

# NORTHERN RIVERS

2021-2022

*Student-Parent*

*Handbook*

*The School at Northeast*





September 2021

Dear Student:

Welcome to the School at Northeast! We are happy to have you here, and we look forward to showing you just how different we are from other schools. Here we first work with you and your family to understand what you need to be successful in school, at home, and in the community—and then we help you achieve your goals.



We believe that the key to being your best self is starting with a strong foundation. Our school isn't just about reading, writing, math; and science. It's a complete program to help you do better in class while also helping with your social, emotional, and behavioral needs. We don't just randomly assign you to a classroom. We learn about your needs to determine which classroom environment gives you the best chance for success. Once you're here, we listen to you, learn about you, and if there's a classroom or program that suits your needs better, we'll make the changes.

When you get here, your student support team will help you learn the ropes so that you have a better understanding of our program and your role as a student. You're never alone here. Many staff members are available to assist you in learning those problem-solving skills that will enable you to be successful in any environment.

To help you get started, we've created this handbook, which will probably answer many of the questions you might have, as well as inform you of our policies. It is impossible to include everything in this handbook, but we hope that it will help you understand who, we are, how we work, and what we want to help you achieve. If you have any questions that are not answered here, please feel free to talk with the guidance counselor, therapeutic support team, assistant principal, primary teacher, teacher assistant, clinician, dean of students, director and assistant director of day education, or principal.

All the staff here at the School at Northeast hopes that you will enjoy and benefit from the time that you spend here. Our goal is for you to leave with the skills you need to succeed in your school, home, community, and workplace. We are here to help you succeed!

Good luck and have a wonderful 2021-22 school year!

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# Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

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To create and sustain support systems that improve the educational environment for students, the School at Northeast began schoolwide implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) in the 2011–2012 school year. PBIS is a three-tiered system based on clearly defined behavioral expectations. All students begin at Tier 1 and are taught what is expected of them behaviorally in different school settings (classroom, cafeteria, etc.). In each setting, all students are expected to:

- ✓ navigate with manners
- ✓ engage in learning
- ✓ work hard
- ✓ be safe

We provide a description of expectations in various settings to all students.

## ► Three-Tiered Framework

**Tier 1:** All students begin at Tier 1 where we teach them appropriate behaviors in different settings by modeling and reinforcing those behaviors. When students demonstrate the ability to use these skills, they immediately receive a voucher as a reward, and staff again reinforces the expected behavior. Students can use the vouchers for privileges such as snacks, time away, field trips, school store, special events, etc.

**Tier 2:** If a student in Tier 1 is struggling to learn the expected skills or struggling to demonstrate those skills consistently, a staff member may refer the student to the Tier 2 team. The administration may also refer a student to Tier 2, if the data shows the need for extra student support. This team consists of the PBIS coordinator, director of Tier 2 and Tier 3 support services, guidance, psychologist, dean of students, and day education directors. The treatment team (teacher, clinician, and leader) are also invited to attend this meeting to discuss the current data and the possibility of either focusing more closely on a few Tier 1 interventions or developing

a Tier 2 plan. The plan would help the student move toward successful demonstration of the expected behaviors. We can try many different interventions at this level depending on the student's needs.

**Tier 3:** If a student has accessed all the interventions at both the Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels and still struggles to be successful, the Tier 2 team or administration may decide to move the student into Tier 3, which includes a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and possibly a behavior intervention plan (BIP). The assessment identifies the function of the behavior that is the biggest obstacle to learning, and the behavior intervention plan uses that information to formulate an even more detailed plan that allows the student to get what they need/want in an appropriate way.



# 2

## Rights and Responsibilities

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### ► Student Rights

All students have the right to:

- ✓ be treated with respect
- ✓ receive an education within our school and community
- ✓ receive due process in accordance with education law when questions or allegations arise
- ✓ be treated fairly regarding the rules and policies outlined by Northern Rivers and its member agencies

### ► Student Responsibilities

All students are expected to:

- ✓ treat all others with respect
- ✓ follow the daily rules set by the school and teachers
- ✓ attend school, be on time for all classes, and come to class ready to work
- ✓ work to the best of their abilities
- ✓ use appropriate communication, not only verbal but body language as well
- ✓ dress in a manner that is safe, not disruptive, and appropriate to the weather
- ✓ refrain from items and behaviors that are in violation of school policies and/or rules or of local, state, and federal law

### ► Parent and Guardian Responsibilities

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- ✓ help their child become a responsible student
- ✓ reinforce appropriate attitudes toward school
- ✓ maintain obtainable academic and behavioral expectations for their child
- ✓ communicate with their child frequently and praise success
- ✓ keep the lines of communication open with school staff

- ✓ urge their child to practice good personal hygiene and dress properly
- ✓ follow through with agreements made with school staff
- ✓ problem-solve any concerns with school personnel directly, but not in front of the student

## ► Staff Roles and Responsibilities

### Superintendent

The superintendent is the chief executive officer (CEO) of the education program. As the CEO, the superintendent has general management responsibilities, supervising the principals and Day Education Program director. The superintendent oversees education standards and student achievement, plans budgets and allocates resources, and acts as the point person for all interactions with government agencies.

