



# Family Handbook

2020 - 2021

# Welcome and Key Information

Welcome! We are excited for you to join us on campus this fall and to provide you with an updated version of our handbook. Of special concern to our community this year is the Covid-19 pandemic. This handbook does not address the specific ways in which North Country School plans to manage Covid-specific health and safety protocols, but is designed to provide information about how the NCS program runs and expectations that are in place when our program is running in an optimal manner. You should expect communications throughout the remainder of the summer and into the school year about the ways in which the North Country School program will be adapted to ensure the safety of our community members.

We ask that students and families take the time to read through the handbook. Feel free to reach out about any questions you may have. Over the years, we've learned that there are a few key areas that we continually need to revisit with families. Below are a few key points to highlight. Adhering to these guidelines is important, but please read the entire handbook for other detailed information.

- Please limit packages to necessary items only. These should be items that are required for classes or activities directly related to school program. The occasional "special package" with a small gift or treat is acceptable. Please refrain from sending magic cards, candy or sugary drinks/snacks (please see information about packages)
- Communicate with House Parents or Advisors before sending any items to your children to determine if it is essential or necessary.
- Label everything!
- Many of the items that are lost or misplaced here on campus are items that do not have your child's name on them. Please be sure to put a nametag on all items.
- Cell phones are allowed for Grade 9 students only. They are allowed to use them three nights a week. That time is limited to ½ hr per night at the discretion of House Parents or the Dean of Students.

---

## Non-Discrimination Statement

Consistent with applicable law, North Country School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin or disability, or on the basis of any other protected characteristic, in its admissions, educational programs, or activities, including its educational policies, financial aid programs, or other school-administered extracurricular programs.

## Ensuring the Ability of Students with Disabilities to Participate in the Program

Consistent with its policy prohibiting discrimination, the School is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities are provided with equal access to its programs. The School will provide accommodations and modifications to ensure a disabled student has equal access to the School's services. Should a student need an accommodation, the School will make an individualized determination of the student's needs and an accommodation plan will be developed.

# Contact Information

Todd Ormiston, Executive Director  
tormiston@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6505

Matthew Smith, Director of School  
mpsmith@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6504

Fritz Sabbow, Business Manager  
fsabbow@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6506

Bryan Johansmeyer, Dean of Students  
bjohansmeyer@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6525

David Damico, Director of Admissions  
ddamico@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6000

Jess Wegrzyn, Director of Learning Support Services  
Jwegrzyn@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 5448

Courtney Allen, Director of Equity and Inclusion  
callen@northcountryschool.org

Sheila Tavares, Administrative Support  
sheila@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 1000

Colleen Blanchard, School Counselor  
cblanchard@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6509

Shannon Portal, School Nurse  
sportal@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6508

Fax: (518) 523-4858

Weekend "Head of the Day" ("Hot-D") (518) 339-4368

Administrator on Duty ("AOD") 518-339-5018

# Handbook Table of Contents

## SCHOOL PROGRAM

Daily Schedule.....	4
Academics.....	4
Work Program.....	6
Town Meeting.....	6
Grade Meetings.....	6
Music Lessons.....	6
Title Trekking.....	6
Standardized Testing.....	6
Secondary School Placement.....	7
Dining Room.....	7
Council.....	7
Out-time.....	7
Residential Life.....	7
Homenights.....	8
Weekends.....	8
School Trips.....	8
Intersession/Endersession.....	8

## SCHOOL RULES AND POLICIES

Student Guidelines for Behavior.....	8
Discipline Guidelines.....	9

## STUDENTS AND TECHNOLOGY

Television/Movies.....	10
Computers and Electronics.....	10

## FAMILIES AND SCHOOL

General.....	12
Advising Students and Families.....	12
Counseling Services.....	13
Medical.....	13
Preparing Your Child for NCS.....	13
Packing for School/Clothing List.....	13
Outdoor Gear and Clothing List.....	14
Academic Supplies.....	14
Horseback Riding Gear.....	14
Ski/Snowboard Equipment.....	14
Barn Boots and Jackets.....	15
Bicycles.....	15
Labeling and Nametags.....	15
Dress Code.....	15
Transportation to and from NCS.....	15
Homesickness.....	16

Letters/Email.....	16
Phone Calls.....	16
Packages.....	16
Money.....	16
Birthdays.....	17
Food.....	17
Visiting Times and Procedures.....	17
Federal Holidays.....	18
Dog Policy.....	18
Family Weekend.....	18
Graduation.....	18
Business Office.....	18

## SERVICES

Laundry & Housekeeping.....	19
Health Office.....	19
Attendance at Religious Services.....	19

## DAY FAMILIES

### THE SCHOOL DAY

Drop-Off and Pick-Up.....	19
Attendance, Health Issues, Holidays, Late Pick-Up, Snow Days/Bad Weather.....	19-20
Contacting Your Child.....	20
Morning Jobs.....	20
Sleep-Ins.....	20
Clothing and Equipment.....	20
School Supplies.....	21
Personal Electronics.....	21
Homework.....	21

### HOMENIGHTS/WEEKENDS/SPECIAL EVENTS

Homenights.....	21
Weekend Program.....	22
Inviting Boarding Students to Your Home.....	22
Whiteface Afternoons.....	23
Chaperones.....	23

## APPENDICES

Contact Information.....	2
Sexual Misconduct Policy.....	24
Academic Calendar 2019-2020.....	30

## SCHOOL PROGRAM

### Daily Schedule

#### Monday, Tuesday, Friday

AM Classes: 45 minutes / PM Classes: 40 minutes

8:30-9:15 - 1st Period

9:15-9:20 passing time

9:20-10:05 - 2nd Period

15 Minute Recess

10:20 - 11:05 - 3rd Period

11:05 - 11:10 passing time

11:10 - 11:55 - 4th Period

11:55 - 12:00 - passing time

12:00 - 12:35 - Lunch (35 minutes)

12:35 - 12:50 Council (15 minutes)

12:50 - 12:55 passing time

12:55 - 1:35 5th Period

1:35 - 1:40 passing time

1:40 - 2:20 6th Period

2:20 - 2:25 passing time

2:25 - 3:05 7th period

3:05 - 3:15 passing time / snack

3:15 - 4:30 Out-time (1 hour 15 minutes)

4:45 Barn Chores Begin

#### Wednesday, Thursday

AM Classes: 40 minutes / PM Classes: 40 minutes

9:00 - 9:40 - 1st period

9:40 - 9:45 - passing time

9:45 - 10:25 - 2nd period

15 Minute Recess

10:40 - 11:20 - 3rd Period

11:20 - 11:25 passing time

11:25- 12:05 - 4th Period

12:05 - 12:10 passing time

12:10 - 12:45 - Lunch (35 minutes)

12:45 - 1:05 Council (20 minutes)

1:05 - 1:10 passing time

1:10 - 1:50 5th Period

1:50 - 1:55 passing time

1:55 - 2:35 6th Period

2:35 - 2:40 passing time

2:40 - 3:20 - 7th Period

3:20 - 3:30 passing time / snack (10 minutes)

3:30 - 4:30 Out-time (1 hour)

4:45 Barn Chores Begin

(This schedule may change depending on fall, winter, and spring terms)

### Academics

*"A child who reads poorly, spells badly, writes slowly and awkwardly, has little freedom. He is without tools – or his tools are so dull that production and creation are discouraged. Freedom is gained as we acquire ability and skill."*

– Walter Clark

**Academic Curriculum:** North Country School's core academic and arts/electives programs are based on the conviction that direct experience, acquired in the context of a diverse social, emotional, and academic environment, are the best foundations for learning. The NCS curriculum incorporates best-practices from hands-on, mainstream, experiential and skill-based approaches to learning. These practices reflect an intentional blend of traditional and progressive teaching practices. The curriculum is taught in such a way that students are provided a nurturing environment to both expand their skills and grow their self confidence as they are encouraged to become critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, effective communicators and active collaborators.

North Country School takes pride in providing an academic curriculum and teaching philosophy that allows for individualized instruction and to meet each student 'where they are'. Faculty embrace, engage, and encourage students as unique learners.

Although NCS does not officially distinguish between a "lower school" and an "upper school," there is a distinct transition between the self-contained classrooms of Grades 4-6 and the departmentalized structure of Grades 7-9. These two "divisions" are distinct in their placement in the building as well. Classrooms for Grades 4-6 are at one end of the main building, whereas Grades 7-9 have classes at the opposite end. This configuration allows for an elementary school feel for the younger children and a middle school feel, with multiple transitions, for the older students.

Classes are divided into two basic categories: core academic courses and art/electives. The core academic program for all grades includes English, math, science and social studies/history courses. Students in Grades 4-6 have an additional core reading class. One of NCS's unique graduation requirements is that all students take at least one elective in each of four art/elective categories by the time they graduate from North Country School: studio arts, performing arts, culinary arts and STEM/industrial arts. For their art/elective classes, students in Grades 4-6 experience studio art, performing arts, and culinary arts over the course of the year. Students in Grades 7-9 have more freedom in choosing their art/elective courses. North Country School values diversity in elective offerings and strives to balance students' desires to concentrate on their particular areas of interest with opportunities to explore additional arts/electives that challenge and expand their creative skills.

**Study Hall:** North Country School offers two study hall models. For students in Grades 4-7, study hall is scheduled during the academic day and includes teacher guidance and support. Additionally, students in Grades 4-7 have required study hall on Sunday

mornings in a classroom setting and a regular in-house reading period during week nights. Study Hall for Grades 8 and 9 occur outside of the academic day with supervised study hall times on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings. Students in this study hall model are expected to manage their time and work independently.

**Weekly Friday Feedback:** North Country School's academic program places an emphasis on processes of learning. Students are actively encouraged to develop a growth mindset about their capabilities. Students receive regular feedback regarding class participation, promptness, and class preparation, in the form of Friday Feedback. These grades are not linked to academic achievement, but instead provide feedback to students about their "school skills," such as answering questions in class, having their homework and books at hand, coming to class on time, and behaving appropriately in a classroom setting. The frequency of these grades is intended to identify and encourage strong academic habits. These grades are not part of a student's transcript but they are shared with families on a weekly basis.

**NCS Notes:** In addition to weekly progress reports, NCS recognizes student achievement and contributions to the community in the form of NCS Notes. These are a less formal means for communicating about a child's success in the classroom and other parts of the program. NCS Notes are shared with the Director of School, the student's Advisor, the student's Houseparents, the student and the student's family.

**End of Term Reports:** At the end of each term, student achievement and progress is reported with a three-part report for each class. The first section describes the curricular content covered during the term. The second section is comprised of a basic checklist of skills acquired, performance shown, and participation during the term. The final section of each report includes a narrative that highlights areas of strength and growth witnessed over the course of the term as well as areas where there are opportunities for continued progress. NCS has a non-graded program in that no summative marks are awarded until the Spring Term of a student's Grade 8 year. Grade 8 students receive grades during that term in order to get them better prepared for their Grade 9 year. For Grade 9 students, teachers assign grades in each term so that high school credit can be provided for coursework completed. Additionally, at the midpoint of the fall, and spring terms, each advisor contacts the family with an interim report to update the family about their student's academic progress.

**Ensuring the Ability of Students with Disabilities to Participate in the Program:** Consistent with its policy prohibiting discrimination, the School is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities are provided

with equal access to its programs. The School will provide accommodations and modifications to ensure a disabled student has equal access to the school's services. Should a student need an accommodation, the School will make an individualized determination of the student's needs and an accommodation plan will be developed.

**NCS's Learning Support Program:** While learning support usually comes in the form of intervention and accommodations made by classroom teachers, there are situations where a higher level of individualized attention may be required. The NCS Learning Support Services program is available to students in all grades. Learning Support needs are often determined during the admissions process. However, as students grow and learn, we also appreciate that the need for these services may emerge or may no longer be needed. When a change is merited, families are contacted and engaged in the placement process.

NCS offers the following learning support services to students in Grades 7-9:

- Learning Lab is available three days a week to students with relatively light academic support needs, but who might require extra time and support for working on homework assignments.
- Learning Skills is a more intense and personalized tutorial service that meets five days a week and has a student-teacher ratio of 2:1.
- Small Group Study Hall is offered to students who require more guidance in completing their work. This study hall is staffed by faculty members trained to provide study skills support.

