Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School

Parent-Student Handbook

2026-2027

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www.ndes.org
440.279.1127 ~ Fax 440.286.1235

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School

Our Mission

Like Mary, who gave Christ to the world, Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School educates leaders who transform the world, as Jesus did, by living the truth in love.

Our Vision

Notre Dame Schools will engage students from preschool through high school in an exceptional Catholic education.

We will focus on loving, respecting, and educating all to discover and develop their God-given talents.

We will challenge our students to respond faithfully to Jesus' call to transform the world by consciously doing good and bringing hope to the hearts of all.

Our Core Values

Justice

Inspiring all to work toward a more just and peaceful world, especially through service to those on the margins of society and by caring for all God's creation

Respect

Cherishing and honoring the God-given dignity of each person

Integrity

Challenging and supporting students to live authentic, virtuous lives

Community

Welcoming and connecting persons so that all may live in love with one heart and soul

Excellence

Continuing and ever-renewing the highly esteemed tradition of Notre Dame education

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School! Our Parent-Student Handbook is designed to familiarize our parents and children with the foundational statements of Notre Dame, its activities, and consequent responsibilities so that parents can support our efforts to educate children in their faith formation and education. This handbook serves as the "written agreement" between the family and school in terms of the expectations we have for the relationship between the school, parents, and their children.

Parents and students are responsible for understanding and following the information contained in these pages. During a school year, a policy may be amended, revised, or deleted. If this occurs, the school will attempt to give prior written notice. It remains the prerogative of the school administration to implement and interpret the provisions of the handbook.

Parents are requested to indicate their acceptance of all handbook policies by electronically signing the Parent-Student Handbook form in PowerSchool.

FAITH FORMATION

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School provides students with an experience of living in a community of faith that supports their development of a deep, personal relationship with Jesus, leads them to meaningful participation in the sacramental life of the Church and assists students in developing attitudes of service. All students participate in religious instruction.

LITURGICAL AND SACRAMENTAL PARTICIPATION AND PREPARATION

To support students in the growth of their faith, they are provided with frequent opportunities to plan and participate in the celebration of Eucharist and prayer services according to the liturgical year. While students receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation in their home parishes, the 2nd and 8th grade curriculums support the preparation for the sacraments. It is the responsibility of the parent to contact their parish in September to have their children included in the parish programs for sacramental preparation.

SERVICE REQUIREMENT

All Middle School students are required to complete service hours before they graduate. Students in grade 6 are required to complete 10 service hours. Students in grade 7 are required to complete 15 service hours. Students in grade 8 are required to complete 20 service hours.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL OVERVIEW

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School is sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame and governed by the Notre Dame Schools Board of Directors. One Board oversees Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School, and Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School.

The President, hired by the Board of Directors, is the chief executive officer of Notre Dame Schools leading the senior management team responsible for external and internal operations.

The finance and advancement departments assume a major responsibility for assuring that Notre Dame Schools are fiscally responsible and intent on giving visibility to the mission, vision, and core values.

The Principals, working closely with the Faith Formation Director, Faculty and Staff, accept the responsibility for the Catholic identity of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School. Together they accept their call to guide and form the children as they grow in their relationship with Jesus, devotion to Mary and service to others.

The teachers, who directly impact the lives of children every day, are highly competent and state certified.

Specialized instructors in art, music, physical education, STEM, technology, and Spanish expand the curriculum.

Auxiliary personnel (nurse, speech therapists, psychologist, and intervention specialists) support the faculty in educating, caring for and forming the children.

The support staff, administrative assistants, aides, maintenance, and many volunteers assist teachers and staff in fulfilling the mission of Notre Dame Schools.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Responsibilities

Parents, as the primary educators of their children, partner with the school by:

- Promoting the faith formation of their children.
- Making church attendance an integral part of their family life.
- Supporting the school and staff in every way possible.
- Providing an atmosphere at home that promotes good study habits.
- Developing and encouraging the gifts and talents of their children.
- Meeting all financial responsibilities promptly and in accord with the financial policies in this handbook.
- Supporting and participating in special events sponsored by the school.
- Attending, if possible, school programs and events highlighting the children.

Parent Groups

The Notre Dame Parent Association (NDPA): The Notre Dame Parent Association is an organization comprised of parents/guardians of students enrolled in Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School. Their purpose is to promote the spirit of Christian community through spiritual and social activities for families.

Parent Volunteers

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School welcomes parent volunteers and offers many opportunities to become involved. An electronic volunteer sign-up will be available at the beginning of the school year. A representative will contact parents regarding meetings and planning for a particular event. Parents who have consistent contact with the children must complete the following:

- An online volunteer application.
- Acknowledge receipt and reading of the Diocese of Cleveland, *"Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse."*
- Acknowledge receipt and reading of the Diocese of Cleveland, *"Standards of Conduct for Ministry."*
- Attend the Diocesan VIRTUS training program.
- Complete a background check.

Access the NDS website for a volunteer application, Diocesan policies, and the link to sign up for VIRTUS training.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Registration of Students

Currently enrolled: Registration of current students occurs in the second semester.

Kindergarten: A child must be five years of age on or before September 30th and be screened before final acceptance into kindergarten.

Students new to the school: Transfer students applying for admission in grades 1 – 8 must present a copy of their current report card and standardized testing results. An interview with the student and a placement test are part of the admission process. Registration is complete when academic records, student profile form and health records are received and reviewed from the school previously attended.

School Records

Permanent Records: Accurate and complete individual permanent and cumulative records are maintained for each student enrolled at Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School. These records will include the student's attendance records, grades, test scores and other pertinent information that is relevant to the students' enrollment.

Availability for Review: The school implements any and all requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). Parents of any student who is or has been in attendance have the right to inspect and review the education records of their children. Access shall be made to the parents upon receiving a written request and within forty-five (45) days of the request. With the exception of the parents and those employees of Notre Dame Schools who have access to education records within the normal course of business, all student records remain confidential.

Transcripts: Final report cards and student records are the property of Notre Dame Schools.The school will release student records after all financial accounts have been settled. When a student withdraws from Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School, a copy of the cumulative record card and health records will be sent directly to the receiving school after a signed request by the parent is received and all payments are complete.

School and Office Hours

Classes begin at 7:55am and end at 2:40pm. Students should arrive no earlier than 7:25am. After 3:00pm, all children are sent to the school's After Care Program. Parents are responsible for covering the charge for this service. The school office opens at 7:30am and closes at 4:00pm on school days. The office phone number is 440-279-1127.

Reporting Absences, Tardies & Early Dismissals

If a child is absent, tardy or will be leaving school early, please do the following by 8:00am:

- Complete the on-line Attendance/Early Dismissal form
  Upon form completion, all information is sent to the grade level teacher(s) and front office

OR

- Call the Absent, Tardy and Early Dismissal Message System
  NDS – 440.279.1127

Reporting Daily Changes in Transportation

If a child requires a transportation change such as taking the bus, being a car rider or attending After Care, do the following by 2:00pm:

- Call the Change in Transportation Message System
  NDS – 440.279.1127

See Office Forms on the website for all on-line attendance forms.

Make-up Work Due to Prolonged Absence

Parents may contact their child's teacher to request missing assignments due to an absence. Assignments may be picked up in the school office at the end of the school day or sent home with a sibling. Teachers will provide students with a reasonable amount of time to complete missed assignments. If a student is absent due to participation in a sporting event, it is the responsibility of the parent and/or student to contact the teacher regarding missed assignments. Due dates for tests, quizzes, projects, and homework may not be adjusted because of absences related to sporting events.

Tardy & Absence

Students are considered tardy if they are not present in their classroom by 7:55 a.m. Tardiness is recorded on the report card and cumulative record. Students will not be marked tardy if a school bus is late or if there is inclement weather. The Perfect Attendance Award is given to students who attend school for the entire school day every day school is in session. Students who are absent, tardy, or dismissed early for any reason, including medical appointments, are not eligible for this award. In addition, students who accumulate 8 or more tardies and/or absences may be required to attend a conference with the principal.

