faculty and school board.

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately with a phone call and/or a letter by mail when the faculty or School Board has disciplined their student. A written report will be placed in the student's files.

The suspension policy is that a student serves a one-day in-school suspension for undesirable behavior. This will be followed by a one-day out of school suspension for undesirable behavior that occurs within sixty school days of the first offense. If a third undesirable behavior occurs within sixty school days of the first offense, a recommendation from the faculty will be made to the School Board regarding expulsion.

C. Dress Code

Appropriate clothing for students at NWE is based on simplicity, modesty, cleanliness, neatness and safety. (1 Peter 3:3-4; 1 Timothy 2:9; Romans 12:1,2) These guidelines have been developed to reduce the competition between students in what they wear. Different school activities will at times require different levels of dress. School staff will have the authority to decide whether a student is appropriately dressed and require the student to make the necessary changes.

Clothing considered inappropriate at all times includes:

- Shoes other than gym shoes, in the school gym.
- Tight fitting clothing.
- See through clothing.
- Sleeveless shirts, spaghetti strap shirts and blouses.
- Skirts or dresses not of a modest length.
- Revealing shirt tops
- Clothing with slogans/pictures contrary to school principles.
- Clothing which reveals midriff or back, undergarments.

- Shorts of an inappropriate length.
- Grubby, ragged or torn clothing.
- Yoga pants or similar tight-fitting pants are allowed only with a shirt or dress that covers the hips.

Students who wear inappropriate clothing will be required to change their clothes.

Parents will be responsible for bringing the appropriate clothing to school following notification.

Jewelry of any kind (rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets etc.) is not permitted to be worn at school. Makeup must be natural looking.

D. Radios, CD Players, Cell Phones, Toys etc.

Radios, walkmans, hand-held electronic games, (I-pods, MP3 players) or other personal electronics brought to the school without permission will be held in the school office until they are picked up by a parent/guardian. Cell phone use is permitted on an emergency basis. Cell phones will be off and placed in the teachers' possession during school hours. For first offense, the cell phone remains in the parents' possession for one month and may not be brought to school. For second offense, the cell phone is confiscated and remains in the school's possession for 3 months. For third offence, the cell phone remains in the school's possession for the remainder of the school year. No toys from home are allowed in school during school hours unless approved and directed by the teacher for a school activity.

E. Weapons

Students and non-students, including adults and visiting youths, are forbidden to knowingly or voluntarily possess, handle, transmit, or use all weapons or any instrument which has the appearance of a weapon in school, on school property, or during any school activity. NWE takes a position of "Zero Tolerance" on the following objects:

- All firearms, whether loaded or unloaded
- Other guns of all types
- Knives, switch blades, daggers, swords, razors, etc.

- Artificial knuckles or other object designed to be worn over the fist or knuckles
- Blackjacks, clubs, numchucks, throwing stars, etc.
- Explosives
- Poisons, chemicals, or substances capable of causing bodily harm
- Bow and arrows, sling shots, etc.
- Any other device or instrument used to intimidate, threaten, or inflict harm.

In the event of any offense, the faculty will:

1. Confiscate the weapon (if it can be done safely), or call 911 and request assistance if needed;
2. Notify parents/guardians;
3. Initially suspend for two days and bring a recommendation to the School Board regarding expulsion;
4. Consider police involvement with recommendation to charge;
5. Repeat offenses will result in a recommendation to the School Board regarding permanent expulsion;
6. Depending on the severity of the act, discipline may range from a two day suspension to permanent expulsion.

F. Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment

Faculty and students of Northwoods Elementary School are to exemplify a Christ-like life and should avoid any appearance of wrongdoing. They must never place another person in a position of embarrassment or disrespect due to sexual, racial or religious overtones. To do so would be a violation of God's law and the law of the land, which protects human rights. Everyone at our school has the right to feel respected and safe.

Harassment includes but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature affecting an individual's academic standing.
- Unwelcome sex-oriented comments or gestures (kidding, teasing, jokes, etc.)
- Subtle pressure or requests for sexual activity.
- Unnecessary and/or unwelcome touching of an individual (padding, pinching, hugging, etc.)
- Demand for sexual favors.
- Threatening notes or cartoons.
- Offensive or graphic printed material.

Religious or Sexual harassment consists of conduct that ridicules or otherwise intimidates an individual based on religious beliefs/practice or race. The conduct may be physical or verbal in nature.

Complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly. On determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment, the administration or appropriate official shall look at the record as a whole and the totality of the circumstance.