Additionally, NCS offers the following learning support services to students in Grades 4-8.

- Reading Lab is a service in which a learning support teacher works two days a week with a small group of students to enhance reading fluency and comprehension skills.
- Writing Lab is a service geared largely to students who need additional support with writing strategies.

**English as a Second Language:** ESL services are provided to international students to help them attain a higher level of English fluency so as to be more successful in their academic classes. The goal is to graduate from ESL services to mainstream English classes.

Families may request that their child receive ESL support during the admissions process or by contacting Meredith Hanson, International Student Coordinator, [mhanson@northcountyschool.org](mailto:mhanson@northcountyschool.org). There are additional fees for ESL services.



## Work Program

*"Many of these students may never milk a cow again, or chop a tree with an axe, or climb a mountain on skis, or sleep out in the woods on a cold winter night, or try to drive an obstinate pig from one pen to another.*

*No, it is not because we need these specific skills that we learn and practice them. It is because we need to know what it means to undertake jobs no matter how difficult and unpleasant, and see them through to a useful, practical, satisfying finish. What is important is the persistence and determination to stick with a job, no matter how discouraging it may be at times - the confidence and assurance that comes from having successfully mastered a great multitude of demanding situations, either working alone or in cooperation with others."*

— Walter Clark

Everyone in the community, adult or child, has a morning or afternoon chore, in which they clean a classroom, the locker areas, their houses, set tables in the dining room, or shovel the walkways to the building. Those assigned to the kitchen or the barn have afternoon jobs as well. These are not "make work" jobs; they are essential to the operation of our school. For this reason, it is a student's responsibility to see that their job is covered, personally or with a "sub," should they be away on a hike or out of school for a visit. Jobs are done on a daily basis and rotate every two weeks.

Throughout the year there are numerous community work-jobs. These include farm and garden harvesting, sap gathering, and cleaning the campus. These jobs may involve the whole school or they may be completed by a smaller group during out-time. At the end of the year, the Jamieson-Roseliep Work Award is presented to the student or students who best exemplify our commitment to helping out in our community through work.

## Town Meeting

Town Meetings are held on Wednesday mornings and are led by a faculty member, often accompanied by students, and focus on issues important to the community or aspects of living that deserve reflection. Often the inspiration for Town Meetings comes out of daily life; however, certain themes are chosen in order to enhance the educational experience of both our students and the community as a whole. Town meetings are an opportunity for students and faculty alike to participate in meaningful discussion and have the opportunity to share their thoughts with the entire school community.

## Grade Meetings

Grade meetings, held during the week, allow students to meet with their teachers to build a sense of community and strong peer communication. These meetings can provide the opportunity to practice a social curriculum, ensuring that every student feels greeted and learns to listen, speak, and ask questions in turn. Older students typically use their time to work on assignments/projects, meet with teachers, get extra help as needed, or plan a grade-level event. The meetings usually conclude with upcoming news and announcements pertaining to that group. Each grade team decides how best to use this time.

**Posting Student Work On Our Website:** NCS faculty use the school's website to share student work with the greater world, including families. Permission from a parent/guardian is required to post a child's work and image on our website. The form for this permission is provided in the Family Portal.

**Music Lessons:** All students are encouraged to engage in a form of musical expression – vocal or instrumental – that develops their ability to read and express a musical score. The school provides individual lessons at no extra cost to families. Music lessons are scheduled on a term-to-term basis. Students in Grades 4-6 can sign up for a music lesson regardless of whether they are in a music class. For students in Grades 7-9, lesson slots are prioritized for students who have demonstrated a commitment to their instrument and are actively engaged in taking a music class so that they can have increased, individualized attention. Children who play an instrument are encouraged to bring it to school. Inquiries regarding music lessons should be directed to Joey Izzo, [jwizzo@northcountryschool.org](mailto:jwizzo@northcountryschool.org) who heads our music program.

**Title Trekking:** There are 46 mountains over 4,000 feet in New York State, all within the Adirondack Park. Those who have climbed them are known as "46-ers." Students are invited to climb the literary heights of adventure, fantasy, and intellect as they read through 46 books to become "Literary 46-ers." The range of challenge matches the difficulty of our various "High Peaks." Students who scale all 46 literary peaks have their name entered on the school's Title Trek plaque. To find out more information about the title trek program, parents may contact Sierra Grennan at [sgrennan@northcountryschool.org](mailto:sgrennan@northcountryschool.org) and/or Melissa Orzechowski at [morzechowski@northcountryschool.org](mailto:morzechowski@northcountryschool.org).

**Standardized Testing** Students applying for admission to private secondary schools are required to take the Secondary School Admissions Test (SSAT). We administer this test at North Country School twice in the fall and once in the spring. Grade 8 students usually take the SSAT test in April and then take the SSAT again during the October and/or December as a Grade 9 student. If there are questions about standardized

testing, please contact Meredith Hanson at mhanson@northcountryschool.org.

**TOEFL:** Students for whom English is a second language often need to take the TOEFL test as part of the secondary school admissions process. The school offers an opportunity for Grade 9 students to take the TOEFL at a nearby testing site. Students in lower grades will take the TOEFL Junior test. Any families that wish to have students tested at other times, or when students are in other grades, need to notify the school at least two months prior to the test administration date. Contact Meredith Hanson, International Student Coordinator, mhanson@northcountryschool.org to make these arrangements.

### **Secondary School Process**

Most Grade 9 students apply to independent secondary schools. Families of 9th graders receive a summer communication explaining the secondary school placement process that includes procedures for visiting schools with their child, the application process, and the SSAT test dates. In the fall term, Grade 9 students prepare and write their essays, practice interviewing, and complete their applications. Most of our 9th graders schedule visits to the secondary schools they are applying to for the week after our Thanksgiving break. These visits are coordinated with Bryan Johansmeyer (bjohansmeyer@northcountryschool.org). Also, in early spring, families sometimes elect to take their students for a revisit to some of the secondary schools seen earlier in the year.

Each year a number of admissions officers visit NCS to talk with students about secondary schools. Rarely, Grade 8 students and their families may consider being part of the secondary school placement process. If this is the case, we will work with a child and family to counsel them on the appropriate secondary school placement.

### **Dining Room**

Meals are served three times daily in the dining room. In addition, three snacks – mid-morning, before out-time, and after out-time – are served by our kitchen. Students are required to attend all meals unless excused by the nurse. In accordance with both the school’s dress code and philosophy, students are required to wear clothing to the dining room that is not only appropriate in terms of style and function, but also hygienic. Each student is greeted at the door and has their hands checked for cleanliness by a teacher before sitting down for meals. Students are assigned to tables of six (five children and an adult table head) on a two-week rotation. Within the assigned period a child will be “waiter” on two or more days. The school community will establish a brief silence before the table head at the first table sits down for the meal to begin. The table head serves the meal, reinforces table manners, and oversees the

conversation and behavior at the table. Students are encouraged to try a little of everything that is served. A reluctant student may request a “no-thank-you” portion.

Grade 9 students are given the opportunity and responsibility to serve as a table head at dinners and on weekends. Visiting families who would like to sit with their child at a meal should make arrangements with a faculty member beforehand.

### **Council**

*When each school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service and providing him with the instruments of effective self direction, we shall have the deepest and best guarantee of a larger society which is worthy, lovely and harmonious.*  
— John Dewey

Following meals, students stay at their tables for Council. This is a meeting in which announcements are made by children and adults concerning special activities, upcoming weekend trips, community recognition, lost or found items, and news about school or world events. Additionally, any visitors or special guests are introduced to the community. Council is a time each day when the school as a community checks in to reflect and re-chart our course. Grade 9 students help to facilitate lunch Council throughout the year, one of many public speaking and leadership opportunities that our seniors experience during their last year at NCS.

### **Out-time / Afternoon Activities**

Out-time is the School’s organized, daily physical activity period that generally takes place outside. Students hike the school’s wooded trails, ride horses, and learn to climb and rappel on the school’s climbing venues. Activities such as sledding, skiing, skating, orienteering, wood splitting, and other community work-jobs are examples of out-time offerings throughout the year. Team sports such as soccer, basketball, and Nordic skiing are also offered at this time. Students choose from a list of out-time offerings during lunch. There are some activities that are required throughout the year, such as community-wide work-jobs, but for the most part, out-time is an opportunity for children to explore and experience activities based on their own interests.

### **Residential Life**

The residential program provides safe and nurturing, family style houses for eight to eleven children comprised of all ages and a variety of cultures, countries, and regions. Of the six houses, some might be single gender residences while others will



be mixed gender, depending on enrollment. NCS boarding students practice and experience how to live with one another in accordance with the school's mission and values. The daily routines and special activities that occur in the houses are intended to develop responsibility, mutual respect, self-confidence to communicate with peers and adults, and skills to resolve conflicts. Students also share the pleasures of reading time, games and special events, and preparing and sharing weekly house meals. Primary houseparents, who live in the house with the students, and the support houseparents, are also teachers who share their knowledge and special interests with students.

### **Homenights**

The schedule on Wednesdays provides a time in the houses for students to attend to housekeeping and laundry, as well as time for bonding as a house group. After classes, students go to their lockers in the ramp and, under the supervision of one of their houseparents, go through the clothing and other belongings that have accumulated during the week. These are sorted and the majority is taken back to the house. Once at the house, the children bag their dirty clothes, put away clean laundry, clean their room, and make up their beds with fresh linens. Children eat a home cooked meal in their houses, which they help prepare, and share an activity as a house. Examples of homelight activities include: sledding on the Lake Hill, tobogganing or ice skating in Lake Placid, going to a movie, watching a video at home, building forts in the woods, and playing games as a house or with another house at the Upper Field.

### **Weekends**

Weekends include a broad range of outdoor recreational activities on and off campus, as well as scheduled study hall time on Sundays. Art rooms, the library, and media center are usually open for some time during the weekend. Weekend days may be organized around a particular seasonal theme such as Garden Harvest in the fall, and Holiday Open Houses in the winter. Students go hiking and mountain climbing almost every Saturday of the school year. There is also ample time on weekends for children to read, practice a musical instrument, and enjoy their friendships. Each weekend day is organized and overseen by a faculty member considered the Head of the Day ("Hot-D") and the Administrator on Duty "AOD"). One highlight of each weekend is the Saturday night activity, an all-school event planned by the Hot-D.

### **School Trips**

Students travel off campus frequently as part of the academic, residential, outdoor, and weekend programs. For general off-campus daily activities, we do not necessarily contact a parent/guardian ahead of time. If there is an academic or residential life related, off-campus overnight activity, we will contact a parent/guardian ahead of time.

Each grade goes on a class trip at some point during the school year. The purpose of these required trips is to enhance the experiential educational opportunities for the students and offer each class a chance to bond around a shared experience. The trips get longer and more ambitious as students get older. Typically, the trips for Grades 4-6 are two days in a comfortable setting, the Grade 7 trip is two days in more of a backcountry setting, the Grade 8 trips are three or four days, and the Grade 9 trip is up to ten days long. The aim of the Grade 9 trip is to engage in field study that is strongly related to work done in the classroom. In past years, students have traveled to the Four Corners of the Southwest and taken Outward Bound sailing trips in the Florida Keys.

### **Intersession/Endersession**

During Intersession week, at the end of Winter Term, students do not have regularly scheduled classes; instead they have an assortment of offerings from which to choose that involve a more in-depth study of one or two activities a day. Examples of past classes include: African dancing and drumming, basket weaving, cooking, costume design, dark room photography, ice climbing, poetry writing/performance, pop-up band, set building, stop-motion animation, telemark skiing, telescope building, and woodcarving, to name a few. Students can choose to enroll in full-day activities, or they can divide the time between morning and afternoon half-day electives. Most activities meet on campus or in the surrounding mountains or community.

Endersession happens at the end of the year and runs in a similar manner to Intersession, the exception being that a large number of students are involved in the play and the drill team, and have less elective choice if they are already committed to those activities.