### Principal

The principal is responsible for all activities at the School at Northeast and for developing agency programs. The principal is also responsible for ensuring staff meet students' educational, behavioral, social, and emotional needs. Assistant Principal/Coordinator of Guidance and Testing

The assistant principal/coordinator of guidance and testing supervises educational staff at the direction of the principal. Other duties include supervising the Guidance Department and coordinating state testing and reporting. The Guidance Department is responsible for student and staff schedules and transcripts.

### Assistant Principal

The assistant principal supervises education staff at the direction of the principal. The assistant principal is responsible for overseeing the discipline process as it relates to the student Code of Conduct and day-to-day school operations. The assistant principal oversees the building when the principal is absent.

### Director of Day Education

The director of Day Education is responsible for development and oversight of Day Education services offered to students who attend the School at Northeast. The goal is to ensure clinical staff, outside providers, school staff, students, and their families work collaboratively to plan for each student's safety and success. Additionally, the director of Day Education acts as liaison with out-of-district transportation departments, and works with agency and community programs to develop protocols and access additional resources as needed.

### Assistant Director of Day Education

The assistant director of Day Education provides support to clinicians in a similar manner as the Day Education director and works with the director to develop

processes and protocols for the Day Education program. The assistant director ensures that clinical work meets best practice standards and aids clinicians and school staff in problem-solving difficult cases.

The Day Education director and assistant director support the Day Education clinicians, students, and families. They participate in meetings to discuss student progress and needs, including education planning meetings, reinstatement meetings, Tier 2 and Tier 3 meetings, and meetings with the home school district's Committee on Special Education (CSE).

### **Director of Student Specialized Services**

The director of Student Specialized Services provides support and leadership to the student support team and is responsible for the development and implementation of behavior intervention plans for students referred to the highest level of support in the PBIS multitiered framework.

### **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Coordinator**

The PBIS coordinator coordinates PBIS training and activities to enhance implementation of the PBIS framework within the School at Northeast. The coordinator schedules and facilitates both the Tier 1 and Tier 2 PBIS meetings. This person also may participate in portions of the Tier 3 process where appropriate.

### **Dean of Students**

The dean of students helps students attain the goals they have agreed to work toward while at the School at Northeast. Problems between students and education staff may be brought to the dean of students. The dean of students can also help students work with classmates, family, and service providers such as probation officers. The focus is on developing the skills a student needs to deal successfully with situations, events, and people. The dean of students also collects data on each student, including incident reports, time-out use, travel vouchers, attendance, and positive incident reports. The data is used for treatment planning conferences, service plan reviews, and other meetings that help plan for the student's future. The dean of students oversees all therapeutic crisis intervention trainings at the school.

### **Therapeutic Support Staff**

The Therapeutic Support staff (TSS) supervises the time-out area as well as the individualized education classroom. They help students having problems in class with education staff or other students and when students are unable to resolve problems with the help of classroom staff. The TSS works with administration, education, and the residential staff and is another resource to help students succeed at school.

### **School Psychologist/CSE Chair**

The school psychologist's main role at the School at Northeast is to be a resource to staff members, students, and their families, which involves completing psychological evaluation(s) that provide educational staff with information about the student's academic, intellectual, behavioral, and social skills. The point is to help staff understand each student's strengths and needs, so staff can develop an educational program. The school psychologist also meets with staff and students to discuss problems that may be affecting a student's success at school and helps find solutions to those problems.

The CSE chairperson conducts all CSE/504 meetings for residential students regarding the referral, evaluation, parent notification, individualized education program (IEP) development, placement, and annual and re-evaluation review processes for special education students.

### **Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Literacy**

The director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Literacy provides leadership and vision in ongoing planning, implementation, development, review, and evaluation of the curriculum and instructional programs at the School at Northeast. The director works with the leadership team to ensure teachers are providing a solid academic program that prepares students to be successful on statewide assessments, and ensures students receive academic experiences connected to their grade level and individual educational needs. The director also provides professional development for educators and ensures teachers have the information and materials they need to successfully teach students.