Chronic Absenteeism

In Ohio, chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of the school year for any reason. Chronic absenteeism is a leading predictor of student literacy and academic success. Students who are chronically absent are at greater risk of struggling academically, especially in middle school. Regular attendance is essential for student learning and engagement. After a student has accumulated 8 absences, a doctor's note may be required explaining the absence and/or providing recommendations. Necessary accommodations may be provided for students experiencing prolonged illnesses. Students with chronic absenteeism may be prohibited from participating in extracurricular activities.

Family Vacations

The decision to take a child out of school for a family vacation with the parents; however, the education of the child should remain the primary consideration. Students are responsible for completing all assignments and classwork missed during the vacation. Missed work should be completed during the week following the students' return to school. Teachers are not required to provide assignments or classwork prior to a student leaving for vacation. Parents are asked to provide the homeroom teacher with at least one week's notice before the vacation begins.

Family Custodial Agreements

A copy of the page of the court decision bearing the case number, the sections referring to visitation rights, the school's responsibilities and contact and the page bearing the judge's signature and court seal must be submitted to the school. These are kept on file in the school office.

The custodial parent is required to inform the principal or school office when modifications are made to the court order. Ordinarily, communications regarding the child will be sent to the custodial parent only.

In instances of "joint custody," both parents will receive school communications and information. Parent/ Teacher conferences will be scheduled jointly if both parents wish to have a conference.

In the case of family difficulties (lawsuits, divorce, etc.) the student will be released to the parent who is the legal guardian.

Emergency Closing Procedures

All families receive text notifications for emergency closings. If school is closed, all scheduled activities are also cancelled.

If a particular school district is closed and/or does not provide busing during inclement weather and Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School are in session, parents make the decision about bringing students to school. Students not in attendance on these days will be marked absent.

Withdrawal Procedures

In the event of a family relocation or other circumstance that will require a student to withdraw, parents should follow these steps:

- Parent completes the Transfer Notification Form to allow NDES/NDMS to transfer student records. No records will be forwarded to another school until the form is returned.
- Note: All financial obligations must be paid, books returned, etc., before any records will be released.
- Registration fees are non-refundable.
- See the finance sections of this handbook for tuition and refund schedules.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Tuition Agreement

Upon registering their child(ren), parents enter into a financial contract with the school. In return for the educational services provided, we expect parents to fulfill their complete financial commitment to the school.

Schedule of Charges

26/27 Tuition which includes activity fee and non-refundable registration fee:
Grades K-2 $ 7,700.00
Grades 3-5 $ 8,200.00
Grades 6-8 $ 9,050.00

Payment Plans

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School has contracted with FACTS/Nelnet Business Solutions to be the processor of tuition payments. Each family in the Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School community is required to have an account.

Available Tuition Payment Options

Annual payment	Due July	Annual fee $0
Semester payments	Due July and January	Annual fee $0
Quarterly payments	Due July, October, January, and April	Annual fee $70
Monthly (12 payments)	Due July through June	Annual fee $70

Tuition Assistance

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School strives to meet tuition assistance requests. However, limited resources do not allow the school to meet every request. Any parent may apply for assistance by completing an application no later than March 31 for the next school year. Tuition assistance needs to be applied for annually.

Late Tuition Payments

The expectation is that all tuition payments are made on time and according to the selected payment plan. A $35 late payment fee will be assessed on payments not received by the schedule outlined. The school may, at its sole option and discretion, enforce the following options:

- Students whose tuition accounts are not current on June 15th will not be permitted to begin classes for the new school year.
- Students whose tuition accounts that are not current on December 31st will not be permitted to begin classes for the second semester.
- Transcripts will be withheld for students until all tuition and other payment responsibilities are completed.
- Families selecting single or two semester check payments who do not pay on schedule will be required to convert to the monthly payment plan.
- Instances of NSF checks or funds not available will be assessed a fee of $30 per occurrence.
- Students whose tuition accounts are not current may be prevented from attending classes and participating in school activities.

Refund Schedule

Enrollment at Notre Dame Elementary School is for the full school year, and the school staff has staffed accordingly for all students. Any family who withdraws their child before September 1st will be eligible for a 90% refund. Any student who withdraws after September 1st but before January 1st, will receive a 40% refund. If the child withdraws after 1/1, no refund will be given.
In the event that Notre Dame Elementary School dismisses a student during the 2026-2027 school year, the entire tuition must be paid in full, regardless of the date of dismissal, for official transcripts to be released. This enrollment contract is for one school year only and does not guarantee enrollment for any future school year.

Textbooks/Computers

Students are financially responsible for textbooks and computers should they damage or lose them.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Contacting a Teacher

Teachers can always be contacted via phone, voicemail, or email. Expect a response within 24 hours. The home phone or mobile numbers of any school personnel or students will not be released by Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School.

Student Progress System - PowerSchool

Information regarding student progress can be accessed through the PowerSchool system app or desktop application. The PowerSchool system provides information such as homework assignments, grades, school forms and links to school website information, school calendar, school family and faculty/staff directory and so much more. An email sent at the beginning of the year will include account credentials for each parent. Students in grades 5-8 will also receive login credentials. Direct all questions regarding passwords and instructions for use to the main office.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

All parents are asked to attend the scheduled conference during the first semester. It is extremely helpful if parents can accommodate their schedules to the time allotted. Online registration for conferences will be available the first week of October. The second semester conference is optional.

Friday Focus

The *Friday Focus* is an electronic newsletter intended to be distributed every Friday afternoon, so that parents can remain connected with the week's most important updates. Past Friday Focus editions are available on ndes.org

Parent Notification System

Messages/announcements/updates will periodically be sent home through the parent notification system.

Parent Travel

When parents are traveling for business or other purposes and cannot be contacted, it is important to inform the school office in writing or by email, as to who is the responsible person in case of an emergency.

Media Release Form

All parents are requested to complete the Media Release Form at the beginning of the school year. This form is part of the student information online forms in Final Forms.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Curriculum

The school's curriculum is based on the Courses of Study for the Diocese of Cleveland and Ohio's Learning Standards. In addition, Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School provides and enhances all learning with STEM, Spanish, technology education, library K-3, music, and art opportunities for students in grades K – 8.

Challenge

Students that qualify in grades 2-5 using a standardized ability assessment will participate in a weekly 45-minute pull- out session focused on project-based learning which emphasizes real-life skills such as critical thinking, communication, problem solving, and creativity. Parents receive a progress report explaining strengths areas for growth and projects completed.

Field Trips

General Field Trips: The school provides field trips for students throughout the year for the purpose of enriching and extending classroom learning. The normal mode of transportation for these is a chartered bus. Students are always accompanied by teachers and additional chaperones if needed or appropriate. Electronic permission forms are required to be signed before a student may participate in a field trip. It is always a privilege for a student to participate in a field trip. A student whose behavior has not been appropriate within the school setting may be asked to remain at school.

Changes in Classroom Assignments

Classroom changes are made for educational reasons only.

Homework

Homework provides students with practice of basic skills and opportunities for enrichment and extension of learning. The goal is to help children develop a greater love for learning and maintain a high level of engagement in the learning process. By providing a balanced and meaningful approach to homework, children will be able to enjoy family time and pursue other interests.

Parents can assist and encourage children by providing a quiet place and set time each day, assisting with organization of folders and backpacks, checking for neatness and accuracy, listening to them read or recite work and supporting good study habits.

Final Report Cards

Final report cards are mailed home in June. All financial obligations must be met (tuition, AVI, After Care, library fees, etc.) before final report cards are released to parents.

IEP Progress Reporting

Students with IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) will receive quarterly Progress Reports indicating mastery towards their IEP goals/objectives. Reports will be generated based on the method(s) for measuring the child's progress towards annual goal(s) indicated on their IEPs. Copies of the report will be sent to home districts as well as parents.

Educational Resources

The State of Ohio Auxiliary Services Program allots funding for the school nurse, psychologist, and speech-language pathologists.

If a parent wants to request any of these services, contact the principal and the process will be initiated. Written parental consent is needed to receive these services with the exception of the school nurse.