## **SCHOOL RULES AND POLICIES**

*"We are here at North Country School to help each other learn and grow, each to his or her greatest potential. This means encouraging the growth of our bodies, our minds, our hearts, and our spirits. This also means learning to care for the entire community, both the people in this community and the greater environment."*

– Walter Clark

### **The Basic Rules of Behavior**

North Country School focuses on creating a culture of civility at school and upholding the community standards upon which the faculty collectively agree. To achieve this goal, we specify expectations, use clear language when engaging students, and respect the community around us.

We have three basic rules: do no harm to yourself, do no harm to others, and do no harm to the property. We also have additional rules and expectations.

### **Student Guidelines for Behavior**

North Country School faculty members are dedicated to encouraging behavior that supports growth and discourages behavior that works against the health and safety of the individual or community. We value community and feel that we learn and grow best in the context of many caring relationships. If you behave kindly, respectfully, and gently you will grow, learn, and feel like you belong to a caring community that will continue to nurture and protect you. If you do anything to hurt yourself, another person, or the larger community of people, activities, property or land around you, you will probably feel that you are less connected to the community.

There are, of course, different levels of harm that can be done to oneself, others, and the physical community. We expect students to make mistakes, and we will do our best to use those mistakes as opportunities for learning. We will encourage students to know themselves well and to practice resolving conflicts before they become too big. There are times, however, when adults need to intervene and help guide the conversation between students.

Every member of the NCS community deserves respect, even in the midst of conflict. Respect means remaining mindful and courteous; it means making time to listen and trying to understand what the other person is saying. It means being willing to stop what you are doing in order to solve a conflict or situation that needs dialogue.

It is important to note that we expect an NCS student to exhibit respect for oneself, others, the community, and the property, whether they are on campus or elsewhere, and whether school is in session or not. Students will be proactively counseled on the importance of reflecting on the impact of their choices. We will educate children about the reality that their behavior, even when students are away from school, may cause harm to others in this community or adversely impact the community of NCS, and may result in a disciplinary response from the School.

Misuse of technology (please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy in the appendix of this handbook), use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco or e-cig products (vaping), and any violation of the law are some examples of behavioral choices that may violate the Basic Rules of Behavior.

### **Discipline Guidelines**

*Children, along with all humans, can only take a small amount of correction at a time, and the effectiveness of any corrective measure is almost in direct proportion to the amount of positive affection, satisfaction, and consideration that a person is receiving.*

– Walter Clark

### **Proactive Discipline**

We approach discipline in a few ways at North Country School. The first approach is proactive discipline. It involves getting all community members involved in the process of creating a nurturing space to inhabit. A significant amount of time at the start of the year is dedicated to building a caring community. Individuals who feel a sense of safety and belonging as well as actively engage in the establishment and understanding of community norms are more likely to uphold them. As part of this approach, students and staff are encouraged to model appropriate behaviors and remind and redirect others before rules are broken. If community rules are broken, North Country School guides community members to a restorative discipline approach.

### **Restorative Discipline**

Restorative Discipline is a whole-school, relational approach to building school climate and addressing student behavior that fosters belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment. Its practices replace fear, uncertainty, and punishment as motivators with belonging, connectedness and the willingness to change because people matter to each other.” ([www.irjrd.org/restorative-discipline-in-schools](http://www.irjrd.org/restorative-discipline-in-schools))

At North Country School, restorative discipline is a comprehensive approach to working with students when they make mistakes. A restorative approach gives students a chance to fix a problem. When all affected parties are satisfied with the outcome and the problem has been fixed, the violation has been restored. There are no prescribed outcome or consequences in the NCS restorative discipline model but the process is meant to repair relationships, be respectful to all parties involved and be relevant and realistic. All teachers are encouraged to use restorative practices in working with students. That being said, the restorative discipline model requires time, the establishment of a safe space and trust between students and faculty members. When any of these critical pieces are missing, work will be done (sometimes with the help of the Dean of Students and/or school counselor) in order to establish these foundational elements.

### **Reactive Discipline**

Reactive discipline is reserved for those times when students engage in behaviors that are considered

harmful to themselves or the community. It is also employed when all efforts to prevent, defuse, and contain have been exhausted. Discipline at NCS is highly individualized and does not follow a specific chart or set of rules. It is designed to help students progress in a meaningful way. Some possible outcomes of reactive discipline at NCS may include in-school suspension, at-home suspension, and, on rare occasions, dismissal from school.

## STUDENTS AND TECHNOLOGY

**Television and Movies:** It is the policy of North Country School to avoid network or cable program broadcasts during the school year except, on occasion, some significant newsworthy events. Magazines and the daily paper may be found in the school library, and students have supervised access to information on the Internet.

Our common practice is that only movies with G, PG, and PG-13 ratings are shown. Even so, faculty must be aware of the reason for the PG-13 rating in particular, as some of these films may not be suitable. Therefore, we have started to use Common Sense Media as well to gain their "age" rating. On occasion, a staff member may consult with the Director of School to determine the imperative of showing an R-rated movie to older students as an outgrowth of their class studies (Lord of The Flies, or Schindler's List, or Cold Mountain, for example).

**Computers and Electronics:** Simplicity is at the root of our lives here, as is sound education, which today involves many electronic aids. The school has enough computers and other electronic technology to meet the educational needs of every student. Therefore, students will not need nor be permitted to use their personal computers or other personal electronic devices for academic purposes.

**Personal Music and Reading Devices:** Boarding students may bring a modest compact stereo or media (MP3) player for their rooms. Personal electronic devices are restricted to student rooms because NCS seeks to preserve community spaces as places where meaningful interactions occur. The one exception to this rule will be for off campus trips that involve a car ride of two or more hours. With permission of a supervising faculty member, students may bring a personal music device on such a trip and will be subject to the rules established for the use of the music device on the trip. Only music and recorded books are permitted on personal electronic devices. Devices containing movies, games, videos, and apps are not permitted, and will need to be placed in the student's valuables if brought to school. This includes devices that have the potential for other capabilities,

for example mobile (cellular) Internet connectivity (iPod Touch, iPad, Kindle Fire, Surface, etc.), even if that capability is disabled. Given this, we suggest to the families that their child have a simple and "feature limited" player that has only music and/or recorded books already loaded (Students do not have the ability to load music at school) — a "player for school" so to speak. Similarly, e-book readers (e.g., Kindle) must be of the non-cellular variety, and may not contain movies, games, videos or apps.

We appreciate that when traveling to and from school surrounding school breaks, a student may bring to school one or more types of devices that are not allowed for personal or academic use while here, including cell phones, DVD players, tablets, and gaming systems. If this is the case, the device(s) will be held in the student's valuables until traveling back home.

**Headphones:** Students may bring their own headphones to NCS; however, we would urge that students bring a relatively inexpensive pair if they plan on using headphones at the main building. Headphones are ubiquitous and hard to keep track of. Headphones may only be used during study halls, and/or in some classes with the explicit permission of supervising teachers. Please know that we are unable to keep track of headphones from day to day and that an inexpensive pair for use in the main building is the recommended course. North Country School maintains a supply of headphones at the main building for student use.

**Tablets:** Kindle Fire, Nook HD, Nexus7, NextBook, Surface, and other tablet computers are not permitted. Many of these devices are currently sold as e-book readers, but devices in this category are also capable of displaying full motion video, playing games, and running apps or programs that extend the capabilities far beyond that of displaying reading material or playing audiobooks. If these types of devices are brought to campus, they will be stored in a student's "valuables".

**Personal cameras:** These include digital, film, or video cameras, and may be used only with permission of a houseparent or teacher, and during special occasions and events only. At all other times cameras will be kept in the student's valuables.

Phones, media players, iPads, tablets, and other devices may not be used as digital camera replacements. Personal cameras generally stay at the houses, but can accompany a student on weekend trips and for special school events with the permission of trip and event leaders.

In summary, the following is a list of what is **allowed**:

- Media (MP3) players lacking cellular internet access containing only music or, audiobooks (no videos, movies, games, or apps)

- E-book readers lacking cellular internet access containing only reading material, audiobooks, or music (no videos, movies, games, or apps)
- Film or digital camera for special occasions
- Ipad
- Cell phones for travel only (except Grade 9 students)

**Grade 9 Cell Phone Privilege:** Our conservative approach to cell phones and social media, as well as our commitment to reduced screen time and avoidance of passive technology creates a unique environment that isn't available to most teenagers in school today. We also want to make sure that graduates are prepared for secondary school by including more experience with the responsible use of technology. Grade 9 students may bring a cell phone or tablet (iPad, Kindle Fire, etc.) for their use for one half-hour before they get ready for bed on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights. All Grade 9 students who wish to use a cell phone during the designated times must have signed permission from a parent/guardian and must abide by all of the cell phone policy rules. Cell phones are only to be used in designated areas of the house as well as on special trips where they are provided as an extra level of safety. This is a privilege that is being offered by the school and can be revoked for misuse at the discretion of houseparents, the Dean of Students, or the Director of School.

**Acceptable Media Players and e-Readers:** There are still many devices currently on the market that fulfill our requirements, and the good news is that most of them are under \$100. Without the need for WiFi, videos, and games, manufacturers are able to give you more features that matter, like small size, great battery life, and high quality audio. Media Players and e-Readers are only to be used within the house.

- The most widely known media player in this category is the Apple iPod Shuffle.
- Much like the iPod shuffle, the Sony Walkman Sports MP3 Player also has no screen, but it is water resistant, and the entire unit is molded into the in-ear headsets.
- Portable Music Players by SanDisk: All of these offer expandable memory and 15-24 hour battery life.

## DAY STUDENTS AND TECHNOLOGY

**Day Students' Personal Electronics:** Day Students should never bring media players to campus except when specifically allowed by a trip leader or teacher (in general we say that trips over two hours might be ones on which students are allowed such players). However, movies, games, and videos are not allowed, therefore devices capable of displaying movies, games or videos are not permitted at any time. This includes devices

(iPod Touch, iPad, Kindle Fire, or equivalent) that have the potential for other capabilities as well, including Internet connectivity (even if that capability is disabled such devices will be collected if brought to school). Given this, we suggest that day students have a simple and "feature limited" player that has only music and/or recorded books already loaded — a "player for school trips," so to speak.

**Cameras:** Cameras are welcome only during special occasions such as Halloween celebrations and class trips or other special events or when specifically requested by a teacher or houseparent. Students will be informed when these events are happening and that they are allowed to have cameras. Phones, iPads, tablets, and other devices may not be used as a digital camera replacement.

**Cell Phones:** Day students are not allowed to bring cell phones to school at any time. If media players, cameras, or cell phones are brought to school when not allowed, we will return the device to the parents or guardians and ask that it not return to campus for the remainder of the term.

**Academic Technology:** The school has ample computers and other technology needed to meet the educational needs of our students. Students will not need nor be permitted to use personal electronic devices for academic purposes. This includes but is not limited to laptops, tablets, video/voice recorders, cameras, and media players.

Most Day Students, especially in Grades 7-9, need to work on computer-based assignments at home and at school. Most student work is done and managed through Google Suite. This is a web based system that can be assessed both at school and home.

If you have any questions about a student's home computer's compatibility with our computers, please contact Devon Jacobs ([djacobs@ncstreetops.org](mailto:djacobs@ncstreetops.org)).

## STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND COMPUTER AGREEMENT

Although North Country School is a media-reduced environment, we appreciate the educational value provided by appropriate use of technology. As a boarding school, we also seek to provide ways for healthy communication and connection between students, families, and friends. At the same time, we also acknowledge the potential mishaps and inappropriate use of these forms of technology.

Therefore we have an Acceptable Use Policy that is written with our community's basic Code of Conduct in mind - Encourage learning and growing. Do no harm to yourself, others, the community, or property.



A copy of this policy and agreement can be found in the appendix of this handbook. It was also sent to families earlier in the summer to review with their child(ren) and to sign and return to NCS. These forms are reviewed with the students as part of their technology orientation, during which they will be provided an opportunity to ask clarifying questions. If you have any questions concerning student technology use or the Acceptable Use Policy or Computer Use Agreement, please contact Matt Smith, Director of School; Devon Jacobs, Director of Technology; or Bryan Johansmeyer, Dean of Students.