### **Guidance Counselor**

The guidance counselor helps students with their class schedules and is the person to see when a student feels he or she needs a class change. The guidance counselor formally meets with each student twice a year to discuss education plans and needs. The guidance counselor is another person who can help a student resolve problems with an educational staff member or another student, or in the event a student is having difficulty in a class or is doing poorly. At the end of the year the guidance counselor meets with each student to discuss transcript(s).

### **Transition Coordinator**

The coordinator of Transition Services helps students plan for what comes after graduation from high school. The coordinator meets with each student and treatment team to discuss the student's goals for the future and develop a plan to help meet those goals. The coordinator of Transition Services also helps students identify the types of supports they will need after high school and helps connect students with people and agencies that provide those supports. The coordinator also oversees the School-to-Work program.

## **Primary Teacher**

Each student has a primary teacher who serves as homeroom teacher. The primary teacher prepares reports concerning each student's academic, social, behavioral, and emotional strengths and needs, and presents them at meetings concerning the student's program at the School at Northeast. These include CSE meetings, student planning conferences (SPCs), service plan reviews, and other meetings. A student's primary teacher, clinician, and team leader form the student's treatment team, which implements and monitors the goals established at the SPC. The treatment team is also involved in other decisions that affect a student's program at the School at Northeast, such as missing a day of school or changing target skills.

The primary teacher is an advocate for the student and has her or her best interest at heart. We encourage students to develop a constructive, positive relationship with their primary teacher.

## **Day Education Clinician**

All Day Education students at the School at Northeast are assigned a clinician (counselor) who works directly with the student and his or her family. The clinician helps the student transition to the program. Students meet weekly with their clinician during the school day, and sessions focus on identified treatment goals and problem-solving areas of stress. Caregivers communicate with the clinician regularly to discuss the student's progress toward social and emotional IEP goals and difficulties in school and/or at home, and they work collaboratively to develop plans to support the student's success. Ideally, parents or guardians and clinicians will meet twice during the first month, including one home visit, to develop the best plan for the student. After the initial SPC, family meetings are held monthly to help family members continue to improve their relationships and to work on current goals to improve functioning in school and community.

## **Teacher Assistant**

The teacher assistant (TA) helps students succeed academically, socially, and behaviorally. When the teacher is outside of the classroom, the TA acts as the teacher. The TA is the first person a student should speak with when having problems at school. They can help with schoolwork and with problems with peers and/or education staff.

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## Academic Guidelines for Marking and Grading

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### ► Grades Are Important

At the School at Northeast we recognize that grades are important to students, teachers, parents and guardians, as well as school districts, outside agencies, and other educational organizations.

### ► High School Diploma Requirements

The School at Northeast grants New York State Regents and local diplomas. Requirements are set by the New York State Education Department and are available for review by our coordinator of Testing and Guidance as well as our school counselor.

### ► Documenting Academic Achievement

It is important that both students and their parents and guardians receive regular, timely, and appropriate feedback regarding their academic progress. To this end we provide the following:

#### Quarterly Report Cards

The School at Northeast operates on a 4-quarter system with students receiving a report card at the end of each 10-week marking period. The report card includes a numeric (92, 74, and 82) grade for each subject the student is enrolled in. This grade reflects the student's achievement for that marking period. Teachers determine the factors that are considered in determining a quarterly grade.

Report cards are mailed home to parents and guardians and are distributed to residential staff for students who reside on our campus or in one of our group homes.

## **Interim Reports**

At the 5-week (halfway) point in each marking period, teachers provide parents and guardians and students with academic progress feedback via an interim report. The interim report includes a numeric (from 1–100, 100 being highest) grade for each subject the student is enrolled in. This system allows teachers to select a variety of statements that connect to the personal progress, effort, motivations, and behavior of each student in each subject area.

Interim reports are mailed home to parents/guardians and are distributed to residential staff for students who reside on our campus or in one of our group homes.

## **Individualized Education Plan Progress Report**

Parents/guardians of students who have an individual education plan receive an IEP quarterly progress report with their quarterly report card.

## **► Determining Student Academic Grades and Quarterly Averages**

Classroom teachers determine student grades through the grading process and practices developed and announced at the beginning of the school year. Individual teachers make professional decisions regarding the components that factor into determining a student's grade in each course of study.

We require that grading practices are fair, equitable, written, and known to the students. A copy of each teacher's grading practices is given to the school principal at the beginning of the school year. We firmly believe that grading is not a way of disciplining a student. A separate disciplinary structure exists within our school.

