



NorthStar
Parent Information Handbook
Expectations and Procedures

School Year 2020-2021

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NorthStar Parents,

The 2020-2021 school year starts on August 18, 2020. On behalf of the entire NorthStar team we want to welcome you! We also want to take this time to thank you for considering NorthStar as your choice for after school and/or summer camp programming. We take your vote of confidence seriously, and we want you to know that we will do our best to cultivate this partnership with quality programming, communication and overall excellence.

If along the way you have questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us. You can reach us by leaving a voice mail message, sending us an email or asking the receptionist to locate one of us when you are in the building. While it is our goal to be available to all parents, please understand that we are not always available at a point of need, so if you do not find us on your first attempt please consider one of the other options and we will try to reconnect with you as quickly as possible.

Programming Team - 402-614-6360 (Here are some alternative ways to find us)

		Email Address	Extension
Angel Fairchild	Office	angel@northstar360.org	218
Jim Stevens	Director	jim@northstar369.org	207
Hana Abbott	Sr. Manager	hana@northstar369.org	213
Mike Mitchell	Athletic Manager	mike@northstar369.org	215
Jordyn Jackson	Elem. Manager	jordyn@northstar360.org	209
Evan Royuk	M.S. Manager	evan@northstar369.org	217
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NORTHSTAR

NorthStar Mission

To change young men's lives through programming that supports, challenges, inspires and instills a life rooted in education, self-discipline and service to the community.

In Fall of 2014, NorthStar opened its doors to boys in North Omaha for academic support and skills development, along with the intentional advancement of physical, emotional and social skills through athletics, adventure and experiential learning and arts exploration.

Academics

NorthStar after-school academic programs focus on supporting boys in daily homework along with academic tutoring in areas of challenge. NorthStar believes boys can be on grade level and prepared for graduation!

Athletics

Boys will be able to learn skills in a variety of athletic and team-building activities in the after-school program. With an athletic field and indoor Fieldhouse, NorthStar also partners with established athletic organizations to ensure continued athletic opportunities, even when students have not transitioned to varsity sports.

Art Immersion

Boys will develop knowledge of various art forms and knowledge about themselves, their community, and ideas they wish to express in their artwork. Art at NorthStar involves the process of planning, practice, and performance and opportunities to make learning visible. Boys **will participate in hands-on visual and performing arts, discovering, expressing and expanding their creativity while learning to build classroom community through arts-based processes.**

Adventure and Experiential Education

Through participation in Omaha Outward Bound School programs, NorthStar boys develop leadership and teambuilding skills that challenge them to do more than they thought possible. The Outward Bound experience includes participation in the several outstanding programs, which include: Hitchcock Climbing Wall, high/low ropes course training, leadership development and summer expeditions.

Career Readiness

NorthStar partners with several local organizations to provide young men with valuable experiences to help them set goals for their future careers. Both on-site presentations and off-site tours help NorthStar students to envision themselves in the workplace, whether as an engineer with HDR, a finance professional at First National Bank, or an entrepreneur.

THE NAME "NORTHSTAR"

Looking to the evening sky, the North Star is used to help identify direction when a person is lost. The NorthStar Foundation seeks to do the same for male youth in North Omaha: encouraging an upward view, providing a constant resource and offering direction.

NorthStar Program Handbook

This handbook is designed to give parents and guardians a helpful insight into the programs offered by NorthStar. It includes NorthStar after-school program and summer camp procedures that support a safe and purposeful experience. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it available for reference during the year.

Communication

Communicating with families is crucial; we use a variety of tools to keep parents informed about what's going on at NorthStar and to find out what parents are interested in or concerned about.