## FAMILIES AND SCHOOL

### General

We want to work closely with families. We invite families to speak with us often. Here are some of the topics about which parents might like to have information during the year and the people who can provide that information:

Academic Program .....	Matt Smith, Director of School
Instructional Support.....	Jess Wegrzyn, Director of Learning Support Services
Counseling/Advising.....	Colleen Blanchard, School Counselor
Discipline .....	Bryan Johansmeyer, Dean of Students
Health and Dietary Concerns.....	Shannon Portal, School Nurse
Instrumental Music Lessons .....	Joey Izzo, Music Program
Residential Life.....	Bryan Johansmeyer, Dean of Students
Secondary School Placement .....	Bryan Johansmeyer, Placement Coordinator
Ski Program Coordinator .....	Bryan Johansmeyer, Ski Program
Technology.....	Devon Jacobs, Technology Director
Thanksgiving and Graduation Events.....	Sheila Tavares, Administrative Support
Travel, Visiting, and Weekends.....	Sheila Tavares, Administrative Support Bryan Johansmeyer, Dean of Students
Admissions and Financial Aid .....	David Damico, Admissions Director Rachel Carter,

	Admissions Associate
Billing .....	Fritz Sabbow, Business Manager
Supporting NCS.....	Christie Borden, Director of Advancement Todd Ormiston, Executive Director

### Advising Students and Families

Many teachers will assume the role of advisor for one to four students. An advisor's first obligation is to keep the communication with families clear, open, current and accurate. The second obligation is to provide individual support to the student. Your student's advisor is your first point of contact within NCS; however, we understand you may develop close ties with the school nurse, counselor, houseparents or other teachers during your child's NCS career. The advisor can help you navigate the NCS system of communication and make sure you're receiving a high level of responsiveness when/if you have a concern or question.

When pairing advisors and advisees, an attempt is made to match an advisor with a student with whom they have regular contact or some shared interests. Consideration is also given to the best match between student and advisor and between family and advisor, as well as to the balance of students and families one advisor serves.

Families and students receive a feedback form or program survey a couple times each year. This periodic review is critical for continued management of the Advisor Program. A student's advisor may change from year to year or remain the same during the student's NCS tenure.

### General advisor communication timeline for families:

- Introductions: via email, phone or in-person prior to the beginning of Fall Term and/or on move-in day at NCS
- Initial check-in: typically for boarding families and within the first week of Fall Term
- Midterm progress reports (fall, spring)
- Advisor Letters: cover letters that accompany each term report

Advisors may elect to spend time with their advisory groups outside the designated Town Meetings (usually 2x/term) and can be called upon to assist with outfitting your child with winter gear, toiletries, footwear or the much-needed haircut! Advisors contact families to obtain permission for any purchases or services for your child.

Colleen Blanchard, School Counselor, oversees the Advisor Program (ext. 6509) [cblanchard@northcountryschool.org](mailto:cblanchard@northcountryschool.org)

## Counseling Services

Colleen Blanchard is the NCS school counselor. Her primary responsibilities include counseling students, coordinating counseling services with outside providers, whether home-based therapists or therapists in the Lake Placid community, teaching lessons related to students' social-emotional growth (Life Skills classes and workshops), training and educating faculty, working closely with parents and local service providers as well as consulting and collaborating with the administrative team. Colleen completed her MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from SUNY Plattsburgh in 2019 and recently was the therapist and treatment coordinator at Mountain Lake Academy.

## Medical

New York State licenses our school nurses, Shannon Portal and Jessica Jeffery. They are required by law to comply with the Scope and Standards of Professional School Nursing Practice. These standards require that all students have a current health form on file at the start of each academic year.

The health form and physical examination form (signed by a physician) should be completed and returned to the health office at least two weeks before the start of school. Please note the immunizations that are now required by New York State before a child may enter school, and make sure that your child's are up-to-date. The parent/guardian authorization must be completed for medical treatment. This provides your permission should your child need medical treatment. It also has an emergency contact's information if we cannot reach you directly.

All non-emergent appointments, such as orthodontic, dental or eye exams, must be scheduled at home prior to the opening of school or during school breaks. If your child requires emergency orthodontic, dental, or eye care you will be notified, and a local provider will evaluate your child. Please be sure to provide NCS with a copy of your child's current health insurance card (as requested on the Health Form) to allow the hospital and doctor's office to bill your insurance directly. Otherwise, you will be billed directly by the medical provider for your child's care. If you choose, you may put a credit card on file with the North Country School's business office for this purpose.

If you have any questions or for further information, please email Shannon Portal at: [sportal@northcountyschool.org](mailto:sportal@northcountyschool.org).

## Preparing Your Child for NCS

Uncertainty about the details of a new venture often adds to a child's anxiety. Make sure your child gets as much of a feeling for school as possible before arriving. Feel free to call the Admissions Office with any questions concerning the routines of school life and

encourage your child to visit our website. Make getting ready for school a joint effort. Have your child see what they already own from the clothing list and what is needed. Help your child pack. In addition, personal electronics (handheld electronic game systems, cell phones, DVD players, and PDAs) are not allowed to be kept by students and will be stored in your child's "valuables" if brought to school. Please refer to the technology section of this handbook for a more specific list of appropriate electronic devices.

Reminder: our school policy is that candy and gum are not to be brought to school.

## Packing for School/Clothing List

Please remember to label all clothing and belongings with a permanent marker or a stitched tag prior to arrival at school.

Winter clothing should come in September, as we often get snow and freezing temperatures in late October or early November.

A clothing checklist is included in the Family Portal. Below is the clothing list for your convenience. After almost 80 years of receiving children for the school year and moving them through the seasons, we are confident that this list is comprehensive. Please do not choose to omit any items on this list, as they are all needed during the school year. At the same time, please do not send more than what is listed. When you receive your first phone calls your child they will tell you what is missing or needed. It is wise to consult with houseparents whether requested items are indeed needed or allowed at school before you send additional articles.

Quantity	Item
10 pair	Pants: Jeans or work pants (no pre-torn jeans, no skin tight or low-riding styles)
10	Long Sleeve Shirts
10	Short Sleeve T-Shirts (not muscle shirts or spaghetti straps)
4 pair	Shorts (mid-thigh or longer length, no pre-torn, no short-shorts, no skin tight or low-riding styles)
2	Lightweight Sweaters or Sweatshirts (can be cotton)
14 pair	Underwear
16 pair	Heavy Cotton Socks
2 pair	Sturdy Sneakers
2	Dress-up Outfits
2 pair	Lightweight Pajamas
2 pair	Warm Pajamas
1	Warm Bathrobe (must be worn during shower time)
1	Bathing Suit



Toiletries: Shampoo, toothpaste, three tooth brushes, comb, hygiene products, skin care, lip balm, deodorant, dental floss, contact lens supplies

### Outdoor Gear and Clothing List

Included in the summer mailing is a complete outdoor clothing list. Below is that list for your convenience. We supply students with all non-personal items needed for day and overnight trips: warm sleeping bags, crampons, snowshoes, water bottles, back packs, day packs, sleeping pads, and tents. Therefore students do not need to bring any of this gear. However, sometimes students bring their own sleeping bag, and we encourage your child to bring a personal water bottle. If your child wants to bring a sleeping bag, make sure it is lightweight and compact. Down is light and compact but expensive, and it loses its insulating value when wet. If you feel you want to send a sleeping bag, then consider getting one filled with Polarguard, Hollofil or Quallofil. Be sure to get a stuff sack and mark both bag and sack with your child's name.

Quantity	Item
1	Barn Jacket (an old winter coat or lined jacket)
1 pair	High Rubber Boots (the insulated variety are particularly useful throughout the year)
1 pair	Insulated Winter Boots
1 pair	Hiking Boots
1 pair	Work Gloves (e.g.: insulated leather)
1	Winter Parka (with room for layers)
1 pair	Snow pants
1 set	Rain Gear (pants and jacket)
2	Wool or Fleece Hats
1 pair	Warm Winter Mittens or Gloves
1 pair	Kinco Gloves for Tow Rope at the Ski Hill and/or Winter Barn Chores
1	Fleece Neck Warmer
3	Long Sleeved Wool or Fleece Sweaters (NO COTTON!)
1 pair	Wind Pants
1	Fleece or Wool Long Sleeved Shirt
1 pair	Fleece Pants (non-cotton)
2 sets	Non-Cotton Long Underwear (Please read the label)
4 pair	Wool or Non-Cotton Socks for Hiking and Snow Boots (Please read the label)
1 pair	Nylon Sock Liners for Hiking
1 pair	Boot Gaiters for Hiking
1	Flashlight or Head Lamp with Extra Batteries
1	Water Bottle

### Optional Gear

1	Ski Helmet (may be rented)
1	Ski Goggles
1	Bike Helmet
1	Backpack for Books

If you cannot find what you need in your local stores, the list below may be of help.

Campmor	Phone: 888-226-7667 Online: <a href="http://www.campmor.com">www.campmor.com</a>
EMS	Phone: 888-463-6367 Online: <a href="http://www.ems.com">www.ems.com</a>
Lands' End	Phone: 800-963-4816 Online: <a href="http://www.landsend.com">www.landsend.com</a>
L.L. Bean	Phone from USA/Canada: 800-441-5713 Online: <a href="http://www.llbean.com">www.llbean.com</a> Phone from United Kingdom: 0-800-891-297 Phone from all other countries: (International Access Code) + 207-552-3028
REI	Phone: 800-426-4840 Online: <a href="http://www.rei.com">www.rei.com</a> International: 253-891-2500
Sierra Trading Post	Phone: 800-713-4534 Online: <a href="http://www.sierratradingpost.com">www.sierratradingpost.com</a>

### Academic Supplies

The school provides all books and other classroom supplies (binders, paper, pens & pencils, etc.) The school also has desktop computers, Chromebooks, and other technology needed to meet the educational needs of our students.

### Horseback Riding Gear

We provide riding helmets for all students. If students want to bring their own, they must meet ASTM F1163 standards and bear an "SEI Approved" label or else, by law, we cannot allow them to be used. Students will need boots they can ride in. It is not necessary to buy riding boots, but if they intend to use their hiking boots for riding, the boot must have a heel on it. (This prevents the entire foot from sliding through the stirrup.)

### Ski/Snowboard Equipment

All students participate in our alpine ski/snowboard program. A helmet is required for all students. The school is able to rent alpine ski or snowboard equipment (skis and poles or snowboard, boots, and helmet) for your child at a local ski shop. Since children rapidly outgrow such equipment, many parents have found renting more economical than buying. If you choose to rent, this charge will be added to your bill. If

you are considering buying ski/snowboard equipment, please keep it simple and durable. Please contact Bryan Johansmeyer at [bjohansmeyer@northcountryschool.org](mailto:bjohansmeyer@northcountryschool.org) with any questions.

### **Barn Boots and Jackets**

Students are required to have a barn jacket and barn boots for barn chores. If you choose to send a barn jacket and/or boots with your child, know that most children prefer to pull the jacket on over other warm layers of clothes, so a bit large is OK. Choose a jacket that can get dirty – really dirty – never-use-it-for-anything-else dirty. If you have them, an old pair of wind or rain pants that can be pulled on for barn chores will be helpful as well.

In fall and late spring, non-insulated rubber barn boots are acceptable for barn work. However, as soon as freezing temperatures begin (around the end of October), the rubber boots are not warm enough. This is when students begin wearing insulated winter boots. North Country School has a large supply of uninsulated barn boots that can be loaned to students during the beginning and end of the year. We highly recommend that students come to school with an insulated pair of dedicated barn boots for the year. For some students, these boots take the form of a sores type boot that can also be used for playing in the snow and winter hiking. For other students, a neoprene style muck boot is preferred.

### **Bicycles**

School-owned bicycles will be provided for supervised trips and for use around campus. New York State Law (and NCS) requires that all bike riders wear a helmet. Please ensure that your student brings a bike helmet. They are welcome to bring their own bikes as well, for the school year, but this is not a necessity.