As a treatment school, we understand that sometimes treating every student fairly does not mean treating them all the same. We allow flexibility in addressing the various problems that arise.

## **► Percentage Grading (Numerical)**

All grades are assigned in percentages unless the principal grants permission to issue pass/fail grades. The minimum passing grade at our school is 65.

The minimum failing grade recorded for each quarter is 50 to allow students to have a motivational chance of passing a yearlong course. Experience has shown that students who receive a grade lower than 50 during a marking period often see their situation as impossible and give up. This is especially true for students with little confidence in themselves as learners and who have had little or no academic success in their school careers.



### **Final Course Grade**

The final average for a full-year course is determined by averaging the four quarterly grades. For a semester course, the two quarterly marks are averaged.

### **Incomplete Grades and Making up Work**

Missed work due to excused absences may result in a grade of “incomplete.” When a student does not come to class or chooses not to do the assigned classwork, the resulting report card grade is “incomplete.” The student will be given 5 weeks from the last day of the marking period to complete assignments, at which point the teacher will enter the grade for the marking period.

### **► High Honor and Honor Roll Criteria**

Academic recognition for students is available for those who meet the criteria listed below. These two forms of academic recognition are provided at the end of each of the four marking periods.

#### **High Honor Roll Criteria**

- ✓ The student must pass all subjects.
- ✓ The numerical average of all classes must be 90 percent or higher.

#### **Honor Roll Criteria**

- ✓ The student must pass all subjects.
- ✓ The numerical average of all classes must be 85–89 percent.

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# 4

## Comprehensive Attendance Policy

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New York state regulation has a compulsory school attendance requirement, and regular school attendance is a critical factor for school success. Students must be in school at 8:30 a.m. and remain until 2:15 p.m. Although there are guidelines below that explain the differences between an excused and an unexcused absence, it is of utmost importance that students and parents/guardians avoid multiple absences of any kind. With this goal in mind, a student will be more capable of progressing not only academically, but also behaviorally, social, and emotionally with regular attendance.

### ► Expectations for Good Attendance

Good attendance, along with good instruction, enables a student to:

- ✓ learn the subject matter and earn good grades
- ✓ develop responsible work and study habits
- ✓ prepare for the world of work

When a student is absent, a parent/guardian should call the school nurse before 8:30 a.m. on the day of absence at 518.346.1273, ext. 7343, and be prepared to leave the following information:

- ✓ Parent or guardian name
- ✓ Student name
- ✓ Reason for absence
- ✓ Telephone number to be reached

A note is not required if the parent or guardian offers a reason for the absence when calling the school. The parent or guardian should also give the estimated duration for the absence to the school nurse. For absences longer than one week, a health provider's note may be requested as proof of an excused medical absence and, if requested, must be provided when the student returns.

School absences are classified as one of four categories: excused, unexcused, tardy (excused or unexcused), and early departure.

## Excused Absences

Absences are considered excused for the following reasons:

- ✓ illness
- ✓ illness or death in the family
- ✓ religious observation
- ✓ medical appointments
- ✓ required court appearance

## Unexcused Absences

Any other reason for pupil absence, tardiness, or early departure is unexcused. Each absence, tardiness, and early departure is accounted for by the teacher in the register of attendance and is entered as excused or unexcused.

**Tardy:** Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:45 a.m. Tardiness is coded either excused or unexcused.

**Early departure:** A student who leaves before completing 2.5 hours of school is considered an early departure.

### ► Student Drop-off and Pick-up

All students MUST be signed into and out of the main office if arriving after 8:45 a.m. or departing prior to 2:15 p.m. Before a student can be released, an approved person as indicated on the Authorization to Pick Up form must show appropriate identification as needed and that person must be at least age 18.

### ► Interventions for Multiple Absences

If a student consistently misses school, multitier attendance interventions will begin to help break down barriers to attendance, provide supportive assistance to families, and encourage students to go to school. If added assistance is needed from the school staff, please contact a member of the student's treatment team or an administrator.

# 5

## Assessments

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### ► Reading and Math Assessments

Students who enter the School at Northeast are administered reading and math assessment tests, usually within weeks after starting school. These tests help determine the student's overall academic skills, so we can develop an educational program that best meets their individual needs. The tests cover areas such as vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, spelling, math computation, and application skills.