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School work cooperatively with the Chardon Local Schools school district to identify students with suspected disabilities.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Overview

Students are evaluated on the objectives stated in the Courses of Study for the Diocese of Cleveland and Ohio's Learning Standards. Measurable results are important. Demonstration of learning may include teacher observation, directed activities, quizzes and tests, student participation and engagement in class discussions and activities, experiments, projects, oral and written reports, home and class oral assignments and written work.

Grading System

The following marking code is used in kindergarten through grade 2 for all subjects, in grades K-5 for Specials that meet once per week and Effort and Conduct in grades 3-5

O Outstanding
O 95-100

Satisfactory
S+ 90-94
S 79-89
S- 77-78

N Needs Improvement
N 70-76

U Unsatisfactory
U 69 and below

The following marking code is used for all academic subjects in grades 3-8 and for Specials and Electives that meet daily in grades 5-8

A Superior
A+ 100-99
A 98-93
A- 92-90

B Above Average
B+ 89-88
B 87-84
B- 83-82

C Average
C+ 81-80
C 79-76
C- 75-74

D Below Average
D+ 73-72
D 71
D- 70

F Failing
F 69 and Below

I Incomplete
There is a two-week time period to make up incomplete work, if not, an "F" is given.

Reporting to Parents

Academic Progress: Parents are encouraged to check PowerSchool routinely, as regular updates of student performance are posted by the classroom teacher. This online portal to the gradebook helps parents remain updated regarding missing assignments or poorer than expected performance.

Interim Reports: Midway through each quarter interim reports are issued if a student is not achieving in a subject area or demonstrating appropriate behavior. This allows time to address the difficulty and make the necessary changes prior to the end of the grading period. Interim reports are to be signed and returned to school within one week of distribution.

NDMS will continue to offer on-track ELA and math instruction but will also offer honors ELA and math instruction for students who need that extra challenge. Students in the middle school will have the opportunity to earn high school credits in Algebra, Spanish I, and French.

Honors Criteria

To be placed in Honors a student needs to have at least four of the five criteria below.

1. Score 85% or better on Math MAP test (or 85% or better on Reading MAP test for ELA)
2. Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) composite score of 115 or better
3. Score 85% or better on Honors placement test
4. Math teacher recommendation letter (or ELA teacher recommendation letter)

Calculating Grade Point Average Grades 4-8

Honor Roll and GPA for Grades 4 – 8: Students are eligible for the honor roll at the end of each quarter. This is based on Grade Point Average (GPA) which is calculated on the following point scale using points assigned per grade earned times the credit value divided by the total possible credits earned for that quarter.

Grade 4

- Religion, Math, ELA, Social Studies, and Science are worth one credit and all other subjects are worth ¼ credit. All are factored into the GPA.

Grade 5

- Math, ELA, Social Studies, and Science are worth one credit and are factored into the GPA.
- Band and Choir are worth ½ credit and are factored into the GPA.
- Religion, Spanish, and Technology are worth ⅓ credit and are factored into the GPA.
- All other subjects are worth ¼ credit and are factored into the GPA.

Grade 6

- Math, ELA, Social Studies, Science are worth 1 credit and factored into the GPA.
- Religion, Health, Band, and Choir are worth ½ credit and factored into the GPA.
- Technology, STEM and Spanish are worth ⅓ credit and factored into the GPA.

• Physical Education, Art, and SOS are worth ¼ credit and factored into the GPA.

Grades 7-8

• Math, ELA, Social Studies, Science, Religion, and Band are worth 1 credit and factored into the GPA.

• Technology/STEM and Spanish are worth ½ credit and factored into the GPA.

• All other subjects are worth ¼ credit and are factored into the GPA. (Study hall is not calculated into GPA.)

Quality Points Earned per Grade

Letter Grade	All regular classes (Grades 4-8)	Honors ELA/Math (Grades 6-8)
A+	4.3 points	4.8 points
A	4.0 points	4.5 points
A-	3.7 points	4.2 points
B+	3.3 points	3.8 points
B	3.0 points	3.5 points
B-	2.7 points	3.2 points
C+	2.3 points	2.8 points
C	2.0 points	2.5 points
C-	1.7 points	2.2 points
D+	1.3 points	1.8 points
D	1.0 points	1.5 points
D-	0.7 points	1.2 points
F	0 points	0 points

Honors:

- First Honors: 4.0 and above
- Second Honors: 3.5 – 3.99
- Merit Roll: 3.25 – 3.49 *(*To qualify for Merit Roll, all grades need to be A, B or C.)*

Promotion, Retention and Acceleration

The administrators of the school, in consultation with the teachers, have the right to assign, retain, or accelerate students to a particular grade level. Acceleration of a student is advised if all other avenues of meeting the student's intellectual gifts have been exhausted. Acceleration must have the approval of the administration, respective teachers, parents, and the student.

The right to retain a student is dependent on the school's judgment and therefore, parental permission is not required. However, parents will certainly be notified and consulted prior to any definitive action by the administration. Retention may be considered for the following reasons:

- Failure in three or more core subjects i.e., reading, mathematics, ELA, science, and social studies. A student fails an individual subject if he/she receives an average grade of "F" in that subject for the school year.
- Failure to master fundamental reading skills in the primary grades
- Failure to show the readiness necessary for the next grade
- Social immaturity
- Excessive absence

Academic Probation

If a student receives two failing grades, three or more D's or any combination of these grades, the student is placed on academic probation for one quarter. It is the responsibility of the student and the parents during this quarter to monitor progress in the identified subject areas. A student is removed from academic probation if, at the end of the quarter, the student has improved and no longer has two failing grades or three subject areas below average. If no improvement is evident, the student may be asked to transfer from Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School.

If a student is on academic probation, they will also be placed on sports probation. They will not be permitted to play CYO sports until their grades are raised.

Summer Tutoring

Failure of a core subject (i.e., Math, reading, ELA) may result in the requirement of summer school or private tutoring by a certified teacher. Courses are often offered in your local public school district. Both the attendance record and progress that demonstrates learning are required before the student may return to NDES/NDMS in the fall. Summer tutoring in addition to our traditional summer review packets may also be recommended if a student has received academic intervention during the previous school year.

Standardized Testing Program

Standardized testing provides a systematic way of assessing student mastery of basic skills. The following standardized tests are given in addition to traditional classroom assessments:

Grades K-8: MAP **tests** (Measures of Academic Progress) are given 3x per year in fall, winter, and spring in the areas of reading and math (and science for grades 5 & 8). Achievement and growth scores are reported to parents through a record sent home at report card time.
Grades K-5: **DIBELS** (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy) are screening assessments for reading skills given 3x per year and also reported to parents. DIBELS can be used to monitor growth toward benchmarks if the need for reading intervention is indicated.
Grades 5 & 8: **ACRE** (Assessment of Children/Youth Religious Education) measures our instructional alignment to the standards for religious education. Individual results are not reported. This assessment is administered in the spring.
Grades 2 & 5: **CogAT** (Cognitive Abilities Test) is an assessment that gives profile scores of a student's learning aptitudes in verbal, nonverbal and quantitative thinking areas. This assessment can help teachers pinpoint specific areas of strength and weakness for students. A profile report is sent home to parents at the time of the second reporting period.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Student & Parent Expectations

Students of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School are expected to act in a manner that reflects their dignity as children of God and transforms their lives. They are expected to be young men and women who demonstrate our core values of integrity, who work for justice, treat others with respect, value community and strive for excellence.

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School Code of Conduct flows from its mission, vision, and core values and intends to develop the art of self-discipline in each student and promote an atmosphere conducive to building Christian community and effective learning in all classrooms.

Students and parents who refuse to comply with the faculty and staff may be asked to transfer from Notre Dame Schools. It is understood that the Principal of the school has final authority to ask a student to leave the school when it is deemed that behavior is not in accord with the philosophy, mission, principles, or policies of Notre Dame Schools.

The code of behavior must be followed when a student is on school property, on the way to and from school or a school-related or school-sponsored event, or while in any location for the purpose of or related to attendance at a school-sponsored event, activity, or function.