### **Labeling and Nametags**

Books, combs, musical instruments, duffels, tennis rackets, hats, electronic devices – everything – needs to be labeled with your child's name. Sanford Sharpie markers work well on sneakers and raincoats, but nothing can beat sewn-in nametags for permanence. (iron-on labels often come off in the first wash.) Sew nametags doubled over like a tab at the back of the neck or back of the waist of clothing and at the tops of socks. We encourage you to involve your child if possible in sewing nametags; there is nothing like an investment of time to encourage responsibility for one's belongings.

### **Dress Code**

Dress Code at North Country School is representative of how we lead our daily lives. While we spend much of our time outside working at the barn, playing in the out-of-doors, and taking care of day-to-day work jobs, we are first and foremost students and teachers, and

our appearance is important.

We believe we have found a workable and appropriate dress code of "neat, clean, and durable" that can be further defined as:

- no rips or tears in any clothing, no pre-torn fashions are to be worn during the academic day
- no hats or hoods covering heads may be worn into the dining room at any time (hats may be worn while working in the kitchen and in classrooms at the teacher's discretion)
- no pajama wear may be worn to school with the exception of certain school events
- no shorts worn over long underwear or leggings may be worn during the academic day with the exception of certain school events
- closed toe shoes and socks must be worn in the Main Building during the academic day, to the barn, at out-times, and on all work jobs
- no advertising or promoting of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, profanity, or any other inappropriate message permitted on any part of clothing
- at the barn, long pants and boots are required at all times
- at the barn, students should wear snow pants, snow jackets, insulated winter boots, and at least have in their possession insulated gloves and an insulated hat during the winter.

North Country School requests that clothing be appropriate for the classroom as well as non-academic time. Students will be asked to return to their house or locate an appropriate piece of clothing in their locker if they are not in dress code or if their choice of clothing falls outside of what is deemed appropriate. Any faculty person may request that a student change their clothing and, if need be, request support from the Dean of Students or Director of School. A pattern of disregard for the NCS dress code may result in a disciplinary response.

### **Transportation to and from North Country School**

School wishes to facilitate the most efficient and practical travel to and from school for students. We chaperone trips to and from 7 East 96th Street, at the corner of Fifth Avenue in New York City—\$135. JFK Airport—\$325; Albany Airport—\$100 on designated travel days (see school calendar) during the school year. If transportation is required for your child on a day other than the designated travel days, there will be extra charges posted to your account (Albany Airport—\$300; Plattsburgh Airport—\$75; Saranac Lake Airport—\$50; Westport Train Station—\$50). In addition, there will be an extra fee to pick up students from any airports other than Albany, Plattsburgh, or Saranac Lake on designated travel days.

Faculty members serve as drivers and chaperones,

and they take this responsibility – and student's safety – seriously. If your child's plane departure or arrival from Albany Airport is scheduled before 7:00 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m., or if poor weather dictates, it may be necessary for the school to secure overnight accommodations, and you would be billed for any expenses incurred for the chaperone and student. The school will try to make these arrangements before the travel day. However, there may be times (delayed flights, poor weather) when the decision to stay the night in a hotel will need to be made at the last minute. When this is the case, the chaperone or an administrator will work to contact families.

It is highly recommended that all students traveling by air bring a valid passport.

### **Homesickness**

Every year, some students go through periods of homesickness, a few acutely. There are no predictors as to who will be affected. A nine-year-old may not be homesick at all, while a twelve-year-old who is "grown-up" in other ways may be very sad. Homesickness is not something we take lightly, as the feelings are real. We help students deal with homesickness by making sure they become involved in activities, by giving them "TLC," by listening to and acknowledging their feelings, and by assuring them that homesickness does go away. Most students recover from homesickness in a few days to a week. During that period the student is usually saddest at bedtime. It may be helpful to send along a small bonding item with your child – something that will help make their new home feel familiar. This can be a pillow and pillowcase, a comforter, a stuffed animal, a picture of the family – or all of the above.

All students love to get mail and email from home and receiving frequent communications can alleviate homesickness. It is not helpful, however, if these communications describe how terribly you miss them, how lonely the dog is without them, or the exciting things you are doing in their absence. What is helpful is your asking what your child is doing at school and responding in a positive and encouraging manner to their letters home.

We are also aware that a child's first time away at boarding school can be very difficult on parents. We know how hard it is when you get a letter or a phone call from a homesick child. Feelings of guilt can obscure why you wanted your child to come to school in the first place. Be assured that a consistent, positive response to your child during this time will be rewarded by growing confidence and independence as they make the transition to boarding life.

Let us be helpful. We have had lots of experience with homesick children and child-sick family members. Call someone at school – a houseparent, your child's

advisor, our school nurses Shannon Portal (Ext. 6508) or Jessica Jeffery (Ext. 6508), or our school counselor, Colleen Blanchard (Ext. 6509) – to discuss your child's homesickness.

### **Letters and Email**

We encourage you to maintain close contact with your child. Students enjoy mail a great deal and are excited to receive it. Nothing that your child receives in the mail means as much as a letter from home.

Email is available, too. Shortly after the start of school, your child will be provided an email address, which will be forwarded to parents and guardians. Though we provide time most afternoons from 4:30-6:00 for students to access email, your child may be busy with other activities, and responses may be delayed accordingly.

### **Phone & Skype Calls**

Students may have two calls a week with their family. Students have access to a telephone and two Skype iPads in their houses in order to make their calls. Please check in with your child's houseparents to set up a regular day and time each week to call your child. These calls are run on a schedule set during the first week of school and the schedule is usually very tight. As a general rule, students in Grades 4-6 are available to receive phone calls Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights from 7:30 p.m. until 8:15 p.m. Grade 7 students are available on the same nights until 8:45 p.m. Grade 8 students are available between 8:10 p.m. and 8:45 p.m., and Grade 9 students are available from 8:40 p.m. until 9:15 p.m.

### **Packages**

Students are always happy when there is the occasional surprise to open from home. If you are sending edible treats, which are greatly appreciated, please keep in mind our commitment to healthy foods and limited amounts of empty calories. Houses have "snacks" some evenings. If you would like to send some healthful, non-candy goodies for your child to share with the house, please contact the houseparents about the parameters for "eligible" snacks. If snacks are excessive, or beyond what is deemed "eligible," then they will be kept safe and returned when your child leaves campus to return home. If you send clothing, then remember to label them beforehand with your child's name. Please understand that the houses are packed with all the belongings of 10 students. An excessive number of packages places a burden on the student as well as the houseparents. Occasional surprises from home (a couple per term) are always welcome.

### **Money**

There is no need to send money with your child. As part of your comprehensive tuition we allocate an amount for each student for house and entertainment expenses,

such as movies and recreational outings. Our intention is to allow students to be on as equal a financial footing as possible.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are often celebrated with a cake or treat in a student's house. "Happy Birthday" is also sung in the dining room after a small group of students announce a child's birthday. During lunch at the end of every month, we celebrate all the birthdays in that month with a giant birthday cake made by the kitchen staff. Families who would like to play a part in, or provide treats for, birthday celebrations should contact houseparents to coordinate efforts.

Please feel free to send your child a present within the guidelines of the things permitted at North Country School. We do ask, however, that you not provide money to houseparents for celebrations greater than what is outlined above.

### **Food**

Our philosophy promotes the eating of nutritious food. In the dining room we serve well balanced and varied meals. The main course is accompanied by fresh vegetables and salad – often from our garden – and homemade bread. Children get plenty to eat although they may have a period of adjustment as they get used to new food. Candy, soda, gum, and junk food are not a part of our diet, except on very rare occasions. Items of this sort purchased on a weekend with families must be consumed before the child returns to school. In case you fear that your child's sweet tooth will be neglected, rest assured that we offer ice cream cones on Saturday night and home-baked cookies and other treats throughout the week.

### **Visiting Times and Procedures**

You are welcome to visit at almost any time of the year, but please call ahead. Otherwise, you might arrive only to discover that your child is away on a field trip or camping at the top of a mountain. We also ask that you allow your student to properly settle in to school and house routines at the beginning of each school term. No visits are permitted during the first weekend of the term or during the last weekend of the term. Too many visits in a term may also be disruptive to the students and the program. We ask that you limit your visits to a maximum of two per term.

When you wish to make a visit, we appreciate having at least one week's notice. This will help to ensure that there are no conflicting events scheduled for your child on the day or weekend of your visit. There are numerous overnight accommodations in Lake Placid, and we are happy to help you find them.

### **Weekday Visits**

Our school policy is that all students remain on campus overnight from Sunday through Thursday, including the last week of school before Graduation. Therefore, please take your child for an overnight in town only if it is for Friday and/or Saturday evening. Any exceptions should be coordinated with the Dean of Students, Bryan Johansmeyer. Any exceptions should be coordinated with the Dean of Students, Bryan Johansmeyer.

### **Weekend Stays in Town**

If you visit and then take your child to town on a weekend, then it is important that you follow the following procedure:

1. Call Sheila Tavares to plan your visit at least one week ahead of time. She will notify your child's houseparents, teachers, the nurse, and weekend staff.
2. Dean of Students, Bryan Johansmeyer, will sign out a student during the week. On weekends, the AOD or the Hot-D will sign a student out.
3. Your child must secure a "job sub" to cover any chore responsibilities. It is not difficult to do this, and your child will have it done before your visit.
4. When you arrive on campus, please check in with Sheila or an administrator so we know you have arrived. Also, if needed, please see Shannon Portal or Jess Jeffery, our school nurses.

### **Extending Invitations to other Boarding Students**

As a boarding student, your child may invite a friend to town for daytime activities on Saturday or Sunday. A guest student may have one meal away with a host family – lunch or dinner on Saturday, or, lunch only on Sunday. On Saturday the guest must be back no later than 8 p.m.; on Sunday, no later than 5:45 p.m. Visits may happen if:

1. The guest's family has signed a permission form allowing for such visits
2. Dean of Students, Bryan Johansmeyer, reviews the guest's standing in the community
3. The guest student secures a "job sub" to cover any chore responsibilities

When another NCS student is under your care, it is assumed that the children are under direct parental/guardian supervision at all times. If at some point during the visit a situation arises during which your ability to supervise your child's friend is compromised, please contact the school to make arrangements to return the guest. Students invited to town as guests of visiting families are not permitted to sleep away from school. It

is important that an invitation to take another student off campus is extended by the Tuesday prior to the off campus visit so that the visit can be accounted for in our weekend planning.

### **Your Child Receives an Invitation to Leave Campus with an NCS Friend**

If you wish to give permission for your child to go off campus with another student's family, then make sure you have signed the permission form in the Family Portal.

In addition, if an invitation is extended to your child, then we will make every prudent effort to contact you prior to any specific permission being granted by North Country School. If you have any questions in this regard, please contact Sheila Tavares.

### **Federal Holidays**

Because we are a boarding school, our students have classes on federal holidays that fall on a weekday (typically Monday). Although these weekends are often convenient for family visits, we ask that your plans for visiting with your child not extend beyond the Sunday, 5:45 p.m. return time.

### **Dog Policy for Visitors**

All visitors are expected to have their dog on-leash or in their cars at all times while on campus.

### **Family Weekend**

Family Weekend is held the weekend before Thanksgiving. We ask that all families make an effort to join us. The weekend provides the opportunity for parent/teacher conferences as well as the chance to sit in for core academic classes, observe student artwork, and experience a theater performance. Your child will have much to show you. There is also a Thanksgiving dinner that consists almost entirely of food that students have helped cultivate and harvest. No other time of the year is as emblematic of the NCS community as Thanksgiving. We invite you to bring your family, including your child's siblings and grandparents. You will receive from Sheila Tavares a guest list to fill out. Given restrictions on our dining room's capacity, creating a seating chart requires coordination, so please contact Sheila early on if you'd like to bring a "crowd."

### **Graduation**

We consider it important that all families attend this ceremony each year that their child attends NCS. Graduation is a significant time in our school experience.

End of year student performances (equestrian, musical, theatrical) and our graduation ceremony provide a special opportunity to recognize our students for their accomplishments and announce their promotion to the next level of study. Each member of the graduating

class receives their senior book, a long-standing tradition at NCS. These festivities and traditions are a powerful and affirming conclusion to the year.