### ► Psychological Evaluations

Upon referral to the Committee on Special Education or once every three years (for previously identified students), a psychological evaluation will be administered. The evaluation(s) may include a student interview, review of educational records, assessments of the student's behavioral and social emotional function, and assessments of general intellectual functioning. The purpose of the psychological evaluation(s) is not to assign grades or make value judgments about the student; rather, the results of the evaluation(s) provide additional information to help the education staff better understand the student's educational, behavioral, social, and emotional strengths and needs. This allows members of the treatment team to plan and/or modify the student's treatment goals and strategies in ways that increase opportunities for behavioral and academic success.

### ► Targeted Skills and Skill Sheet

#### The Skills

Students work to modify behaviors that may have caused problems in their previous school. New students are assigned three basic success skills:

- ✓ accept feedback
- ✓ use self-control
- ✓ follow instructions

After a student has been in the program for about 6 weeks, a student planning conference will be held. After the SPC, the student is given a new skill sheet listing individual targeted skills and school success skills listed below. While students are at the School at Northeast, staff members work with them to help improve targeted skills.

The four school success skills include:

1. **Be engaged:** Be on time and prepared for class.
2. **Navigate with manners:** Display positive interactions.
3. **Work hard:** Follow directions on the first request and use class time effectively.
4. **Be safe:** Demonstrate appropriate use of equipment and supplies.



### **The Skill Sheet (Credit Sheet)**

Each morning students receive their skill sheet (credit sheet) from their primary teacher. Students take this to each class. At the end of each class, the teacher or teacher assistant will assess the credits the student has earned based on how well the student attained his or her targeted skills. Students must carry the skill sheet at all times. Students who lose their skill sheet must see their primary teacher.

Students may earn up to 4 credits in each of 10 areas for a total of 40 credits per class. Homeroom and dismissal are each worth 20 credits. Together, these add up to 400 credits for the day, which is divided by 10 and becomes the student's school credit for the day. A "perfect day" equals 400 credits. However, if a credit sheet has been altered, the total is automatically zero.

# 6

## Student Policies and Procedures

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### ► Dress Code

Dress and appearance must be within the limits of safety, cleanliness, decency, and appropriateness for school. Dress and accessory appearance should neither disrupt the education process nor be offensive to staff members or community members. Students may be asked to wear protective gear or not to wear certain clothing items depending on certain class activities (e.g., physical education, science, family and consumer science, or technology classes). The following guidelines will assist in making good decisions regarding clothing and accessories.

- ✓ See-through shirts may only be worn if a T-shirt is worn under them at all times.
- ✓ T-shirts must also be worn under tank tops if the tank top has large armholes. Shirts must be made for outerwear. There must not be an excessive amount of cleavage showing.
- ✓ Shorts, dresses, skorts, and skirts must be approximately mid-thigh in length when the student is sitting. Dresses, skorts, and skirts with slits must also have the slits reach no higher than mid-thigh when the student is sitting.
- ✓ No underpants or boxers can be showing.
- ✓ Shirts must meet the waistband when the student is standing with hands at side.
- ✓ Footwear is required at all times. For safety reasons, some classes may require a specific type of footwear. Student should wear shoes appropriate for the activities of the day.
- ✓ Jewelry and logos on clothing and accessories must not disrupt the educational process. They must not reflect themes about profanity, drugs, alcohol, gang symbols, sexuality, violence, race, gender, religious insults, or prejudicial comments.

- ✓ Clothing items must not be worn in an inappropriate manner, for example shirts on heads, pajamas as clothing for school, and so on.
- ✓ Sunglasses are not permitted in school except for medical reasons.

## ► Electronic Devices

The following guidelines are meant to help create and maintain an atmosphere where teaching and learning can occur. They take into consideration the needs of both adults and students in a positive school setting. We expect all staff and students to adhere to these guidelines and behave in a mutually respectful manner.

Parents/guardians who wish to contact children during the school day should use the school's main office number (518.346.1273) or call their child's clinician.

### Cell Phones

- ✓ will be stored in a safe place (e.g. in student's pocket, book bag, purse)
- ✓ will be turned off or in vibrate mode and not be visible during the school day
- ✓ use cannot interfere with teaching and learning

### Personal Music Devices

- ✓ as with cell phones, will be stored in a safe place
- ✓ may be used appropriately on the bus/van

### All Other Personal Electronic Devices

- ✓ including, but not limited to, hand-held games and smart watches
- ✓ should not be used during the school day
- ✓ should be stored in a safe place (e.g. in student's pocket, book bag, handbag)

***The School at Northeast is not responsible for any items lost, stolen, or damaged during the school day.*** For students' and others' safety and security, parents/guardians are asked to limit the amount of money a student brings to school to just a few dollars.

## ► Escort Policy

During the school day when not in class, all students must be escorted by an adult at all times except when changing classes. Students are not to be sent to other classes, clinician's offices, the school nurse, or any other destination, without an escort.