Students or employees who engage in harassment or violent acts on school premises or off school premises at a school sponsored activity will be subject to appropriate discipline, including suspension/expulsion, or in the case of an employee, job termination.

Violence towards others, as well as, harassment whether it be religious, racial, disability, age, sexual, ethnic, or gender related is against the law.

If harassment is found to exist, faculty shall take prompt corrective action. Depending on the severity of the act, the discipline may range from a written warning to immediate dismissal.

If anyone uses words or actions that make you feel uncomfortable or fearful, you need to tell a teacher, the principal or another responsible adult. Your right to privacy will be respected as much as possible.

G. Bullying

Northwoods Elementary administrators, staff, and students have adopted the OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program in order to make our school a safer place for all. Thus, a student or group of students must not participate in, or allow, any act of physical, verbal, cyber, social exclusion, or subtle forms of bullying.

For the purpose of this policy “bullying” is defined as:

“...when someone repeatedly and on purpose says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending himself or herself.”

Northwoods has established the following anti-bullying rules:

1. We will not bully others
2. We will try to help students who are bullied
3. We will try to include students who are left out
4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Behavior consequences are determined by consideration of the following factors:

- 1) Age/development/maturity
- 2) Degree of harm/Nature of incident/Circumstances
- 3) Number of incidences
- 4) Relationships between parties
- 5) Severity of incident

Incidents requiring lowest response will be immediately acted on by teacher or staff and may result in loss of privileges.

Incidents that are identified as bullying and repeated bullying will be responded to in the following ways: Educator intervention, parental involvement, documentation, conversations, consequences, referrals for help as needed, behavior plans, safety plans, possible suspension or expulsion.

*Northwoods bullying policy is based on the Olweus Prevention Program.

VI. Attendance and Health

A. Length of School Day

The school day for students will be from 8:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Monday-Friday. Pre-K/Preschool will meet Monday and Wednesday and Friday, dismissing at 11 a.m. (Students in the Fresh Five program meet MWF full days.

Parents/guardians are asked to honor the teacher's time by arriving no earlier than 8:00 a.m. each morning picking up students no later than 3:00 p.m.

B. Northwoods Pick-up and Drop off Policy

To expedite the pick-up and drop off of our students we would ask that parents follow these guidelines:

- 1) Drop off procedure:
 - a. Stay in line drop-off: Parents should form a single file line in the roundabout to drop students off (No double parking will be allowed). Please be patient and wait your turn in line. Do not leave your car if you are in the round-about. Use the parking lot if

you need to enter the school building for any reason.

2) **Pick up procedure:**

- a) **Stay in line pick-up:** Parents should form a single file line (No double parking). Please be patient and wait your turn in line. Students will be dismissed by families. Teachers will communicate via walkie talkie to expedite the process. PreK students will be dismissed by the teacher or teacher's assistant at the front door when parents arrive.

Before and after school is always a busy time for teachers. We would strongly encourage parents that have things to discuss with their child's teacher set up an appointment after school. **Please remember the round-about is only for loading and unloading – not for parking.**

C. Attendance & Punctuality

Students are expected to attend school every day; they are expected to arrive on time in the morning and to leave at dismissal time. When students are punctual, a better learning and instructional atmosphere exists. Data collected indicates a significant correlation between student absences and achievement.

When a student will be absent for any reason, the parents/guardians are expected to notify the school. Parents/guardians are requested to call the school prior to the starting time on the day of absence to give the reason for the absence. If your child is absent from school and you have not phoned

you must send a written excuse with your child when he or she returns to school.

In the case of a planned absence such as a vacation, doctor appointment, etc., you must notify the school in advance so that the necessary arrangements can be made for makeup work. Children will not be able to leave with anyone other than a parent/guardian or grandparent, without prior written notification or arrangements.

Reasonable excuses for absences include sickness, attendance at a funeral, doctor appointments, and unique family situations for which prior arrangements are made.

Anything not pre-arranged is unexcused.

- All students enrolled in the school are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance. A student who is tardy more than twenty percent of a grading period will have his/her attendance records reviewed by the school board. Written excuses for all absences and tardies are required the first day back to school.
- A pupil who is absent as many as seven days out of a grading period, for whatever cause, may forfeit his/her grades unless it is evident to the teacher that his/her work has been satisfactorily made-up.
- A student must have parental consent to leave school during school hours. Students who leave the school grounds during school hours without proper permission will be considered truant and subject to immediate disciplinary action, including suspension.
- The attendance, along with citizenship and scholastic grades, become a part of the student's permanent record and will be listed on his/her transcripts with his/her grades.
- Any function or activity in which the school participates in at Maplewood Academy will be considered a regular school day and students are expected to be in attendance.