### **Business Office**

Business Manager, Fritz Sabbow, is available to discuss your account with you. Our fees are "comprehensive," and you will not receive extra bills for art supplies, science materials, laundry, music lessons, riding lessons, field trips, or other components of the daily program.

However, there are some specific charges over and above tuition for which you might be billed, including:

1. Transportation to and from school including: buses to and from airports, train stations and to/from New York City, and taxis to airports and train stations. Fees for transportation can be confirmed with Sheila in the Business Office if you have questions.
2. Necessary clothing purchases requested by parents/guardians
3. ESL support and instruction
4. Learning Support Program
5. Items purchased at the school store
6. Ski or Snowboard Rentals
7. Students will receive a fee for TOEFL and SSAT testing as well as international insurance
8. Purposeful damage, above and beyond "normal wear and tear" on the facility or equipment
9. Day or 5-day boarding students' overnight stays on campus
10. Spending money (\$20 per night) for in-town Friday night activity (For Grade 9 students).

Please note: As a general rule, day students are not permitted to stay overnight. However, sometimes extraordinary situations arise when parents/guardians ask permission for their child to sleep over. A fee of \$75/night will be charged if your child stays overnight. If it is determined that the request for staying overnight becomes frequent, further discussion on a long term fee may be addressed with parents/guardians. A child staying overnight for a weekend will be assessed a fee of \$225. Day families are not charged extra fees for "required" overnight trips such as Grade Trips.



## SERVICES

### Laundry & Housekeeping

Our housekeeping staff works in the school's laundry, washing and sorting students' laundry. Please remember to sew in name tags. Students send in their dirty laundry weekly and receive clean clothes back the following week. Therefore, each child needs enough clothes to last a two-week cycle.

Our housekeeping staff also cleans the student houses, including the common living areas and students' bedrooms.

### Health Office

The nurse works in conjunction with houseparents and staff to provide the best quality care to NCS students. The Health Office has regular sick call times (before breakfast, during recess, after lunch, and at the end of the academic day) for students who need assessment or wish to speak with the nurse. If a student is ill, they will be kept in the Health Office for observation and be cared for as required.

In case of an emergency or a need for a medical evaluation, the nurse or other NCS staff will notify a parent or legal guardian. If you cannot be reached then the alternate emergency contact identified on the Authorization to Treat Form will be notified.

We request that all non-emergent appointments, such as orthodontic, dental, or eye exams, be scheduled at home prior to the opening of school or on school breaks. If a student requires emergency orthodontic, dental, or eye care, the student will be taken to a local provider. The parent or legal guardian must assume all related costs and will be billed directly by the care provider.

### Attendance at Religious Services

Although we cannot assure weekly trips to church or synagogue, our weekend program sometimes includes a church trip that rotates through various faiths. Students may attend if it is the religious practice pursued at home and if this is the desire of both the family and the child. Please let your child's advisor or houseparent know if you would like your child to attend. Please do not ask us to initiate new or contrary practices, since this is a parental prerogative beyond the range of our endeavor. It is also possible to arrange for a student to prepare for their bar or bat mitzvah or confirmation. Please speak to your child's advisor or houseparent if you wish to make such arrangements.

## DAY FAMILIES

Day students enrich the school in all areas. They are able to make these contributions inside and outside

the classroom because they are welcomed into every aspect of school life.

### The School Day

The school day begins with the morning job and ends after out-time or barn chores, except on Wednesday. Wednesday is homenight and may have a different pick up time (see that section for details).

### Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Your child's drop-off and pick-up will always be at the turn circle (called the COD) near the Main Building and Woods House. Times will depend on your child's chore. Barn and compost jobs start at 7:15 a.m. Compost might be scheduled as a morning or afternoon job, depending on the season. Barn chores meet again at 4:45 p.m. and are usually completed by 5:15 p.m. All other work jobs start at 7:30 a.m.

**Morning:** If your child has barn chores or compost, drop-off time at the Main Building is at 7:00 a.m. If your child has a building job chore, drop-off time at the Main Building is at 7:25 a.m. Some day families choose to drop their children at the barn gate by 7:15 a.m. and then drive to the Main Building to unload their children's books and gear in their ramp lockers.

All students have an adult job supervisor; it is expected that day students will do their chores with the assistance and guidance of the NCS adult supervising that chore.

**Afternoon:** Pick-up time at the Main Building (COD) is at 4:30 p.m. unless your child has barn chores or compost, then pick-up at the Main Building is at approximately 5:15 p.m.

### Picking Up Other Students While On Campus:

Although tempting and generous, we ask that day families do not give rides to students traveling to and from the barn, as it creates a dangerous situation when a child may step out to flag down a car. Also, it can create inequity and hard feelings when some children regularly receive rides while others do not (although we know if you had a car big enough, you'd give a ride to all the kids). In the same vein, it can create hard feelings when you wait for your child to finish barn chores or to get dressed for chores with the purpose of providing a ride for your child to or from the barn. Please be aware that a student's parent/guardian needs to give explicit permission every time their child rides in a car outside of regular school program events like out-time or weekend trips.

### Attendance

Please remember that your child's school day begins with morning chores and ends after out-time or barn chores (except on Wednesdays). Please email the Dean of Students, Bryan Johansmeyer, [bjohansmeyer@](mailto:bjohansmeyer@)



northcountryschool and our school nurses, Shannon and Jess at nurse@northcountryschool.org any time your child will be absent, late, or leave early, and note the reason why (medical, sports, personal/family, etc.) so we can document it properly. Attendance is taken every day at breakfast. If you know your child will be absent, please email attendance@northcountryschool.org. If the absence is unexpected, a call that morning is needed to Sheila Tavares in the main office 518-523-9329 Ext. 1000, where she processes the calls and communicates with staff.

### **Health Issues**

Please keep your child home if they have a fever or any signs of being contagious to others. Please make sure your child is fever-free for 24 hours before a return to school. If your child presents to the health office with illness you will be notified to come and pick up your child.

### **Holidays**

Because we are a boarding school, we have classes when most other schools have holidays (Columbus Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, etc.). It is expected that your child will be in school on the days NCS is in session.

### **Late Pick Up**

You can pick up your child at 4:30 p.m. (or 5:15 p.m. if on barn chores or compost) each day at the COD. If you arrive after 4:45 p.m., your child will either be at their house, where a houseparent provides supervision, or in the Main Building, close to the Main Office. Please know that we cannot offer extended supervision on a regular basis, as our houseparents are charged with supervising our boarding students from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

### **Snow Days/Bad Weather**

Given that we are a boarding school, we do not have official snow days. We will always honor the discretion of the parent or guardian when it comes to safe travel. If you decide that driving your child to school is unsafe, simply give us a call so we know your decision. The same holds true for an early pick-up if the weather is threatening to make travel unsafe. Also, know that Day Students may stay overnight with us if the weather change is sudden and travel is not safe.

### **Contacting Your Child**

#### **Weekdays**

Between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.: call the main school number at 518-523-9329.

Between 4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.: call Bryan Johansmeyer (Ext. 6525). If no one answers, please leave a message. Know that we will check those extensions for messages.

After 4:30 p.m.: you may additionally call your child's

house or the Administrator on Duty (AOD) phone: 518-339-5018

### **Weekends**

- First call the Hot-D phone: 518-339-4368
- If no answer,
- Then call the AOD phone: 518-339-5018

### **Morning Jobs**

Morning jobs change every two weeks, usually on Monday afternoons, while lists are often posted on Fridays so your child can learn of their new job before the weekend. You will also receive an email letting you know your child's new chore.

**Barn Chores:** Morning barn chores begin at 7:15 a.m. (at the barn and properly dressed). Boarding students go to the Main Building at 7:00 a.m. to get ready for barn chores; therefore, a 7:00a.m. drop-off at the Main Building allows your child to drop off backpacks and belongings and then join the other children for the walk to the barn. (In the afternoon barn chores end at about 5:00 p.m. Pick-up should be at the Main Building turn circle (COD) after your child has left barn clothes in their ramp locker for the next day.) When a student is assigned to barn chores, it is for both the A.M. and P.M. sessions.

**Compost:** Compost also begins at 4:45 p.m. and has no morning component.

**Building Jobs (all other morning-only jobs):** All other morning jobs begin at 7:30 a.m. These include classrooms, recycling, Quonset, ramp, KAM (morning kitchen), and table setting. Drop-off at the COD is at 7:25 a.m.

**Getting a Job Sub:** Day students have an assigned job sub for weekends. If you know your child is going to be absent during the week, please help us to remind them to get a substitute only if on barn chores, ramp, compost, or in the kitchen. The other jobs can absorb the absence more easily, but barn, kitchen, ramp, and compost really feel the absence so a substitute is essential. Students will be taught how to get a substitute and ultimately we teach them that it is part of their job responsibility, but a reminder is always helpful.

### **Sleep-Ins**

On Thursdays, we "sleep in" and begin morning jobs 30 minutes later.

### **Clothing and Equipment**

The information in the previous sections of the handbook – "Packing for School/Clothing List (page 12) and "Outdoor Gear and Clothing List (page 13) – hold true for Day Students as well. Having the appropriate outdoor clothing available at school every day is essential. Children should come to school prepared to

be outdoors every day of the week. It is a good idea to send your child with clothing appropriate for the weather, as well as an extra set in case an outing results in the need for a clean item of clothing. Also, selecting shoes that can be left at school eliminates forgotten footwear when arriving in barn or snow boots. The school can issue barn boots for your child. However, if you have this item at home, feel free to provide them yourself. If you choose to provide the boots, it is important that they be dedicated for barn-use only and can stay at school. Your child will also have need of a dedicated barn jacket (roomy fit for wearing with warmer layers in winter).

### **School Supplies**

North Country School provides all books and school supplies. Nevertheless, we know that for some students, shopping for school supplies is part of the back-to-school ritual. Since many teachers have specific preferences for organizing materials, please limit initial purchases to pencils, pens, pencil case, erasers and sticky notes. We highly recommend a sturdy book bag or backpack.

### **Personal Electronics**

Please refer to the "Computers and Electronics" section for more information on electronics, specifically which items are permitted and which are not.

### **Cameras**

Cameras are welcome only during special occasions such as all-school events, homenight celebrations and class trips or other special events, or when specifically requested by a teacher or houseparent. Students will be informed when these events are happening and that they are allowed to have cameras. Phones, iPads, and other devices may not be used as a digital camera replacement.

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones are not allowed at any time. If media players, cameras, or cell phones are brought to school when not allowed, we will return the device to parents or guardians and ask that it not return to campus for the remainder of the term.

### **Academic Electronics**

The school has ample computers and other technology needed to meet the educational needs of our students. Students will not need nor be permitted to use personal electronic devices for academic purposes. This includes, but is not limited to: laptops, video/voice recorders, cameras, and media players.

Most Day students, especially in Grades 7-9, need to work on computer-based assignments at home and at school.

Every student has a school Gmail account, Google

Drive, and many classes are online through Google Classroom. Internet access while away from school is essential to manage schoolwork. If you have any questions about your home computer's compatibility with our computers, please contact Devon Jacobs (Ext. 5406)

### **Homework**

Expect that your child will have homework during the week. (On Wednesdays, homework is not assigned.) The amount of homework will vary, but generally the breakdown is as follows:

Grades 4-6: 30 minutes

Grade 7: Reading 30 minutes

Grade 8: 60-75 minutes

Grade 9: 75-90 minutes

Grades 4-7 finish homework in a Study Hall during the academic day on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. They do not usually bring homework home; however, they do have 30 minutes of reading every night. Grades 4-7 day students will need to make time for completing homework on weekends if it is assigned.

For day students in Grades 8 and 9, as coursework and projects cycle through the year, there may be periods of intense homework then periods of light homework. Of course, we want to know if your child is either struggling with homework or rarely has any. Emails, or calls to the teacher, or to your child's advisor are great first steps to finding answers to your homework questions.

### **Res Life Program: Houses, Homenights, Special Events and Weekends**

#### **Houses:**

Day students are assigned to a specific house in order to foster a connection with their peers through the residential program. Accordingly, day students are welcomed and encouraged to participate in house activities. In fact, we ask that your child spend at least one homenight per term with their house. If your child chooses to participate, please let the houseparents know a day in advance so that the kitchen can provide the correct portions.