## ► School Bus Procedure

Appropriate student behavior during the transportation of students to and from school is of the highest importance in guaranteeing the safety of not only the



students, but also the staff. For this reason, the following policy and procedure is in effect for all students: ***All students must stay seated while on the bus until the bus arrives at the destination and has come to a complete stop.*** Additionally:

- ✓ All students must stay seated while on the bus until the bus arrives at the destination and has come to a complete stop.
- ✓ All students must keep hands and feet inside the windows.
- ✓ All students must avoid any hands-on activity.
- ✓ All students must follow all directions given by the driver and/or bus aid.
- ✓ All students must wear a seatbelt.
- ✓ All students must refrain from speaking loudly or yelling.
- ✓ All students must refrain from eating or drinking while on the bus.

### ► Backpack Policy

To maintain safety and avoid distraction throughout the school day, students are required to turn in their backpacks and book bags at the main office in the morning. They will be returned to students at the end of the school day.

### ► Discipline Policies and Procedures

#### Time-Out

Time-out is used as a behavior management strategy to assist a student in regaining self-control, or whenever it is necessary to remove a student from a potentially dangerous, unanticipated situation that poses an immediate concern for the physical safety of the student or others.

The time-out provides the student with an area to deescalate safely, regain control, and prepare to meet the behaviors and expectations necessary to return to the classroom or other educational program.

Time-out is a progressive intervention that begins with verbal prompts and reminders. The student is then given options for ways to regain self-control. If these options are unsuccessful, the student may be (voluntarily) escorted to the time-out room where he or she will be monitored while in time-out.

The time-out room is a private space free from distractions that allows a student to become calm before returning to the educational program.

If a student consistently needs time-out support, it is added as a planned intervention in a student's behavior intervention plan (BIP).

## Incident Review Committee

The Incident Review Committee (IRC) consists of several school administrators, including the principal, assistant principal, director of Day Education, assistant director of Day Education, dean of students, and members of the Therapeutic Support staff. The IRC meets at the end of each day to review all incident reports for that day and determines which action is appropriate for the student. The ranges of consequences include:

- ✓ phone calls home
- ✓ lunch detention
- ✓ after school detention
- ✓ meeting with an administrator
- ✓ individualized education room (IER)
- ✓ external suspension
- ✓ other consequences deemed appropriate

## Detention

In the school setting, detention can be assigned for academic or behavioral reasons. Examples of academic reasons may be that a student is having a hard time academically, is falling behind in subject matter, is not completing his/her assignments during the class time, or has missed school.

Academic detention should not be viewed as punishment. It is the responsibility of our staff members to improve our students' chances of passing all of their classes. If a student is in danger of failing a class, it is our staff's duty to require students to stay after school for extra help so they can ultimately pass the course.

Detention may also be given to a student for behavioral issues. The school has a discipline code and schoolwide behavioral expectations that all students are expected to follow, and that staff are expected to uphold. If a student acts inappropriately and/or violates school rules, a staff member will assign the student to detention, identifying the behavior(s) that led up to the detention assignment.

Staff members will give all students an opportunity to avoid detention for behavioral reasons. When a student acts inappropriately, staff will verbally encourage the student to stop and try to correct the behavior(s). The encouragement may include acceptable alternatives to the inappropriate behavior, offer of time away, a place to discuss the problem or issue, and/or a reminder that the student is not using skills to earn all their credits during the period. If the inappropriate behavior(s) continues, the student will be assigned behavioral detention.

## ► Individualized Education Classroom

At times, it is necessary for students to be removed from the regular education program and placed in the individualized education classroom (IEC). One use of this classroom is to provide a quiet environment for students to make up back work due

to excessive class absences. Another is to provide an opportunity for students to work on social skills related to problems such as fighting, truancy, smoking, etc. A member of the education staff who is trained to offer students academic and behavioral assistance supervises the IEC.

The amount of time a student spends in the IEC is determined by the reason the student is assigned to this program and the student's level of cooperation while in this classroom. The Therapeutic Support staff, IEC staff, and a member of the administrative team make the decision. The student's primary teacher and/or treatment team may also be involved in this decision. There is no limit to the amount of time or the number of times a student may be assigned to the IEC during the school year. Each case is evaluated individually.

When assigned to the IEC, students are expected to spend their time doing the work assigned to them by the IEC staff, and/or their classroom teacher(s). Because this room is used for students with individual needs, privileges are limited. Students may eat their lunches in the IEC room, but are not permitted to talk with others in the room or have friends stop by the room and/or visit. No music devices, games, toys, magazines, or other amusements are allowed. Drawing pictures is acceptable only when the IEC staff gives permission.