Our most common means of communication include:

1. Text Notifications
When NorthStar shares important or updated information, such as weather cancellations, that news is shared via local media outlets, social media pages, and automated texts (Remind). NorthStar must have an up-to-date parent/guardian's cell phone number on file.
2. Telephone calls and voice mail
3. Parent meetings
4. Social Media (primarily Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram)
5. E-mail (firstname@northstar360.org — example:john@northstar360.org)
6. NorthStar's website (northstar360.org)

Staff Concerns

It is our desire that staff have open communication with parents of NorthStar boys. Program Staff are available for phone calls between the hours of 12:00-3:00 PM. If you or your child has an issue with a staff member, please speak directly with the staff. If you are not satisfied that an issue has been resolved, a meeting with the Director of Education is encouraged. Abusive behavior and/or verbal threats by parents toward program staff, children, or other parents will be cause for immediate termination of their child's membership at NorthStar.

Parent/Staff Meeting Request Forms are available in the vestibule. You may fill out the form and request a meeting with staff with this form.

Complaint Procedures

Constructive criticism is welcome through any medium when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program and to equip NorthStar to perform its tasks more effectively. In an effort to resolve all concerns and issues at the earliest stage and through informal methods and procedures, any complaint should first be addressed with an academic manager.

When the manager receives a complaint, he/she will immediately address the concerns by conducting an informal conference with the complainant, thereby providing an opportunity for a discussion and informal resolution of the identified concerns.

If the concerns are not resolved by the manager, the complainant may contact the Student Services Coordinator, who will conduct an informal conference with the complainant, again providing an opportunity for a discussion and informal resolution of the complainant's concerns.

If the complainant's concerns are not resolved by the Student Services Coordinator, the complainant may contact the Director of Education, who will conduct an informal conference with the complainant, providing yet another opportunity for a discussion and informal resolution of the complainant's concerns.

Severe Weather and School Cancellations

When Omaha Public Schools cancels school or evening activities because of weather concerns, all NorthStar activities will also be canceled for that evening.

If severe weather forces the closing of school, an announcement will also be made on local radio/TV stations informing parents that NorthStar programming will also be canceled. Parents who have signed up for notifications on the Remind system will also receive an additional automated text message.

Emergency Procedures

NorthStar staff and students are trained to respond to emergencies by following the Standard Response Protocol (SRP). SRP has been adopted by most after-school programs and law enforcement agencies in Douglas and Sarpy Counties to develop common terminology and procedures to maximize the effectiveness of our response to school emergencies.

SRP involves four responses: Lockout, Lockdown, Evacuation, and Shelter.

Lockout is called when one or more persons or animals outside the school pose a potential threat to student safety. The school day proceeds as usual, but students are kept inside the building until the potential threat has passed.

Lockdown is called when there is someone or something inside the building that poses an immediate threat to student safety. Teachers verify that classroom doors are locked and that students are moved to a location in the classroom where they cannot be seen from interior hallways.

Evacuation occurs when conditions inside the building require that all students be moved out of the building. The most common form of evacuation drill is a fire drill, but students might be evacuated for other reasons, such as a gas leak or damage to the building. If students are unable to be in the building for an extended period or due to extreme weather, students will be moved to a designated temporary evacuation site or to a reunification site where they can be safely released to a parent or guardian.

Shelter requires that all students go to a designated location inside the building designed to withstand severe thunderstorms or tornados.

Students and staff practice these responses throughout the year in an attempt to ensure that all students and staff know what to do and to identify plan elements that may need attention. Except for drills, parents are notified any time conditions warrant the activation of these protocols.

Visitors

During student programming hours, safety is our highest priority. All guests needing to pick up students must identify who they are picking up when entering the facility. Guests must wait in the vestibule where students will join them for departure. If a guest wishes to see their child inside of the facility they can request a manager who will gladly accompany them inside the building.

Enrollment

Student enrollment is renewed annually at the beginning of the school year. Parents must complete an enrollment packet along with a \$100 enrollment fee with each student enrolled. The enrollment process can take one to three days depending on how many students are ahead of you in the enrollment process. If you need financial assistance, the process could take an additional day to complete. Please keep this in mind when you are thinking about a start date for your child. Once a student is enrolled it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep all student information up to date.