- Two days are allowed for make-up work for each day of excused absence. No make-up work is allowed unless a signed excuse has been turned in on time.

D. Family Vacation During School

Teachers at Northwoods realize that some of the best learning experiences that occur in life come from traveling to new places. **Ideally, we ask parents to try to schedule vacation around school breaks and vacations.** When parents do schedule vacations outside of normal school breaks that will affect normal attendance, we ask that you follow the following guidelines:

- 1) The more advance notice the better. We ask that teachers be given at minimum a 2 week notice of any major vacation plans.
- 2) Realize that preparation of lessons in advance require extra time from classroom teachers. It also may require extra time in make-up tests and assignments, teaching concepts that have been missed or reteaching concepts that students were not able to do independently. Work in collaboration with your child's teacher in the preparation and make-up process to minimize as much as possible any extra work required. You are responsible for making sure that missed assignments are completed and turned in.
- 3) Consider volunteering to supervise a recess or lunch break, helping copy materials that may be needed for the trip, etc.
- 4) Realize that there are some things that will simply be missed which potentially may have an effect on your child's grades.

E. Illness

To protect your child and others, students should not be sent to school with fever or any symptoms of illness. Students who become ill at school will be allowed to rest until their parents/guardians can be notified and arrangements made for their timely release.

F. Medication for Students

For the student's protection as mandated by the State of Minnesota, Section 34 {126.201} regarding administration of medications, the policy is as follows:

1. A written note must accompany all medications from the parents/guardians with specific instructions for administration.
2. All prescription medications must be in the pharmacy container labeled by the pharmacist.
3. All medications that are kept at school must be kept in the school office.

It is suggested that whenever possible, medication schedules be arranged to eliminate the need for medication to be administered during school hours.

G. Bad Weather Arrangements

In the event of extremely bad weather, the following policy will govern school closure.

- In most situations Northwoods Elementary School follows the Hutchinson Public School's bad weather closing procedures. Parents are asked to check local TV listings for school closings or delays.
- If parents are unable to bring their child to school because they feel that conditions make travel too dangerous, they must notify their child's teacher. The student will be given an excused absence if this procedure is followed.
- If the buses are running late, school will begin when they arrive, as listed on local TV channels.
- Northwoods Administration has the authority to make a decision different than the public school district. In these situations, parents will be contacted personally.

H. Visitors

Parents/guardians are invited to visit our classrooms, but must call ahead to make arrangements with the teacher. Relatives or friends wishing to visit while school is in session must make prior arrangements with the faculty. Students are to obtain the consent of their teacher before bringing non-adult visitors to school.

I. Volunteers

All classroom volunteers will need board approval with board knowledge of time commitment and duties. Volunteers will also have a Minnesota Conference background check approval prior to volunteering.

VII. Communications

A. Report Cards

Report cards inform you of your child's progress four times each year. The format is set by the Mid America Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The teacher will evaluate the progress of each child through observation, informal and formal testing, and classroom performance. The progress report addresses three basic areas: academic skills; personal and social growth; and work and study skills.

B. Parent/Teacher Conferences

Scheduled Parent Teacher Conferences are to be held, once after the first grading period and again after the third grading period. The purpose of these conferences is to review the student's progress. It is also an excellent time for the free exchange of ideas between parent, teacher and student regarding the student's education. A parent or teacher may wish additional conferences during the year. These conferences are to be scheduled at a time that is mutually agreeable to the parent and teacher.

C. Home and School Association

Cooperation and informal activities between parents/guardians, students and faculty are promoted through the Home and School Association. Parents/guardians are encouraged to become involved.

D. Parent-Teacher Relation/Grievance Policy

On occasion, problems can arise between parents and teachers. The following conciliation procedure based on Matthew 18 and I Corinthians 6 will be used for resolving these problems:

- Step One: The parent is to first speak to the teacher in an attempt to resolve the problem. This is to be done by appointment only.
- Step Two: If the problem is not resolved between parent and teacher, the parent then asks the head teacher to help resolve the problem. This meeting is to be set up by the head teacher and by appointment only.
- Step Three: If the problem is not resolved, the parent contacts the head teacher and requests a meeting with the school board chair. Once again, this is done by appointment only and with all parties present.
- Step Four: If the problem is not resolved, the parent will contact the head teacher and request a meeting with the school board at which time the Conference Superintendent of Education will be invited to attend. The parent must provide documentation to the board chair previous to the meeting that clearly states the grievance to be discussed. Once again, this is done by appointment only and with all parties present.