### ► **Truancy, Out of Program**

Being truant from school or absent from a class can prevent students from reaching academic, behavioral, social, and behavioral goals. Because each student has a unique treatment plan and individual goals, the interventions and consequences may vary. The following interventions may be used to help the student make up missed work and/or improve attendance:

- ✓ Family meeting
- ✓ Lunch detention and/or after school detention
- ✓ Individual Education Room for a specialty class
- ✓ Individual Education Room to make up work missed
- ✓ Tier 2 support to begin to remove barriers to attendance
- ✓ Treatment team and/or parent/guardian meeting
- ✓ Administrative team and parent/guardian meeting
- ✓ Administrative team, parent/guardian, county worker, and/or probation, DSS, CSE meeting

### ► **Out-of-School Suspension**

Out-of-school suspension is a severe disciplinary action for Day Education students who have displayed or display very inappropriate behaviors. A student may be suspended from school for behaviors such as fighting, possession of drugs, possession of a weapon, repeated threats to harm others, indications of serious and persistent loss of emotional control, or other reasons.

After reviewing the specific incident and assessing other interventions that may be or may have been tried, the administrative team decides whether to suspend the student. When the decision to suspend is made, we call the parents or guardians and ask them to come to the school to pick up their child. When they arrive, we give them a letter of notification describing the terms of the suspension.

Whenever a student is suspended from school, the student and the parents/guardians must attend a reinstatement meeting before the student is allowed to return to school. Members of the administrative team, a member of the Therapeutic Support staff, and the student's clinician will all attend this meeting, and the student's primary teacher and any other staff involved in the incident may also attend. The meeting is to help the student problem-solve how to handle similar situations in the future. If the behavior that led to suspension is against the law, the police will be called and other charges may be filed.

Out-of-school suspension can be assigned for 1 to 5 days. The Therapeutic Support staff, administrative team, and placing agency will conduct a review if a student is repeatedly suspended a student to determine whether the programming at the School at Northeast meets the student's needs.



## Special Activities, Programs, and Awards

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### ► **School Store**

The School Store is a staff-coordinated incentive program. Students earn vouchers that are used to “buy” items at the store, such as snacks, VISA gift certificates, personal items, and so forth. Students may also save and accumulate vouchers for bigger items. The School Store is open weekly; students are able to choose items from a catalog, submitting an order form for their items. Additionally, the School Store has several jobs that students hold.

### ► **Birthday Bonanza**

Every month the Student Council organizes a birthday party to recognize all students and staff celebrating birthdays that month. All students and staff celebrating a birthday in that month are invited to come and celebrate with cake and ice cream.

### ► **PBIS Voucher Incentives**

School staff created the voucher incentive to reward students who show good use of their social skills and earn the highest number of vouchers. Each month, the PBIS coordinator identifies students who have earned this (either top 10 voucher earners for the month or homeroom with the highest voucher earnings) and they are entitled to a special lunch. Congratulations to all those who earn the award!

### ► **Day Education Incentives**

The Day Education program provides individual incentives to students based on goal attainment. These could include a special lunch, gift card to a preferred store, or an item chosen by the student. Individual incentives and the criteria for receiving the incentive are approved ahead of time by the students’ parents or guardians.

### ► **March Madness**

March Madness is a schoolwide basketball tournament held in March when students have the opportunity to sign up for one of four teams coached by school staff. At the end of the tournament, an all-star team competes against school staff. Students who choose not to participate in the basketball portion of March Madness can select from alternate activities during that time.

### ► **Talent Show**

Each year students are encouraged to participate in the school's talent show to increase our sense of community and to value one another's individual gifts. Many students sing, dance, present original art, play an instrument, or perform some other act to showcase their talent.

## Appendix A

# Career Services

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Career Services provides meaningful opportunities for students to engage with their community and take control over their lives through success in the classroom, in the workplace, and through service learning. Career Services helps our students develop the right attitude and skills to prepare them for the workplace by aligning the behavioral and emotional health of our students with the expectations of the potential employers.

### ► Career Assessment and Career Planning

All students complete an initial School at Northeast career assessment tool and a strength and interest profile, which is updated annually, and then they use the information from these assessments to begin to explore possible careers and to learn about the skills needed to be successful in those careers. The students identify skills they already possess as well as those they still need to develop, and then they use this information to create a career plan they update regularly and review with the treatment staff annually.

