



North Gem Elementary Handbook

LET THE LEARNING BEGIN



Updated 6/01/2023



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
- Marc Holbrook -Vice Chair
- Dr. Phil Knox
- MaLissa Barfuss
- Paul Curtis
- Candie Massey– Board Clerk



School Board *meetings are the 2nd 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.

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, Teacher 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. Work missed can never be made up in a completely satisfactory manner because the value of class activities is missed forever. Classroom participation is an important facet of the educational process and cannot be reconstructed. 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 guardian 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 statement and documentation will go to an attendance committee comprised of Superintendent, teacher, and school counselor.
6. 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. We won't promise to agree with you, but we will listen and be fair.

We have special times, twice a year, 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, but may ride home with parents with written permission from the parents to the teacher.

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 lead teacher or principal. The lead 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 lead 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 district clerk at the district office. .

In order to be placed on the agenda, you must call the district clerk, one week before the next scheduled meeting.

Desks

Lockers and desks may be searched by teachers and administration at any time.

Lunch

A well balanced lunch is offered K-5th elementary 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.

The student will be expected to leave his/her eating area clean. Gum should be disposed of before entering



the lunchroom and no food should be thrown. Students causing a disturbance may be denied eating privileges.

North Gem School District #149 operates a school lunch program for students. Funding for its operation comes, in part, from the State Department of Education, the Federal Government (who supplies food commodities), local funds and by 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 can 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. Any student may pay cash 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.

Parents Coming To School

Prudence requires that the office be aware of all people on the premises. Therefore, it is necessary that parents 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 and electronic games**

Cell Phones use during class hours is prohibited. Unless used for an educational purpose.

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

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

** 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.

*children 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!