Violations listed within this handbook are representative of levels of infraction but are not meant to be an all-inclusive list. The schools reserve the right to update the handbook at any time and to provide timely notice to parents of the updates.

Consequences for Violations

The school's intent on having a Code of Conduct is to guide children in choosing good at all times. Because children do not readily think through consequences of their words and actions, Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School has a system of consequences, namely, a demerit system, for those who do not adopt fully the school's code of conduct. The consequences vary based on the seriousness of the offense.

Parents have the opportunity and obligation to discuss with their child the behavior leading to a demerit and determine a plan of action to correct the behavior. The demerit is signed and returned to school indicating that this action has been taken.

If a particular action is more serious than warranting a demerit, the administrator may issue a suspension, and the parents will be notified.

The violations listed below are representative of the levels of infraction. They are not meant to be all-inclusive.

1. **Demerit:** Excessive talking, discourteous behavior, not being in the right place at the right time, bus incident, disrespect for school property.
2. **Suspension:**
    - Accumulation of four demerits or disrespect towards others, disturbing class, fighting, lying, cell phone use on school grounds.
    - Administrators may suspend a student. Parents are notified as soon as possible. A student is usually suspended after the student and parents have had an opportunity to meet with the principal. However, if the situation is so serious or dangerous, immediate suspension may take place followed by a prompt post suspension conference with the parents and student, at which time the student will have an opportunity to be heard.
    - Where the suspension is served, and the length of time is based upon the severity. Usually it is served at school, but can be at home supervised by a parent, and is served immediately following the violation.
    - During this time, the student is responsible for all academic work missed and is penalized 20% for work submitted. If a suspension is repeated within the same academic year, the student is penalized 40% for work submitted.
    - Suspension violations include but are not limited to:
        - Stealing, cheating, plagiarism
        - Defiance of authority
        - Threat of harm to anyone, whether physical, written or verbal

- Leaving the school during the school day without permission
- Exhibiting or threatening violence of any type
- Misuse of or vandalism of school property
- Destroying the property of another at school or school events
- Use, possession or distribution of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or vaping devices on school grounds or at school events
- Inappropriate use of the school's technology or other forms of communication
- Possession of a weapon (whether real or look-a-like) at any time: on school grounds or at school events, whether on or off the property, while being transported on a school bus or other vehicle to or from school or a school event or at any other time when a student is subject to the authority of the school
- Any other offense deemed serious by the administration

Seriousness of the Offense

All of the above violations apply any time, when a student is subject to school authority, whether on or off campus. Some may warrant contacting local law enforcement authorities or may involve a referral to Children's Services or require counseling with the school psychologist. The administration reserves the right to exercise its discretion to handle serious student problems in ways other than those listed above.

Dismissal or Expulsion

Some of the above suspension offenses or others deemed serious may warrant immediate dismissal or expulsion because of the pattern of actions or severity of the offense. This decision is the right and responsibility of the principal.

Elastic Clause

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that may arise, this clause empowers faculty members and administration to issue consequences for any action that violates the mission or core values of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School, even though not specified here. The judgment of the administration in all disciplinary matters is final.

Procedure for Appeal

In cases of suspension, dismissal or expulsion, the parent may request a conference with the principal to discuss the action taken. The principal, parents and the student will be present at the conference. The principal has the right to invite others to participate in the conference. The decision of the Principal is final.

DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM POLICY

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School believes that the school uniform helps create an appropriate tone for a focused learning environment. By eliminating competition in dress, the code promotes a spirit of community and builds a positive identification with the school. A basic dress code, with different options, assists students to be conscious of good grooming and appropriateness in dress. Parents are key in helping the school enforce the dress code. Violations of the dress code will result in a demerit. All school uniforms can be purchased through www.Schoolbelles.com. School Code is s0198.

Regular Uniform

Girls in grades K-3 wear a NDES plaid jumper, navy blue or NDES plaid slacks or NDES plaid or navy shorts from Schoolbelles.

Girls in grades 4-5 wear a NDES plaid skirt, skort, kilt or kick-pleated skirt no shorter than 3 inches above the knee, navy blue slacks NDES plaid or navy shorts from Schoolbelles. Girls in grades 4-8 are required to wear leggings or tights with their skirts.

Girls in grades 6-8 wear a NDMS kilted skirt no shorter than 3 inches above the knee, khaki slacks, or shorts from Schoolbelles. Polo shirts or button-down dress shirts may be worn in the colors of white, navy, light blue, or gray. Girls in grades 4-8 are required to wear leggings or tights with their skirts.

Girls Shirts Grades K – 8

Girls wear a solid white, navy or pastel blue, turtleneck, or polo shirt, regular or banded bottom. The NDES/NDMS logo is the only logo permitted.

Boys Grades K – 5

Boys wear navy blue dress pants or navy shorts purchased from Schoolbelles.

Boys Grades 6 – 8

Boys wear khaki pants as part of their uniform. The pants are to be traditional in style.

Polo shirts or button-down dress shirts may be worn in the colors of white, navy, light blue, or gray.

Boys Shirts Grades K – 8

Boys wear solid white, navy or pastel blue polo shirts, dress shirts or turtlenecks. The NDES/NDMS logo is the only logo permitted.

Boys and Girls K – 8

Students may wear a navy or white cardigan or pullover sweater. Crewneck sweatshirts, warm-up jackets or hoodies with the NDES/ NDMS or NDCL logo are acceptable. No other logos are acceptable.

Dress Uniform

All students are required to wear dress uniforms on Mass days or other special days announced throughout the year.

Girls in grades K – 3 dress uniform consists of wearing the NDES plaid jumper with a blouse or oxford shirt. Girls may not wear pants or shorts on dress uniform days.

Girls grades 4 – 8 dress uniform consists of either NDES plaid skirt or NDMS kilted skirt no shorter than 3 inches above the knee with a blouse or oxford shirt and navy vest. Girls may not wear pants or shorts on dress uniform days.

Boys in grades K – 3 dress uniform consists of wearing navy school pants with a short or long-sleeved solid polo shirt or dress shirt. Boys may not wear shorts on dress uniform days.

Boys in grades 4-8 are required to wear a dress shirt and tie in uniform colors and navy Schoolbelles vest with khaki pants (grades 6-8) or navy pants (grades 4 & 5). Boys may not wear shorts on dress uniform days.

Uniform Shorts

Schoolbelles uniform shorts may be worn August - September and May (with the exception of dress uniform days) Grades K-5 students may wear navy uniform shorts. Grades 6-8 students may wear khaki uniform shorts.

Shoes

Any low-top, closed heel and toe, laced, Velcro or slip-on shoes or tennis shoes may be worn in any combination of the following colors: navy blue, brown, black, gray, and white. Light-up tennis shoes are not permitted. Middle School students are permitted to wear high-top tennis shoes. Uggs of any kind are not permitted.

Socks

Socks must be solid colored navy blue, black, gray, or white above the ankle in length. Simple logos are acceptable. Girls may wear solid-colored tights or leggings in the colors of navy, black or gray. Girls in grades 4-8 are required to wear leggings or tights with their skirts. Flared leggings are not permitted with the school uniform.

Belts

Solid brown or black belts are required with belt-looped pants and shorts in grades 4 – 8.

Nail polish & Make-Up

Only clear and light pink nail polish is permitted for grades K-5. No artificial nails are permitted. Middle School students are permitted to wear colored nail polish and minimal make-up only.

Jewelry

Traditional wristwatches, religious pins and a simple gold or silver chain may be worn. Girls may wear simple post stud earrings. Electronic (ex. Apple) watches/devices are not permitted.

Hair

Extreme hairstyles are not permitted, including hairstyles that cover any part of your eyes. Only natural hair colors are permitted. Simple, appropriate hair accessories are acceptable.

Physical Education Uniform Policy

Grade K-4 students will be required to wear their Physical Education uniforms throughout the day on their scheduled PE day.

Grades 5-8 students will change into their Physical Education uniforms at school on their scheduled PE days.

All students are required to change for PE on dress uniform days and dress down days.