### ► Career Development and Occupational Studies Classes

Students have the opportunity to participate in 20-week career development and occupational studies (CDOS) classes during middle school and high school. These classes introduce the world of career development and encourage students to begin thinking about careers at an early age.

During **middle school**, students can learn about a wide variety of careers through classroom activities, video conferences, field trips, guest speakers, and web-based activities, exposing students to an array of career possibilities that they may not otherwise encounter. Students also complete an introductory career assessment to see how their interests align with various careers.

During **high school**, students take this process a step further, starting to examine more closely their interests and abilities and begin making connections between their personal characteristics and possible career choices. Students investigate careers of interest to determine skills and abilities required to be successful and then compare these to their own skills and abilities. Students also learn about the education and training required for that particular career and begin to identify activities they can pursue during high school to prepare for that career.

In addition, high school students taking CDOS classes begin learning about finding a job. They prepare a resume and cover letter, fill out job applications, and learn where to look for jobs and what to say in an interview. These students will also

participate in classroom projects involving paid in-school work in which they will also earn hours required for their CDOS commencement credential.

## ► **Gaining Real-Life Experience**

### **Volunteer and Community Service Experiences**

Students will have the opportunity to participate in volunteer and community service experiences to help them develop work-related skills, learn about different businesses and community agencies, and appreciate the importance of helping others. Volunteering also provides networking opportunities.

### **Subsidized and Unsubsidized Employment**

**Subsidized (paid) internships** are real world experiences where students work in the community but are paid through the school, allowing students to continue to explore careers by working in their field of interest. A worksite agreement is initiated prior to beginning the internship, and students identify specific goals they will work on during their placement. Students receive support from a job coach, who provides transportation to and from the job site and assistance in learning the job and problem-solving issues that may arise. Students will receive evaluations and feedback on their progress from their supervisor during their placement. Job coaches and the School to Work counselor will provide follow-up. Once a student has successfully completed subsidized work experience and the team feels he/she is “job ready,” focus will be on helping the student obtain unsubsidized (employer-funded) employment. Ultimately, it is Career Services’ goal for students to be able to obtain and maintain unsubsidized employment.

**Unsubsidized employment** will be sought through amiable employer relationships that have been established by the School at Northeast Career Services personnel. These opportunities will also be explored through postings on job websites, listings in newspapers, employers’ help wanted signs, word of mouth or other job search methods. Staff will assist students in completing applications, practicing interview skills and making sure that students have the appropriate clothing to wear. Once a student has obtained unsubsidized employment, staff will continue to provide support by helping to arrange transportation, obtaining necessary clothing items, and problem-solving work-related issues that may arise.

### **Portfolios**

A portfolio is a job-hunting tool students develop to give employers a complete picture of their experience, education, accomplishments, skill sets and potential. It encompasses much more than can be provided by a cover letter and a resume. Students will collect information from their volunteer and work experiences to demonstrate the skills they have developed. They can use this career portfolio in job interviews to showcase a point, to illustrate the depth of their skills and experience, or to use as a tool to get a second interview.



## Job Shadowing

Job shadowing provides students with an opportunity to see firsthand what it would be like to work in a particular job. Students are paired with professionals in the community currently working in a job the student is interested in. By spending time with this person during a regular workday, the student gains real-life perspective on what working in that job would be like. This process can help students decide if this is a career they want to pursue.

### ► Connection with Adult Services Agencies

As youth progress through the Career Services program, it becomes apparent for some, that they will require additional support to maintain long-term employment. For these youth, referrals are made to adult agencies that can provide them with ongoing supports (job coaching, assistance with transportation, etc.). The coordinator of Transition Services can assist the treatment team in determining what services a youth is eligible for and help to initiate a referral. The coordinator of Transition Services also serves as a liaison between the school and adult services agencies to help facilitate a smooth transition in services.

Children in therapeutic foster care and specialized foster care are usually in the process of returning home to their birth parents or relatives. The goal of our foster care programs is reunification, but occasionally, when children do not have a resource for permanency, they may be adopted by foster parents. Adolescents in this situation, however, may choose not to be adopted but may remain in foster care to improve their independent living skills.

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## Appendix B

# Acronyms and Initialisms

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Following are the acronyms and initialisms used in this handbook.

BIP	behavior intervention plan
CDOS	career development and occupational studies
CEO	chief executive officer
CSE	Committee on Special Education
FBA	functional behavioral assessment
IEC	individualized education classroom
IEP	individualized education program
IER	individualized education room
IRC	Incident Review Committee
PBIS	Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports
SPC	student planning conference
TA	teacher assistant
TSS	Therapeutic Support staff