**Homenights:** Homenight is optional for Day students. They can depart campus at 3:20 p.m. on Wednesdays if they choose not to stay through the evening's activities. On regular homenight evenings, beginning at 3:20 p.m., all students go to their houses. There is generally a bit of a lull in the action for day students for an hour or so as boarding students clean their rooms and sort laundry. Depending on the house and interest level of individual day students, your child may join their boarding friends to help them with their chores, hang

out in a different area of the house or join an alternative activity. When the boarding students have finished their chores, preparation for the evening meal, dinner and an activity usually wrap up the evening. If they do stay for homenight, the pickup time is between 7:30 and 8:15 p.m. at the COD. The exact time of pickup should be worked out with houseparents.

Day families also have the option of hosting a homenight with your child's house. These events require some communication and coordination with houseparents, but are often easy ways for day families to connect with their child's housemates and house team. We welcome and appreciate these activities.

**Special Events:** Special events are sometimes celebrated in place of regular homenights. Examples of special events include Halloween, Valentine's Day, Box Suppers, Earth Day events, and fall harvest events. Day families receive emails about these special events and reminders about pick-up times or other details. When and if your child's house is heading in to Lake Placid or another local community for a movie, bowling or dinner at a restaurant, you'll get details directly from houseparents.

**Weekend Program:** North Country School offers elective program opportunities every weekend. Saturdays are generally designated as "trip days" for a variety of activities, either on or off campus. When space is limited, priority is given to boarding students since NCS is their "home away from home" while they are in residence. Day students are welcome to participate, depending upon available staffing. Sunday programming is provided primarily for boarding students, but occasionally day students are invited to participate. Students who participate in weekend programming must perform their job if it meets on the weekend, and they must inform the "built-in sub" and workjob coordinator of this fact. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Dean of Students, Bryan Johansmeyer (Ext. 6525).

On Saturdays, the timing of drop-off for your child is 45 minutes later than during weekdays. Your child should inform you when a trip departs earlier. Pick up times may vary. Please note that all day students are expected to complete any afternoon workjob commitments prior to leaving campus. When day students leave campus, they should inform a faculty member to let them know of their departure. North Country School encourages parents/guardians to pick up their children from Saturday activities at the following times:

- 4:30-6:00 p.m. if not on barn chores
- 5:15 p.m. for students with barn or compost chores
- 6:45 p.m. after dinner
- 8:15 p.m. after evening activity

### **Day Students staying overnight**

Day students are not permitted to stay overnight on campus; however, sometimes an extraordinary situation arises and parents/guardians ask permission for their child to sleep over. A fee of \$75/night will be charged if your child stays overnight per family request. There is no charge for an overnight if the stay is program-related. A child staying overnight for a weekend will be assessed a fee of \$225.

### **Inviting Boarding Students to Your Home During the Weekend**

A boarding student may leave campus with a day student for the day or an overnight on the weekend only if the following conditions have been met:

1. Both students are in good standing (both students have not received an N or U in their Friday Feedback for the week and have otherwise maintained status as positive citizens during the academic and non-academic day for the week).
2. The visiting student's parents/guardians have signed the permission form for such visits.
3. You, the parent or guardian, have informed and received approval from Sheila Tavares or Bryan Johansmeyer, the Dean of Students.
4. The boarding student has secured a job sub, if necessary.

### **Day Visits**

Sample procedure for day visit (Saturday)

- Pick-up boarder after breakfast on a Saturday at 8:45 a.m. in the dining room
- Alert Hot-D of departure with student and confirm drop-off plan
- Drop-off boarder to Main Building (West End hallway) between 4:30 - 5:45 p.m.
- Alert Hot-D of drop-off and communicate any information about the visit

Sample procedure for day visit (Sunday)

- Pick-up boarder by noon if having lunch off-campus
- Alert Hot-D of departure with student and confirm drop-off plan
- Drop-off boarder to Main Building (West End hallway) between 4:30 - 5:45 p.m.
- Alert Hot-D of drop-off and communicate any information about the visit

### **Overnight Visits**

The general guideline is for 24 hours and is usually from Friday evening at regular pickup time for your child until Saturday evening just before dinner (5:30). Sometimes an overnight will be from Saturday after breakfast (before trips go out around 8:45) until Sunday

morning late breakfast (usually 8:45). Extensions can be made for a post-lunch return, if approved by the Dean of Students.

#### **Sample procedure for an overnight visit:**

##### **Friday night**

- Pick up in COD at 4:30 p.m. or after barn chores, if applicable
- Confirm pick-up and relay drop-off plans to Administrator on Duty or Hot-D
- Return boarder to campus between 4:30 - 5:45 p.m. to Main Building (West End hallway), or by 8:00 p.m. in the dining room
- Check-in with Hot-D

##### **Saturday night**

- Follow sample day visit pick-up schedule
- Return boarder to campus by 8:45 a.m. (dining room), noon (dining room), or between 4:30 - 5:45 p.m. Main Building (West End hallway)
- Check-in with Hot-D

#### **The following schedule of visits applies:**

- Fall term through Columbus Day: No visits
- Fall term after Columbus Day: One day visit or one overnight
- Winter term: One day and one overnight visit
- Spring term: Two day visits OR one day visit and one overnight

A boarding student may visit the same host family only once per term.

When an NCS student is under your care, it is assumed that your child and the guest student are under direct parental/guardian supervision at all times. The following should never happen: leaving them alone in the house, even for a couple of hours; allowing a babysitter, neighbor, or non-guardian sibling to assume supervision. Only the parents and guardians of the host NCS students can provide transportation. The most successful day-boarder visits include a planned activity like bowling, a concert, movie or theater production. If, at some point, a situation arises that compromises your ability to have a guest, please contact the school to make arrangements to return the child. Know that we can reschedule the visit for another time.

Please see the "Visiting Times and Procedures" section in this handbook (page 16) for more specific information about making arrangements.

#### **Whiteface Afternoons**

During the Winter Term, classes are suspended one afternoon a week (typically Tuesdays) and a large portion of the school travels to Whiteface to ski or snowboard. The school provides transportation to and from the mountain. However, day families can

elect to pick up their children at Whiteface at 3:30 p.m. in the Main Lodge or make other arrangements for transportation to and from Whiteface by communicating directly with the ski/ snowboard program coordinator, Bryan Johansmeyer

#### **Chaperones**

Because we are primarily a boarding school, we have no formal system in place for parents/guardians to chaperone field trips or outings. All of our off-campus trips are chaperoned by NCS faculty and staff. There are other creative ways to volunteer at NCS, so please talk with our Day families liaison or your child's advisor about your ideas or connect with members of the Advancement Team about opportunities.

There may be times when, because of tardiness to work jobs that week, Day students may be asked to assist with 4:00 p.m. homenight barn chores.

## Sexual Misconduct Policy and Complaint Procedure

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), NCS does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in its educational programs or activities. Title IX requires that NCS take specific steps to stop sex and gender-based misconduct, remedy its effects, and prevent its recurrence. Title IX states that:

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic, extracurricular, research, occupational training, or other education program or activity operated by a recipient, which receives Federal financial assistance.

NCS has enacted this Sexual Misconduct Policy and Student Complaint Procedure ("Policy") to reflect and maintain its institutional values and community expectations, to provide fair and equitable procedures for determining when sex-based discrimination or harassment has occurred, and to provide recourse for individuals who are victims of sex-based discrimination or harassment. Inquiries concerning the School's application of Title IX may be referred to the School's Title IX Coordinator.

**Parents/Guardians are encouraged to review this policy with their children to ensure that they understand what behaviors are prohibited and how to make a report of sexual misconduct.**

**Scope of this Policy:** This Policy applies to all forms of sex- or gender-based harassment, discrimination, or violence (together, "Prohibited Conduct") that may deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from NCS' educational programs or activities. Prohibited Conduct can include, but is not limited to sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual exploitation, as well as harassment based on gender identity, gender expression, and nonconformity with gender stereotypes. This Policy also prohibits retaliation against a person for reporting Prohibited Conduct under this Policy or for participating in an investigation of an alleged violation of this Policy.

This Policy applies to any Prohibited Conduct by students, employees, faculty, parents/guardians, and third parties, including visitors/guests, volunteers, vendors, and contractors. NCS may be limited in what actions it may take when investigating or responding to a report if an accused individual is not affiliated with the School or is no longer affiliated with the School at the time the report is made. In such cas-

es, NCS will still, to the best of its ability, conduct an investigation, take steps to prevent the recurrence of misconduct to the extent it is able, and remedy the effects, if appropriate.

This Policy covers conduct which occurs both on and off of School grounds. In addition to the School, this includes locations such as field trips, athletic activities, and events for School clubs. Even misconduct that occurs outside of School, during "personal time," could have continuing effects in the School, and therefore is covered by this Policy.

**Title IX Coordinator:** NCS has designated Fritz Sabbow as its Title IX Coordinator. As the Title IX Coordinator, Fritz Sabbow is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with Title IX.
- Overseeing anti-discrimination and harassment training and education.
- Overseeing and coordinating the response, investigation, and resolution of reports made under this Policy.
- Overseeing certain aspects of discipline, including referring complaints to other personnel in the School as appropriate.

Upon receiving reports of Prohibited Conduct covered by this Policy, the Title IX Coordinator will ensure appropriate action to eliminate the conduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. Fritz Sabbow can be contacted by telephone, email, or in person during regular office hours:

**Fritz Sabbow, Business Manager**  
fsabbow@northcountryschool.org  
(518) 523-9329 ext. 6506

Any inquiries concerning the School's application of Title IX and its implementing regulations may be referred to the Coordinator and/or to the Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights ("OCR"):

**U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights**  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-1475  
Telephone: (202) 453-6020  
Facsimile: (202) 453-6021

### Definitions:

**Prohibited Conduct:** All forms of sex- or gender-based harassment, discrimination, or violence that may deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from NCS' educational programs



or activities. Prohibited Conduct can include, but is not limited to sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual exploitation, as well as harassment based on gender identity, gender expression, and nonconformity with gender stereotypes.

**Responsible Employee:** Any employee who: has the authority to take action to redress sexual harassment/misconduct; who has been given the duty of reporting incidents of sexual harassment/misconduct or any other misconduct by students to the Coordinator or other appropriate designee; or who a student reasonably believes has this authority or duty.

**Sex-Based Discrimination:** Discrimination occurs when one experiences negative or adverse conduct based on characteristics protected in this Policy and/or applicable local and federal laws, where such conduct has the effect of denying or limiting one's ability to benefit from and fully participate in educational programs or activities or employment opportunities. Sex-Based Discrimination refers to a specific type of discrimination, which includes the disparate treatment of a person or group because of that person's or group's sex, sexual orientation, actual or perceived gender, gender identity, or gender expression. Sex-Based Discrimination includes conduct such as assigning students materially different assignments based on their actual or perceived sex or gender. It does not include conduct such as requiring students to use different bathrooms, or using sex or gender as a means to quickly divide the class in half for non-material educational purposes (such as having students complete the same activity by in teams of "boys vs. girls").

**Harassment:** Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to: unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or nonverbal conduct of a sexual nature, including rape, sexual assault, and sexual exploitation. Sexual harassment specifically includes conduct of a sexual nature which is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's success in school. For example, if one student tells another that he will not do his work for the group project unless she kisses him, that is sexual harassment. In addition, depending on the facts, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking may also be forms of sexual harassment.

**Unwelcome Conduct:** Conduct is considered "unwelcome" if the individual did not request or invite it and considered the conduct to be undesirable or offensive. Unwelcome conduct may take various forms,

including, name-calling, graphic or written statements (including the use of cell phones or the Internet), or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Unwelcome conduct does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Unwelcome conduct can involve persons of the same or opposite sex. Participation in the conduct or the failure to complain does not always mean that the conduct was welcome. The fact that a student may have welcomed some conduct does not necessarily mean that a student welcomed other conduct. Also, the fact that a student requested or invited conduct on one occasion does not mean that the conduct is welcome on a subsequent occasion.