Grades K – 8: The physical education uniform consists of a gold Notre Dame t-shirt (grades K-5) or navy Notre Dame t-shirt (grades 6-8) and solid navy shorts with the ND logo. Students in grades K-4 must purchase a warm-up set (navy blue crewneck sweatshirt and sweatpants purchased through Sport&Sports on the school website) to be worn over their PE uniform, weather permitting. PE shorts are to be worn under the warm-up set.

Physical Education Uniform Shoe Policy: Any low-top tennis shoe is acceptable. Students are not required to change into a different pair of tennis shoes for PE class.

Recess Attire

Students should be prepared for outside recess at all times. Students have outdoor recess if the temperature is 22 degrees or above.

Spiritwear Days

Clothing for Spiritwear Days consists of any appropriate Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School Spiritwear t-shirt or sweatshirt with jeans, sweatpants, or shorts. Shorts must be at least fingertip length. Running shorts and/or pajama pants are not permitted. Leggings may be worn with a shirt that is at least fingertip length in Grades K–3. Leggings are not permitted in Grades 4–8.

Dress Down Days

Clothing for a dress down day is to be appropriate for the Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School environment. Suggestive or offensive language and/or pictures are unacceptable. Tanks, spaghetti straps, bare midriff, and ripped jeans are not permitted. Shorts must be at least fingertip length. Running shorts and/or pajama pants are not permitted. Leggings may be worn with a shirt that is at least fingertip length in Grades K–3. Leggings are not permitted in Grades 4–8.

TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY AND HEALTH

Transportation by Car

Arrival

1. Drivers are asked to use the lower lot entrance and follow the perimeter of the lot. Students are dropped off at the blue cones and enter the school by the side door.
2. If it is necessary to conduct business in the school office, parents are to park in the Sisters of Notre Dame parking lot closest to the SND chapel and walk outside with their children to the school.

Dismissal

1. Parents are to park their cars in the lower lot, forming lines facing the upper parking lot. They are to leave their car to meet their children in the pick-up area.
2. If business needs to be transacted at dismissal time, parents are asked to arrive early and complete business by 2:00pm. After that time, the parking area is reserved for the buses. If a parent will be in the school past 2:00pm, the car should be parked in the Sisters of Notre Dame parking lot closest to the SND chapel.
3. Parents are not permitted to pick up other students without the express permission of the parent.

During School Hours

The blacktop area is closed to any traffic between 9:30am and 2:00pm. If you have business to conduct with the school during this time, park in the bus parking area until 2:00pm or in the Sisters of Notre Dame parking lot closest to the SND chapel.

Transportation by Bus

Students are required to observe all rules of bus conduct established by the district providing transportation. Failure to follow the rules may result in a student being removed from the bus for a period of time. Students may only ride the bus from their district.

If a parent has questions regarding transportation provided by a public school district, please contact the local transportation coordinator's office. They can give you the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding pick-up and drop-off times, bus routes, bus transfers, etc.

Safety

The Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School Safety Plan is available in the school office. It is in compliance with the state of Ohio's mandates for school safety. If an emergency occurs, parents will be notified as quickly as possible.

Health

School Nurse

The school nurse provides immediate care for students who become ill or injured at school during school hours and administers medication in accordance with school policy. Students seen by the nurse will be sent home if any of the following are evident: temperature over 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, an undiagnosed skin rash or pediculosis (head lice).

Students are required to remain at home if they are ill, have a fever and until they are free of all symptoms for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

When a child is in school, the expectation is that they can participate in all activities. The obvious exception would include children with severe asthma or broken bones.

Contact the clinic to discuss any accommodations required following surgery or an injury. The school nurse can be contacted at 440.279.1130.

Administration of Medications

Any student who is required to take prescription or non-prescription medication during school hours must have on file the medication permission form with physician and parent signatures or provide a written note from the prescribing physician which details the name of the drug, dosage, route and time of administration, possible side effects, reason for use and expiration date of order with physician and parent signatures. This also includes cough suppressants, throat lozenges, aspirin and antacids which areover-the-counter non-prescription medications.

Upon arrival at school, bring the medication or OTC medication in the original container directly tothe school nurse in the clinic. Parents of students who use an inhaler or an epi-pen must submit the necessary forms for a child to carry this medication. Before the end of the school year, a parent or guardian must pick up unused medication or the nurse will dispose of it.

Immunizations and Physicals

Ohio State Law requires that any child who does not meet the Ohio minimum requirements for shots cannot be admitted to school. Parents will be notified if a student is not in compliance. After 15 days, thestudent will be excluded from school if they are still non-compliant.

Health Precautions

When a student loses a tooth, it will come home in a plastic bag labeled with a biohazard sticker. Bloodon clothes will be covered with tape or clothes will be changed and the soiled clothing sent home in a bag labeled with a biohazard sticker.

If a student cannot participate in physical education class due to illness or injury, a physician's note is required for extended non-participation.

Communicable Diseases

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease such as COVID-19, strep throat, pink eye, headlice or chicken pox, please inform the school immediately. The appropriate families will be notified.
This is in accordance with state law.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

After Care

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School provides After Care. After Care operates only when school is in session. All students attending must have a paid registration form on file. Registration is available online and all payments will be processed by credit card only. The Code of Conduct found in the handbook applies.

Operation Hours/Locations

After Care Hours:	2:40pm – 6:00pm
Pickup Location:	Dining Room Back Door

Registration Fees and Rates

Registration fee: $60 per student
1st half-hour is $5.00 and includes a snack, billing begins at 2:45pm
Each ¼ hour is $2.00

Hot Lunch, Beverages, and Snacks

Hot Lunch

AVI Fresh is Notre Dame School's food service provider. Lunch menus are posted on the website. The **AVI Fresh Food Zones** offer nutritious and delicious selections. The contemporary areas include the inspired and innovative dishes served at **Signature,** the sizzling and seasoned selections from the **Grill**, as well as tasty favorites from our **Salad Bar** and **Fresh-to-Go** choices.

Account Setup

AVI offers a computerized point-of-sale (POS) debit card system for the convenience of students and parents. Cash is also accepted. AVI's online service allows families to monitor their child's lunchtime purchases, track what their child has been eating for the past 30 days, make deposits directly into their meal accounts, transfer funds between students and have an email reminder sent to them when an account balance gets low. Student debit account deposits can be made through ACH payments or by credit card. Each child's account will be updated nightly so that account balance information and payments will be current as of the following day. Funds may be deposited into this account by check (payable to AVI Food systems), by credit card via the https://ndcl.familyportal.cloud website, or by cash payment in the school office or cafeteria. The swipe card functions as a debit card, *not a credit card.* AVI recommends a minimum balance of $10. If an account balance reaches zero, only cash purchases will be allowed. See the website for details on how to enroll in the POS system.

For questions, contact Mr. Jay Cabatingan, AVI's Resident Director, at (440) 279-1058.

Beverages

Beverages in glass containers or those containing red food dye may not be brought to school.

Snacks, Treats, Parties

Some of our students may have food allergies and/or dietary restrictions. The safety and health of all students is extremely important. All classrooms are nut free.

Two convenient options for birthday celebrations: ordering an allergy-free treat from AVI or sharing a non-edible item. An online form with allergy-friendly options is available.

Care of Books and Property

Students are responsible for books and any school equipment they use. Depending on their grade, individual teachers may require workbooks to be covered with clear contact paper and hard-bound books with cloth or paper book covers. Any damaged materials require monetary reimbursement to the school.

Money

If a student needs to bring money to school for a school-related purpose, it is to be in a sealed envelope and marked with the student's name, room number and purpose for the money. Money for personal use should remain at home and not be brought to school. Collection of money for any purpose requires prior approval of the principal.

Lost and Found

All materials and clothing should be labeled clearly with the student's name and grade. Lost items will be placed in "lost and found" which is located outside of the elementary school dining room and 2nd floor of the middle school. Items not claimed will be given to charity.

Items Left at Home

Items, such as homework, lunch, gym clothes, etc., forgotten at home may be brought to the school office, where students may check during the day. It is the responsibility of the student to check for forgotten items.