II. Miscellaneous items

A. Books

Students are urged to take good care of books and will be charged for books that are lost or damaged beyond normal wear and tear.

B. Lunches

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing a nutritious lunch for their own student(s) each day. Some fundraising lunches may be provided throughout the school year to support the eighth grade class or the school. Maplewood Academy allows Northwoods students to attend the cafeteria on Wednesdays. The cost is \$3 for grades 1-4 and \$4 for grades 5-8/Adults.

C. Field Trips

There are a few field trips planned each year. Field trips give students a practical glimpse of the studies of the classroom. Parents/guardians will be notified about field trips in writing prior to the trip. Specific information will include transportation arrangements, costs associated with the trip, meal arrangements, and departure and arrival times. Permission slips will be required from a parent or guardian for each student to participate. Students under the age of 8 and shorter than four feet nine inches are required to use a booster seat on any school outing without bus transportation.

D. Telephone Use

The school telephone is for school business only. Teachers and students should not be called during class time except in an emergency. Students may use the phone only with the permission of a teacher. ** PLEASE NOTE that the school's voice mail will be checked at the end of the school day.

E. Bicycle/Skateboard/Scooters/Rollerblades

Bicycles are to be parked in the bicycle rack while students are at school. Skateboards, scooters, rollerblades are not allowed on school property

F. School Insurance

All students should be covered by their parents/guardians' insurance. Students are covered by the school's insurance, but it is SECONDARY CARRIER type insurance.

Parents/guardians should request the necessary forms when an accident occurs.

G. On Campus Transportation

Students are not allowed to be transported by a private vehicle on Maplewood Academy Campus with the exception of parents transporting their own children!

H. Asbestos Notification

Northwoods Elementary School is in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws regarding asbestos containing building materials. Our school has an Asbestos Management Plan in our school office, which is available for you to inspect by appointment.

IX. Financial Information

Northwoods Elementary School utilizes FACTS Tuition Management for streamlining tuition payments. FACTS gives families expanded payment options and simplifies payment tracking and management for our school and families. Northwoods operates on a ten-month payment plan, August through May. A registration fee equal to one month's tuition is due on the day of registration. Registration fees are not refundable. Northwoods families may also choose to spread tuition payments over a 12-month period. Families choosing a 12 month plan must begin payments in July.

Enrollment in FACTS is a requirement for all Northwoods families. Payments can be directly withdrawn from a bank account or charged to a credit card. There are a variety of payment scheduling options available including weekly, bi-monthly and monthly. Fees will be incurred for late payments. If for any reason your family is having difficulty making your agreed to payments, please contact our treasurer immediately. It is the desire of our school to work with families that encounter unexpected financial challenges. Withdrawing from FACTS tuition management is not

permitted and indicates that a family has decided to withdraw their children from enrollment at Northwoods. Families may opt out of FACTS if they choose to pay the entire year's tuition before the start of the school year.

The previous school year's bill balance must be paid in full prior to the start of the next school year. Accounts outstanding in other schools must be paid in full before the student can be admitted to Northwoods Elementary.

Tuition covers only about one third of the school's operating cost. The remaining costs are made up of the local church subsidy, a portion of our church member's tithe, subsidy from the Minnesota Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and special funding projects throughout the year.

B. *Policy for part-time student tuition:*

The tuition rate will be calculated based on the number of days per week that will be attended by the student as agreed upon between the parent(s) and the teacher at the time of enrollment. Prior to enrolling in part-time attendance, each student will be required to submit an application for enrollment. An application fee of 50% of the current year's application fee for full-time students will be charged at the time of application submission. If the student's attendance reaches 4 days per week, then the tuition rate will change to that of a full time student. Multiple student discounts will apply for families with multiple part-time students. If the student will be casually attending for selected portions of the school program such as art, physical education class, or other specific events, then a \$50 per month tuition will be charged for that student. Part-time students who extend their involvement in school participation beyond the regularly scheduled school days agreed upon at the time of enrollment will also be subject to the additional \$50 per month tuition in addition to their per day of attendance calculated tuition. Part-time attendance should be

determined by establishing the number of days per week a student will regularly attend school and determined at the time of enrollment. Changes in enrollment status will need board approval if changes are requested during the school year.