Open/Closed Enrollment

- **Elementary** and **Middle School** students can enroll year-round. However, once a grade level group reaches capacity a manager may close the option to enroll additional students that register. If that happens, the student can go onto a waiting list until the class returns to a manageable size.
- **High School** students registering in grades 9-12 may **NOT** be enrolled as new students. High school boys will only be allowed to enroll if they attended NorthStar prior to the summer of their 8th grade into 9th grade school year.

Daily Schedule

- After School Program Hours:
Monday –Friday 3:00 pm-7:00 pm
- Camp NorthStar (Summer) Hours:
Monday-Friday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Our daily schedules are the same from day to day; however, if your child's schedule changes because of a special activity or field trip we will communicate with you via text through our **Remind System**.

Students Early Arrival

The staff that work with programming for the after-school program are also involved in transporting/supervising students from various schools to NorthStar each afternoon. Students are not allowed to arrive at NorthStar until after Omaha Public School's students have been dismissed (secondary schools dismiss at 3:05 p.m. and elementary schools dismiss at 4:05 p.m.).

Student Pick-Up Options

Not all families have the same needs when it comes to transitioning their boys from NorthStar each evening. To better help with this process, we provide 3 options that we believe will cover most parent needs.

- **Option 1**
Parents walk into the building to check their son out.
- **Option 2**
Parents call the registration desk (402-614-6360 ext. 210) and request that their child meet them outside. Parents who wish to use this option will need to make sure this is stated in your registration packet.
- **Option 3**
Parents may also give their student permission to walk home. Parents who wish to use this option will need to make sure this is stated in your registration packet.

*Before leaving the building, **everyone** is required to sign-out at the front desk or in the vestibule.*

Late Pick-Up

We understand that occasional incidents arise where a parent may be late in picking up your son. **Please call NorthStar immediately at 402-614-6360 ext. 210 if this is the case.** When we do not know why a student has

not been picked up on time, the primary parent/guardian will be called first then others on the approved pick-up list.

Late Fees

NorthStar is not staffed to provide supervision for students after 7:00 pm during the school year and after 5:00 pm during the summer. If students are here after closing hours, a \$20.00 late fee will be assessed.

After School Program (August – May)

Dismissal time is 7:00 P.M.

Late Fees begin at 7:30 - \$20.00 fee; 7:45pm - \$25.00 fee

8:00 pm – Our staff will contact the Omaha Police Department

Camp NorthStar (June –July only)

Dismissal time is 5:00 P.M.

Late Fees begin at 5:30 - \$20.00 fee; 5:45 pm - \$25.00 fee

6:00 pm – Our staff will contact the Omaha Police Department

Transportation from School

During the 2020-21 school year NorthStar will provide transportation from these target schools to NorthStar on days that Omaha Public Schools is in session. Parents please note that when OPS students are not in session, NorthStar programming is not in session.

Additional schools may be added when the number of registered students reaches or exceeds 10 boys.

Target Schools:

Target Elementary Schools

Central Park Elementary
Fontenelle Elementary
Hartman Elementary
King Elementary School
Skinner Elementary
Western Hills Elementary

Target Elementary/Middle Combo. Schools

Holy Name
Jesuit Academy
Phoenix Academy
Sacred Heart

Target Middle Schools

Buffett Middle School
Davis Middle School
King Science Center
McMillian Middle School
Monroe Middle School
Nathan Hale Middle School

Target High Schools

Benson High School (cont.)

Burke High School
Central High School
Creighton Prep
North High School
Northwest High School
Roncalli Catholic High School

Field Trips

We do not have individual field trip permission slips when students attend a field trip. A signed permission slip for all field trips is included in your registration packet.

Student Valuables

NorthStar is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items brought to NorthStar by students. Students are encouraged to leave items of value at home.