Pets

If a child requires a service dog because of a disability, this is certainly permissible. Pets should be kept in the car during drop-off and pick up of students and not brought into the school.

Extra-Curricular Programs

Sports

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School participates in the CYO sports program for basketball, volleyball, wrestling, football, soccer, baseball, lacrosse, softball, fast pitch softball, cheerleading, cross country, and track. Students in grades 1 – 8 may participate in the CYO sports program. More information about CYO sports can be accessed on the website. If additional information is needed, contact the Athletic Director at athleticdirector@ndes.org

Students participating in sports are required to maintain a satisfactory level of academic achievement, adhere to CYO rules, Notre Dame code of conduct and the rules of good sportsmanship. A parental consent form, current physical and participation fee are required for each sport.

Coaches

In addition to the volunteer requirements listed within the handbook, coaches must also complete the CYO Coaches Development Program and an approved concussion training program. Additional information can be found on the website.

Clubs and Activities

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School sponsors clubs and activities determined by student interest and availability of moderators.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Non-Discrimination Policy

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School recruits and admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Furthermore, it is school policy to comply with applicable and statutory provisions regarding non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, and age. Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School is a Catholic School and has the right to conduct all aspects of its operation, including without limitation curricular and non-curricular activities, in accordance with Catholic teachings and beliefs and to require that its students and staff conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is consistent with Catholic teaching.

Non-Harassment Anti-Bullying Policy

The administration and staff of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School believe that all employees and students are entitled to work and study in school-related environments that are free of harassment, intimidation, or coercion. Any threat of harm to any person either in writing, verbal or physical will be dealt with immediately and appropriately.

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School will not tolerate harassment and/or bullying of any type. Reports of either harassment and/or bullying behaviors will be dealt with in a prompt manner including appropriate disciplinary action by the school. Disciplinary action may include suspension, dismissal or being asked to withdraw from the school.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to: unwelcome sexual advances or other similar verbal or physical contact, verbal or written taunting; bullying; inappropriate, intimidating, hostile or offensive conduct; jokes, stories, pictures, cartoons, drawings or objects which are offensive, annoy, abuse or demean an individual or group. Any and all types of bullying (verbal, emotional, physical, use of telecommunications, photography/videotaping as a means to bully and/or intimidate and socio-economic) as set forth in the Federal Anti-Bullying Guidelines will be addressed by the professional staff.

Students who believe they have experienced harassment, or bullying shall report the incident to the principal. The principal or designated administrator shall immediately investigate and document the complaint including names of witnesses, dates, times, and the specific charge. All information relating to the investigation shall be kept confidential. The administrator shall make a prompt determination regarding any disciplinary actions. No retaliation will be permitted for participating in a complaint or investigation.

Threats Policy

It is the responsibility of the administrators, teachers, and staff to ensure the safety of all in the school or on school grounds or while participating in a school sponsored activity. Any threat of harm to any person either in writing, verbal or physical will be dealt with immediately and appropriately. Such action may include: notification of parents, suspension, dismissal, expulsion, notification of local law officials, psychological/ psychiatric evaluation, counseling, or other actions deemed necessary.

Weapons Policy

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School recognizes that a safe, secure school atmosphere is fundamental to providing an educational environment conducive to learning. Therefore, weapons are prohibited. This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, knife, deadly weapon, explosive, incendiary device or any toy or "look-alike" weapon. Firearms include any loaded or unloaded gun of any caliber or type. This prohibition also includes any pistol, rifle or other device that uses air or gas propelled projectiles. Possession of hunting weapons is also a violation of this policy. No student may have possession of a weapon on school grounds at any time. This includes during or immediately before or after school hours; on school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a group; off school grounds or while at a place or location for the purpose of or related to attendance at a school-sponsored activity, function or event; on a school bus or conveyance; or at any other time when a student is subject to the authority of the school. Violations of this policy are subject to the Code of Conduct and may involve notification of the sheriff, immediate suspension, dismissal, or expulsion.

Search Policy

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School reserves its right to search at any time all school property such as lockers and desks, even if assigned to an individual. Additionally, by enrolling in the school, the student and parent's consent to a search of a student's backpack, gym bag, book bag, purse, coat and student's network folder, when the school has reasonable grounds to believe a student has in his/her possession some unlawful or otherwise prohibited item or items when on school grounds, during and immediately before or after school hours; on school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a group; off school grounds or while attending any place or location for the purpose of or related to attendance at a school-sponsored activity, function or event; on a school bus or conveyance; or at any other time when a student is subject to the authority of the school. The search may extend to a student's person or clothing only if the school has reasonable grounds to believe the student possesses a weapon as defined under the Weapons Policy.

Personal Electronic Device Policy

Technology is used extensively for educational purposes and is provided by the school. Students in K-5 are not permitted to have any personal electronic devices, including cell phones and electronic watches at school or on the bus. Electronic devices also include iPads, electronic watches, and gaming devices.

Middle School students will be allowed to have cell phones in school, but they will be collected and stored in their homerooms. Electronic watches are not permitted.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action for the student and removal of the electronic device. A parent will be required to pick up the electronic device from school. In certain circumstances, the administrator may request a conference with the parents and student.

Ethical Use of AI and The Development of Independent Thinking

At Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School, we recognize that artificial intelligence (AI) tools are becoming increasingly integrated into the educational and professional landscape. As a school rooted in academic excellence and personal integrity, we are committed to guiding students in the **ethical and responsible use** of AI technologies.

While AI can offer valuable support for brainstorming, feedback, and exploration of ideas, our hope is that it never replaces the student's own thinking, creativity, or effort. Over-reliance on AI undermines the development of essential academic skills—such as critical thinking, problem-solving, analysis, and original expression—that are foundational not only to success in school, but also in life beyond the classroom.

As educators, we have a responsibility to **protect and nurture students' intellectual growth**. Our academic honesty policy is designed not just to uphold standards, but to ensure that students continue to grow in their ability to reason independently, communicate clearly, and take ownership of their learning. This is especially important in an age where AI can easily do the work.

NDES/NDMS guidelines for AI use:

- Students may only use AI tools when **explicitly** permitted by the teacher.
- Students must properly cite and acknowledge the use of an AI tool when used on an assignment.
- AI use is strictly prohibited on exams, quizzes, or assignments intended to assess individual understanding.
- Teachers will not accept work if there is reason to believe a student has inappropriately used an AI tool.

The student will be required to submit the work that is completed according to the guidelines set out from the teacher for the assignment.

Inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence tools may result in an academic honesty violation.

Students are expected to use AI tools **within the parameters set by their instructors** and to always remain transparent about how these tools are used. When AI is used ethically, with intention and limits, it can be a powerful aid. When used improperly, it becomes a shortcut that shortchanges the learning process. Our goal is not simply to police the use of AI, but to help students learn how to use it wisely, discerningly, and in a way that strengthens—not weakens—their academic integrity and personal responsibility.

Challenged Materials Policy

Decisions regarding the purchase of materials selected for library and classroom required use are made in light of the school's mission and core values. Objections to the use of materials/textbooks/videos should be brought to the attention of the principal in writing. The administration will review the objection. The material in question will not be removed unless and until the administration makes that determination.

The administration reserves the right to instruct certain faculty and/or staff to assign alternate materials or assignments to particular students, in lieu of removing challenged materials/textbooks/videos from a classroom curriculum or from the school library.

Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

We believe that technology is a vital means to assist those who carry out the educational mission of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School.

Students of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School have access to the student computer network, including the internet. To gain access to the internet, all students must obtain parental permission and must sign the User Agreement. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. Families should also be aware that filtering software may fail to block some visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or otherwise harmful to children.

While our intent is to make internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources.

Internet rules

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. Students may use school computers to access their email for curriculum-related activities and communications. The network is provided for students to conduct classroom work. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parent permission is required. Access is a privilege – not a right. Access entails responsibility. Individual users of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School computer network are responsible for their actions. It is presumed that users will comply with school standards and will honor the agreements they have signed.

Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on any server or computer would be private.

Users have no privacy right to any data received or disseminated on the network and by utilizing these Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School systems they consent to the Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School's right to audit all communications, files, and documents. If a user acts inappropriately through the communications systems, the school reserves the right to report such actions to any outside authorities and/or take appropriate internal disciplinary action.

Inappropriate use includes use that violates this policy or any other policy of the school or that interferes with the integrity of the school's computer network, or any component connected to it. The following are examples of inappropriate use and activity:

• Using computer files to share or receive homework, research, projects, papers, and other work in a manner that violates academic honesty

• Use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs)

• Sending or displaying violent, aggressive, offensive, or obscene messages or pictures

• Harassing, insulting, or attacking others

• Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks

• Hacking or other unlawful activities

• Violating copyright laws

• Downloading or uploading information and files not relevant to curriculum-related activities, including employing the network for commercial purposes, emailing that is not related to class assignments, and other intentional misuses of limited school resources
• Attempting to or overriding internet filtering system, including accessing inappropriate web sites that have escaped internet filtering

• Modifying, changing, or attempting to modify or change any computer setting or configuration without appropriate permission

- Violating privacy issues by posting personal contact information about you or other people; using another's password; and trespassing in another's folders, work, or files

The preceding list is not an all-inclusive list of inappropriate uses and activities. Violations will result in a loss of access as well as other applicable disciplinary or legal actions. Students shall be informed of designated school personnel for reporting inappropriate activity or use of the computer network or internet. Proper school procedures will be followed for enforcement of policy and determining ramifications of infractions of this acceptable use policy.

Electronic devices

Any electronic device brought into the building may be taken from a student if its use interferes with the process of teaching and learning, disrupts school life, or conflicts with the mission or values of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School. At the discretion of the administration, the device(s) may be returned to the student at the end of the day or returned after a period of time to a parent/guardian of the student. Parents and students assume all responsibility for any loss or damage to electronic devices brought to school.

Members of the school community may not photograph, record, or otherwise tape other members of the school community without the express permission of those involved and of the appropriate school authority.

Student Social Media Policy

1. **Purpose**

This policy provides guidelines for responsible, respectful, and safe use of social media by Notre Dame Schools students. It aims to protect positive online engagement, safeguard student privacy and protect the school's reputation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students and all social media accounts (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X (Twitter), YouTube, and others).
- Personal accounts when referencing the school, staff, or students.
- Any online activity, on or off campus, that may impact the school community.
- Student online activity on school devices or during school hours.

3. General Guidelines

- **Be Respectful:** Treat others with kindness and respect. Avoid offensive, discriminatory, or harassing language.
- **Protect Privacy:** Do not share personal information (addresses, phone numbers, grades, etc.) for yourself or others.
- **Accuracy Matters:** Share only verified, factual information.
- **Think Critically before posting:** (Ask yourself: Would I say this in person? Is it true? Is it harmful?)
- **Remember our Core Values:** Represent the school community, yourself and your family, responsibly.
- **Follow Laws & Policies:** Comply with copyright, FERPA, and other applicable regulations. Follow parent requests for Do Not Photograph.

4. Student Guidelines – Dos:

- Use social media to share school related achievements in a positive way.
- Use social media to collaborate with peers on schoolwork.
- Engage in appropriate self-expression that does not harm others.
- Report cyberbullying or harmful content to a school trusted adult.
- Use strong privacy settings on your accounts.

5. Student Guidelines – Don'ts:

- Avoid posting during instructional time unless part of an approved activity.
- Avoid sharing content that is discriminatory, threatening, or harmful.
- Do not impersonate others or make fake accounts.
- Do not post content that disrupts the learning environment or damages the school's reputation.
- Do not represent NDS unless authorized to do so and with the approval of a school advisor.

6. Monitoring & Enforcement

- The school reserves the right to monitor official accounts.
- Students have no right or expectation of privacy when using NDS issued Technology resources (including, but not limited to school devices, electronic files, messages/emails, and records of their online activities).
- Violations may result in disciplinary action per school policy.

7. Commitment to Community

At Notre Dame Schools, we recognize that our influence and responsibility extends beyond the classroom. Our words and actions—both in person and online—should consistently reflect our commitment to faith, excellence, and respect for all.

8. Review & Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

CONCLUSION

The school administration has attempted to be complete in providing the information in this Handbook; however, it is not possible to foresee every eventuality. Therefore, in all matters, the judgment and decisions of the school administration will be final. The greatest opportunity for growth and maturity of Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School students comes from cooperation among the school, parents, and students. Consistent with this philosophy, parents and students will participate in making any such decision as far as, in the judgment of school administration, it is practicable. A student's enrollment at Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School constitutes acceptance by the parents and students of the terms set forth in this Handbook and in any subsequent updates or additions.

APPENDIX A: TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Technology Acceptable Use
Policy 2026 – 2027

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School make a variety of communication and information technologies available to students through computer/network/Internet access. These technologies, when properly used, promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. Illegal, unethical orinappropriate use of these technologies can have dramatic consequences, harming the school, its students and its employees. The Acceptable Use Policy is intended to minimize the likelihood of such harm by educating students and setting standards that will serve to protect the school. We firmly believe that digital resources, information and interaction available on the computer, network or Internet far outweigh any disadvantages.

Definition of School Technology System: The school systems and networks (system) are any configuration of hardware and software. The system includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- telephones, cellular telephones and voicemail technologies
- email accounts
- servers
- computer hardware and peripherals
- software including operating system software and application software
- digitized information including stored text, data files, email, digital images, and video and audio files
- internally or externally accessed databases, applications or tools (Internet- or NDEC-server based)
- school provided Internet access
- school filtered public Wi-Fi
- new technologies as they become available

Acceptable Use: Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with school standards and the specific rules set forth below as interpreted from this policy. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources in accordance with the student Code of Conduct.

Privilege: Access to the Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School computer/network/Internet is a privilege, not a right and may be revoked if abused.

Access to Communication System: Access to the school's electronic communications system, including the Internet, shall be made available to students for instructional purposes. Each school computer, iPad or any other electronic device has filtering software that blocks access to visual deceptions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students or harmful to minors as defined by the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Filtered Internet access is provided to students as defined by CIPA.

Inappropriate Use: Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to, those uses that are specifically named as violations in this document; that violate the rules of network etiquette; or that hamper the integrity or security of this computer/network/Internet system or any components that are connected to it. In addition, students may not access the network with personal devices.

Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- cyberbullying
- gaming

- threatening, pornographic, harassing, defamatory or obscene material
- other inappropriate use of technology such as e-mail, social networking, web pages, blog posts, web posts, or discussion forum/replies posted to the Internet
- copyrighted material, plagiarized material or materials protected by trade
- use of hardware and/or software which disrupts or interferes with the safety and welfare of the school community (even if such uses take place after school hours or off school property)

Vandalism or Mischief: Tampering with or theft of components from school systems may be regarded as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Any attempt to break the law through the use of a school computer/network/Internet account may result in prosecution against the offender by the proper authorities. If such an event should occur, the school will fully comply with the authorities to provide any information necessary for legal action.

Modification of Computer: Modifying or changing computer/device settings and/or internal or external configurations without appropriate permission is prohibited.

Student Access: Computer/Network/Internet access is provided to all students unless parents or guardians request in writing to the school principal that access is denied. Student Internet access will be under the direction and guidance of the administrators and teachers. Students must adhere to the following:

Respect and protect the privacy of others.

Use only assigned accounts.

Decline to view, use or copy passwords, data or networks to which they are not authorized.

Avoid distribution of private information about others or themselves.

Respect and protect the integrity, availability and security of all electronic resources.

Observe all network security practices as posted.

Report security risks or violations to a school administrator, teacher or network administrator.

Do not destroy or damage data, networks or other resources.

Conserve, protect and share these resources with other students and Internet users.

Abstain from overriding the Internet content filtering system.

Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.

Refrain from copyright infringement (making illegal copies of music, games or movies).

Avoid plagiarism.

Respect and practice the principles of the school community.

Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.

Report threatening or discomforting materials (cyberbullying) to a school administrator or teacher.