Lost and Found

NorthStar maintains a collection of Lost and Found items near the reception desk. Students who lose a textbook, sweatshirt, or anything else should check the Lost and Found for the missing item. Due to the difficulty of maintaining a large Lost and Found collection, it is cleaned out at the end of each quarter, and unclaimed items are donated to charity.

Bicycles

Students can ride bicycles to and from NorthStar. Because of heavy traffic near schools, students should be especially observant of safety rules. Students are to walk bicycles through the safety patrol intersections and continue walking the bicycle to the bike rack. Students should keep their bicycles locked in the bike racks provided. NorthStar is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged bicycles.

Accidents at NorthStar

NorthStar does not provide health insurance coverage for students, as that is the responsibility of parents/guardian to provide. Parents are responsible for the medical bills, just as they would be if the student were hurt away from NorthStar.

Searches

NorthStar exercises exclusive control over NorthStar property including, but not limited to, student lockers, desks, computer equipment, and other such property owned by NorthStar. Students should not expect privacy when using NorthStar property. Periodic, random searches of lockers, desks, computers, and other such property may be conducted at the discretion of the Manager.

The following rules apply to searches of students' personal property, and to the seizure of items in a student's possession or control:

NorthStar managers may conduct a search if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a crime or a violation. The search is to be conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances.

Illegal items or other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety of others or a threat to educational purposes may be taken and kept by NorthStar managers or administrative staff. Any firearm or other weapon will be confiscated and delivered to law enforcement officials as soon as is practicable.

Nuisance Items

Items that disrupt or interfere with the educational process are considered to be "nuisance items" that can be removed from the student's possession. Students are also discouraged from bringing food or snacks toys, etc. to

NorthStar except when their presence serves an educational purpose and have been assigned and approved by NorthStar. NorthStar is not responsible for items a student chooses to bring that end up lost or broken. Pets are not allowed unless prearranged with the team's manager.

Network, Email, and Other Computer Rules

NorthStar technology, including network and Internet access, is the property of NorthStar, and is provided as a tool for students' educational use. Students should not assume that their use of technology at NorthStar is private. Use of NorthStar technology, including email, is not private. In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, NorthStar will monitor computer usage and employ technology protection measures. NorthStar may inspect, copy, review, transfer, and store, at any time and without prior notice, any and all usage of NorthStar computers, computer networks, Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received (including e-mail). The Director of Education shall develop regulations, which may include descriptions of inappropriate uses in addition to those included in this policy.

ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY: Use of NorthStar's technology resources is a privilege and not a right. The Director of Education shall develop appropriate user agreements and shall require that students and their parent/guardian sign such user agreements as a condition of access to the technology resources. Parents and guardians shall inform the Director of Education in writing if they do not want their child to have access. The Director of Education is authorized to establish other regulations, forms, procedures, guidelines and standards to implement this Policy. NorthStar technology resources are not considered to be a public forum. NorthStar reserves the right to restrict any communications and to remove communications that have been posted.

Discipline Expectation for all Boys

Establishing reasonable and well-defined expectations for NorthStar boys communicates what staff expects in regard to behavior. It also guides member behavior and strengthens staff monitoring. The goal of the expectations is to create a climate of positive behavior at NorthStar.

➤ Be Safe

Boys are to act in a manner that does not harm or threaten to harm other members, staff, or volunteers. This includes use of violence, force, threats, or intimidation.

Boys are not to possess, handle, or transmit any object or material that is ordinarily considered a weapon. Running, roughhousing, or throwing things at anyone is prohibited.

➤ Be Respectful

Boys are to behave in a manner that is considerate of the members, staff, and volunteers. Boys are to avoid using profanity or other inappropriate language. Voices are to be used at a normal inside level. Boys will be respectful of the building and all its contents. Members will clean up after all activities. Boys will not take anything that does not belong to them.

➤ Be Responsible

Boys will dress in a reasonable manner and will not wear offensive items as determined by NorthStar staff. Pants/jeans are not to sag. Belts will be provided if students' pants are sagging.