Avoid accessing, transmitting, copying or creating material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials or illegal copies of copyrighted works) and that violate the school policies (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory or meant to harass).

Avoid sending spam, chain letters or other mass unsolicited mailings.

Refrain from buying, selling, advertising or otherwise conducting business, unless approved as a school project.

Avoid posting or disseminating any harassing, demeaning, threatening or immoral comment or visual injurious to the reputation of the school, the Church or an individual, whether the action occurs on school property or off grounds.

Print only materials that are assigned by a teacher and are for educational purposes.

School Email and Communication Tools: Email and other digital tools such as, but not limited to, blogs and wikis are tools used to communicate. The use of these communication tools should be limited to instructional, school-related activities or administrative needs. All communications within these tools should adhere to the above-mentioned rules.

Subject to Monitoring: All network/Internet usage shall not be consideredconfidential and is subject to monitoring by designated staff at any time to ensure appropriate use. All electronic files, including email messages, transmitted through or stored in the computer system, will be treated no differently than any other electronic file. Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School reserves the right to access, review, copy, modify, delete or disclose such files for any purpose. Students should treat the computer system like a shared or common file system with the expectation that electronic files, sent, received or stored anywhere in the computer system, will be available for review by any authorized representative of Notre Dame Schools for any purpose. Personal telecommunication devices are subject to examination in accordance with disciplinary guidelines if there is reason to believe that theAcceptable Use Policy has been violated.

Consequences for Violation: Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action which may include the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources. Users have the responsibility to use technology resources in an appropriate manner. Consequences of misuse or abuse of these resources will be disciplined depending on the severity of the situation. In addition to school disciplinary action, appropriate legal action may be taken.

Supervision and Monitoring: School and network administrators and their authorized employees periodically monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and in conformity with this policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline or security of any student or other person or to protect property. The school administration has the right of access to any electronic devices brought onto school property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement should one be committed.

Agreement Form: In order to ensure the proper use of technology resources, it is necessary that each parent/guardian *annually* sign the Technology Acceptable Use Policy – User Agreement Form. The signed form will be electronically filed at Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School before Internet and other technology access is permitted. Signing the form indicates that the student will abide by the rules governing Internet and other technology access as stated in this policy.

The school reserves the right to issue additional or more detailed rules for the use of technology resources and violations of such rules may be a cause for imposition of any of the penalties delineated above. The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student.

APPENDIX B: 1:1 STUDENT TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM AGREEMENT

1:1 Student Technology Program Agreement
2026 – 2027

The policies, procedures and information within this document apply to the assigned tablet PC or iPad for your child's use at Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School. The 1:1 Technology Program is an academic program and the policies governing the use of the tablet PC or iPad support its academic use.

Faculty may set additional requirements for use in their classrooms. This Student 1:1 Technology Agreement is between Notre Dame Schools (the "school") and the student and the student's parent or guardian. The equipment subject to this policy includes one tablet PC or iPad.

Although this Agreement authorizes the student's use of the tablet PC or iPad for the year, the tablet PC or iPad remains at all times the property of the school and must be returned upon the school's request or on the last day of the student's attendance for the school year.

Prerequisite: To receive a tablet PC or iPad to use, the student and his or her parents/guardians must sign and agree to abide by this 1:1 Student Technology Agreement.

Applicable Policies: In using the tablet PC or iPad, the student is subject to and must comply with this Agreement, the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and all other policies and procedures in the Parent/Student Handbook. A violation may result in loss of network privileges, the right to use the tablet PC or any other disciplinary measure deemed appropriate.

Student Responsibility

The iPad is being loaned to each K-4th grader, and the tablet PC is being loaned to each 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grader. It may be used only for educational purposes associated with the school.
Failure to abide by the Acceptable Use Policy and the 1:1 Technology Program Agreement will result in disciplinary action. To retain the privilege of using the tablet PC or iPad, the student is required to accept the following responsibilities:

- Read and/or abide by the provisions of the Acceptable Use Policy and the 1:1 Student Technology Program Agreement.
- Review and discuss the contents with my parents/guardians.
- Retrieve the tablet PC each morning and keep it with me during all classes. I will return the tablet PC to the cart in my homeroom at the end of the day and plug it in, so it charges and is ready for the next day.
- Tablet PC may be taken home if parents give permission. The student is responsible to bring it charged each day. Loaners will not be given for forgotten PC's.
- Students and their parents are responsible for the condition and their use of the tablet PC when removed from the school, including, but not limited to, any unauthorized use of the tablet PC or any damage, loss or destruction of the tablet PC. Student and their parents will promptly replace or repair, under the school's direction, any damage to or loss of any tablet PC.
- iPads shall remain in the K-4 classroom and are returned to the charging cart after use.
- Student shall assume full responsibility for reasonable care of the tablet PC. Student will not intentionally cause damage to the tablet PC by throwing it or dropping it on the floor. Student will not deface, decorate or alter the serial number on the back of any tablet PC.
- Student will back up important files to student's flash drive. Due to the possibility of wireless outages, work could be lost. Flash drives will not be supplied by the school.

- Use of the device will always be under school supervision when the device is on school grounds. Parents assume such responsibility when the tablet PC is taken off the school grounds by the student.
- Students shall attend to the care of their tablet PC at all times. Student is responsible for securing the tablet PC in their homeroom/locker when not needed for classes or while at lunch, etc.
- Student shall report immediately to their homeroom teacher all loss/theft, damage and/or any other problems. In no instance will student attempt to repair the tablet PC or iPad.
- Student shall respect every student's tablet PC or iPad knowing that it belongs to Notre Dame Schools.

Violations of the 1:1 Student Technology Agreement:
Violations of the Technology Agreement will result in disciplinary action and parents will be notified. In circumstances where the violation is deemed severe, parents will be notified promptly for an in-school conference. Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School administration reserves the right to take the tablet PCs at any time if they suspect misuse.

Teachers may also suspend use of tablet PCs during their class if they suspect misuse. Serious and/or habitual offenses may result in more severe discipline as the situation warrants.

Parent Responsibility
In order for your child to use the tablet PC or iPad assigned to him/her at school, parent's responsibilities are the following:

- Read the NDS Acceptable Use Policy and the 1:1: Student Technology Program Agreement and discuss the contents with your child.
- If your child fails to abide by the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and the 1:1: Technology Program Agreement there will be disciplinary action. In a more serious or repeated violations, a parent conference will be required.
- The contents of a tablet PC or iPad may be inspected by an administrator or teacher upon request.
- It is the responsibility of your child to assume full responsibility for reasonable care of the tablet PC or iPad. He/she will not intentionally cause damage to the tablet PC or iPad by throwing or dropping it on the floor nor will he/she deface, decorate or alter the serial number on the back of the assigned tablet PC or iPad.
- Parent understands that the tablet PC or iPad and its contents are school property and that my child is to report immediately to his/her homeroom teacher all loss/theft, damage and/or any other problems. In no instance will he/she attempt to repair the tablet PC or iPad.
- If the tablet PC or iPad is lost, stolen or broken, parents and the students are responsible for the current market value of the device, as determined by the school. Parents and the student are also responsible for any repairs that may be necessary.
- Please note the broken screen fee is $150, broken keyboard is $150, and other damage fees will be determined. These fees are subject to change without notice.
- Parent acknowledges and agrees that the parent is solely responsible for the student's use of and the condition of the tablet PC or iPad when the student removes the same from the school grounds. Parents acknowledge and agree that the school has no ability or responsibility to monitor the student's use once the tablet PC is removed from the school's grounds.

Securly

Notre Dame's Elementary and Middle School all-in-one solution for managing student devices.

Online Filtering
Securly Content Filtering is a cloud-based web filtering tool student issued devices are enrolled in to ensure safe and appropriate access to the internet, whether on school property or at home. Securly ensures CIPA compliance across all devices.

Classroom
Securly Classroom keeps students focused and engaged. Teachers can manage what sites can be accessed, monitor student activity, lock screens, share screens and send announcements.

Home
Securly Home is an optional digital parenting feature to monitor your child's activities on their Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School issued device. To create your account, please refer to setup instructions that will be shared with you.