Boys will be accountable for their own actions

Boys will take care of personal items and the area around them.

➤ Be Remarkable

Act in a way that is better than expected! The following behavior WILL NOT be tolerated at any time at NorthStar:

- Bullying of others in any form (physical or verbally)
- Physical fights or encouraging physical fights or verbal attacks between members
- Threats to physically harm another member, staff, or volunteer
- Disrespect to staff or volunteer
- Unwillingness to take re-direction
- Inappropriate language including singing inappropriate songs
- Inappropriate hand gestures

Discipline Procedure

When members are not following the behavioral expectations, they will be redirected by that staff member. The following steps will take place when a member is unwilling to comply with the expectations of NorthStar. If a member does not respond to re-direction and is unable to control their behavior, they may be asked to leave for the day. A parent or guardian will be notified. The child must be picked up immediately.

If a member is abusive, profane, or uncooperative, they may be suspended for a time of up to one week or longer as determined by staff.

Physical fighting will not be tolerated. An automatic suspension will be given to members who fight. A suspension may be up to two weeks, depending on previous patterns of behavior and the severity of the altercation.

Continued poor behavior will be examined on an individual basis. It may be deemed necessary for a member to be suspended for a longer length of time, or permanently. A member may be suspended indefinitely if staff decides the member is unable to follow established expectations or if the seriousness of their offense warrants it.

Bullying, Harassment and Retaliation

NorthStar strives for an environment in which everyone can grow academically and behaviorally. In order to maintain this environment, incidents of bullying or harassment and retaliation will be addressed when reported.

Definition:

Bullying is a repeated pattern of offensive behavior in an environment of an imbalance of power. Bullying is any unwanted, aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Harassment includes the same behaviors, though not necessarily exercised from a standpoint of observed or perceived power which includes, but is not limited to the following categories:

- Physical intimidation
- Assault
- Social intimidation
- Oral or written threats
- Forced isolation

Specific examples of bullying behavior may include, but are not limited to:

Offensive references, gestures, language, jokes, graffiti based on specific traits of an individual including gender, race, religion, disability, or age, unwelcome physical contact, verbal or written suggestions, Name calling or taunting

Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of every student to report suspected bullying to the appropriate authorities; the appropriate authorities include:

Academic Advisors
Academic Managers
Director of Education

It is then the responsibility of these authorities to take the appropriate steps necessary to deal with the situation. When in doubt, this team may refer to the Code of Conduct from the student's home school.

Omaha Outward Bound School

Delivering on the Adventure & Experiential Learning aspect of NorthStar programming, the Omaha Outward Bound School works with NorthStar students over the summer and during the school year on various leadership, teambuilding and development activities.

Activities through Outward Bound include:

- Hitchcock High Ropes Challenge Course
- Hitchcock Rock Wall
- In-classroom Programming
- Outdoor Expeditions
- Youth Service Leaders program
- Teambuilding activities

For more information about Outward Bound activities, contact Jason Zakaras at 402-614-6360, ext. 204, email him at jason@outwardboundomaha.org, or visit outwardboundomaha.org.

NORTHSTAR AND SOCIAL MEDIA

If you want to keep up with what your son is doing at NorthStar, you can follow us and sign up for periodic text message updates on programming! It's free and you can be a part of the fun!

Website

Visit our website (www.northstar360.org) to learn about our events, read our most recent news releases, or download documents.

Facebook

Follow us at: <http://www.facebook.com/northstar360> Learn more about day- to-day programs, see pictures of the boys, leave comments and hit the "Like" button if you like what you see.

Remind

Parents who use a smart phone and would like to receive important updates via text from Mr. Scott can set that up on their phone (see attached handout.).

Twitter

You can also follow NorthStar activities on Twitter at @nstar360.

Instagram

We're now on Instagram! You can follow us @nstar360.