**Hostile Environment:** A hostile environment exists when sex-based harassment is sufficiently serious to deny or limit the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's programs or activities. The more severe the sex-based harassment, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to find a hostile environment. Indeed, a single instance of sexual assault may be sufficient to create a hostile environment. Likewise, a series of incidents may be sufficient even if the sex-based harassment is not particularly severe.

**Consent:** Consent must be informed, voluntary, and mutual, and can be withdrawn at any time. There is no consent when there is force, expressed or implied, or when coercion, intimidation, threats, or duress is used. Whether a person has taken advantage of a position of influence over another person may be a factor in determining consent. Silence or absence of resistance does not imply consent. Past consent to sexual activity with another person does not imply ongoing future consent with that person or consent to that same sexual activity with another person. Note that because of the age of the students at NCS and the position of authority that employees hold over students, NCS will never consider a student to have consented to sexual contact with any employee.

**Non-Consensual Sexual Activity:** Includes any sexual contact, however slight, with an object or bodily part, by a person upon another that is without consent.

**Incapacitation:** Includes, but is not limited to, lack of consciousness, being asleep, being involuntarily restrained, or otherwise being unable to consent. Indicators of incapacitation include slurred speech, bloodshot or unfocused eyes, unsteady gait (needing assistance walking or standing), vomiting, concern



expressed by others about the individual, expressed memory loss, or disorientation.

**Sexual Assault:** Sexual assault is actual or attempted sexual contact with another person without that person's consent. Sexual assault includes, but is not limited to: intentional touching of another person's intimate parts without that person's consent; or other intentional sexual contact with another person without that person's consent; or coercing, forcing, or attempting to coerce or force a person to touch another person's intimate parts without that person's consent.

**Sexual Contact:** The intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person with an intent to abuse, humiliate, harass, degrade, or arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person.

**Sexual Exploitation:** Non-consensual sexual abuse or exploitation of another, when such behavior does not otherwise constitute another specifically defined behavior. Examples of sexual exploitation include, but are not limited to, non-consensual use of electronics to capture, reproduce, or share images of a sexual nature without consent of parties involved, public indecency, or exposing genitals to others without consent, or engaging in 'peeping' (observing another when privacy would be reasonably expected) without consent.

**Reporting Prohibited Conduct:** NCS strongly encourages all individuals to seek assistance from a medical provider and/or law enforcement immediately after an incident involving violence, including sexual assault. This is the best option to ensure preservation of evidence and to begin a timely investigative and remedial response.

NCS also encourages all individuals to make a report of Prohibited Conduct to both NCS and to local law enforcement, although neither is required. These reporting options are not mutually exclusive. Both internal and external reports may be made simultaneously. The procedures under this Policy may run concurrently with any criminal justice or child protection investigation, and will only be subject to temporary delays at the specific request of law enforcement. Because the standards for finding a violation of a criminal law are different from the standards articulated in this Policy, criminal investigations or reports or determinations made by child protection officials are not determinative of whether a violation of this policy has occurred.

**Filing a Report with NCS:** Any individual who wishes to report Prohibited Conduct is encouraged to report directly to the Title IX Coordinator or any other Responsible Employee. Reports may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. If a complaint implicates the Title IX Coordinator, or if a Complainant is otherwise uncomfortable bringing their concerns to another Responsible Employee, they may bring their complaint to the Executive Director. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Executive Director may designate another appropriate individual to conduct and/or coordinate a response.

All employees of the School are expected to immediately report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Executive Director, who assists in coordinating the appropriate response and fulfilling employees' mandatory reporting obligations. Thus, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when an individual makes a report to a School employee, including school counselors and the school nurse.

**Requests for Confidentiality and/or Anonymity:** Individuals making reports under this policy may request that the Coordinator not reveal their identity to the individual they are accusing of misconduct. If an individual requests this type of confidentiality, the Coordinator will weigh the request against the School's obligation to provide a safe, non-discriminatory environment for all members of its community. The Coordinator will try to honor these requests, but it is not always possible to do so. Regardless of whether an individual requests confidentiality, the School will make every effort to prevent disclosure of the names of all the parties involved – the reporting individual, the Complainant, the witnesses, and the Respondent – except to the extent necessary to carry out an investigation.

Individuals who wish to remain anonymous can leave an anonymous report with the Title IX Coordinator by providing a written summary of the incident, and leaving such written summary in the Coordinator's mailbox. Individuals leaving an anonymous report should be aware that failure to disclose identifying information about the identities of the parties involved or the facts and circumstances regarding the Prohibited Conduct (including the names of any witnesses) severely limits the School's ability to respond and remedy the effects of the misconduct. Anonymous reports that provide enough information to constitute suspected ongoing abuse of a minor will still be reported to child protective services and/or local law enforcement.

## Complaint Resolution Process

**Initial Meeting:** After a report of Prohibited Conduct is made, the Title IX Coordinator will hold a meeting with the individual who filed the complaint (the "Reporting Individual") as soon as possible upon receipt of the report. If the Reporting Individual is not the victim/target of the Prohibited Conduct (the "Complainant") and is only making a report, then the Coordinator will meet with both the Reporting Individual and the Complainant. At that meeting(s) the Coordinator will do the following:

- Ask additional questions to clarify facts/allegations reported by the Reporting Individual/Complainant
- Assess the severity of the situation
- Explain the School's resolution procedures and determine if and how the Complainant would like to proceed with the complaint.

The Coordinator will seek permission from the Complainant to initiate a formal report. Permission for a formal report may be given initially, but can be withdrawn at any time. If a Complainant declines to make a formal report, requests that the report remain confidential, and/or later withdraws permission for the formal report, the Coordinator will weigh the request against the School's obligation to provide a safe, non-discriminatory environment for all members of its community.

**Formal Complaint:** If the Complainant chooses to make a formal report and proceed with NCS' resolution procedures, the Coordinator will make an initial determination as to whether the facts, if as alleged are true, would violate this Title IX policy. If the Complaint does not implicate Title IX, the Coordinator will refer the Complaint to the appropriate person to resolve the Complaint.

Assuming that the facts, if true as alleged, would constitute a violation of this policy, the Coordinator will provide written notice of the Complaint to the individual(s) alleged to have committed the Prohibited Conduct (the "Respondent(s)"). The notice shall contain the date(s) the alleged Prohibited Conduct occurred and a brief description of the Prohibited Conduct, as well as a copy of this Policy. The Coordinator may also notify any students' parents/guardians, if appropriate.

Until the Complaint is resolved, the School may make available reasonable interim measures to prevent harassment and discrimination and to otherwise ensure a prompt and equitable resolution of a Complaint.

These measures may include taking steps to avoid further contact between the Complainant and the Respondent, such as a No-Contact Order.

**Informal Mediation:** Many concerns can be addressed quickly and appropriately by communicating directly with someone. A Complainant is never required to discuss misconduct with an alleged harasser alone. For these reasons, and because the School recognizes that a wide spectrum of behaviors can constitute violations of this Policy or other School policies, the School offers informal resolution (mediation) in appropriate circumstances.

Mediation is the preferred method of resolving many concerns between students. However, it is not appropriate in all situations. The Coordinator will make the determination regarding whether mediation is appropriate. All parties must agree to participate in mediation, otherwise the Coordinator will conduct an investigation.

The nature of mediation is flexible, but in general, the Complainant and the Respondent and, if appropriate as determined by the Coordinator, their parents/guardians, meet together with the Coordinator or other School officials to discuss the incident(s) that led to the Complaint and potential resolutions. The goal of mediation is for the Parties to agree on a solution or resolution together, and is not to determine fault. Such resolutions may include a no-contact agreement, a permanent change in class, activity, or transportation schedules, a verbal or written apology, or other alternate resolutions. Any agreements reached in mediation will be reduced to writing and, if age-appropriate, signed by both parties.

If the Parties cannot resolve a concern during mediation, if any party refuses to mediate, or if mediation is not appropriate for the Complaint, the Coordinator will initiate an investigation. Any party or, if applicable, a party's parent or guardian, can also decide to end mediation and proceed an investigation at any time.

**Formal Investigation:** If mediation is inappropriate, does not succeed, or is ended by either the Coordinator, a party, or a parent, then the complaint will be investigated formally.

The Coordinator may choose to investigate the complaint themselves, appoint another appropriate investigator from within the School, or retain experienced external investigators. When necessary, the

Coordinator will work with other individuals in the School to avoid the need for multiple investigations of the same incident.

Any investigation should include interviewing the Complainant and Respondent, if possible. It may also include interviewing other relevant witnesses or witnesses identified or requested by the Reporting Individual, Complainant and Respondent. The investigator may collect written or other evidence, including statements from the parties or witnesses. All parties will have an equal opportunity to offer witnesses and other evidence. The investigator will maintain notes of each interview and a file of any evidence collected during the investigation.

**At the Conclusion of the Investigation:** After completing the investigation, the investigator will determine (1) whether or not the conduct occurred; (2) whether the conduct constitutes a violation of Title IX, of this Policy, or of any other School policy; and (3) if the conduct was a violation of this Policy, what actions the School will take to end the violation, eliminate any hostile environment, and prevent its recurrence.

The investigator will make their determination based on a preponderance of the evidence standard. This means that the investigator will determine whether they think misconduct is more likely than not to have occurred (there is a greater than 50% chance that misconduct occurred). In determining whether conduct constitutes a violation of the School's policies, the investigator will consider, for example, the age and level of understanding of the student(s) involved, the facts and surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between parties involved and the context in which the incidents occurred.

After the investigator makes their determinations, they will prepare a written summary of their findings, including a proposed resolution (such as proposed discipline, as described below).

**Investigative Findings and Determination:** The Respondent (and their parent(s)/guardian(s), if applicable) will be informed in writing of the investigative finding, sanction, and the rationale for the sanction within twenty (20) school days after submission of the complaint. The Coordinator, in their discretion, may extend the time to complete the investigation if such an extension would be reasonable under the circumstances. The Complainant (and their parent(s)/guardian(s), if applicable) will also be informed, in writing, of the outcome of the investigative process.

ian(s), if applicable) will also be informed, in writing, of the outcome of the investigative process.

If you do not receive a written response from the School within 30 school days, you may contact the Coordinator regarding the status of the investigation.

**Discipline of Students:** If the investigator believes that discipline of a student is appropriate, the investigator will consult with the Title IX Coordinator (if that person did not perform the investigation), and the Director to determine the appropriate level of discipline in accordance with the School's published disciplinary process. Students for whom suspension or expulsion is being considered will be given notice and an opportunity to be heard before a final decision regarding suspension or expulsion is made.

**Corrective Action for Non-Students:** If the investigator believes that corrective action related to or discipline of an employee, volunteer, or third party is warranted, the investigator will consult with the Title IX Coordinator (if that person did not perform the investigation) and the Director (in the case of employees or volunteers) or the Executive Director (in the case of third parties or contractors) to determine the appropriate response to the misconduct.

**Appeal:** The Respondent may appeal the outcome from the decision and/or the sanction/remedy by submitting a written appeal to the Executive Director within ten (10) school days after receiving notification of the findings. Disagreement with the finding or sanction is not, by itself, grounds for an appeal. The appealing party must demonstrate that there was insufficient evidence to support the decision, that there is new or relevant evidence, or that the sanction or remedy is substantially disproportionate given the details of the case. The Executive Director shall review the Complaint and the record of the investigation, including the investigator's summary of their findings, and may interview the parties again if necessary. Within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the appeal, the Executive Director will respond in writing to the appeal, summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any changes to the findings or discipline.

**Advisor Guidelines:** Any individual being interviewed by the Investigators, including the Complainant and Respondent, has the right to be accompanied to any meeting or proceeding related to this resolution procedure by an advisor of their choice. An advisor is an individual who attends as a supportive presence. An advisor may take notes and quietly confer with the individual being advised, but may not speak

on behalf of the individual or in any way disrupt any meeting or the resolution procedure. Individuals who may have factual information relevant to the Complaint may not serve as advisors. If an individual being interviewed wishes to have an attorney serve as their advisor, they may retain counsel independently. Attorney-advisors may participate in the resolution process to the same extent as other advisors, and will not be permitted to speak on behalf of any individual or to interfere with the resolution procedure. Although the Parties are not required to choose an advisor or to bring their advisor to all meetings, utilizing the same advisor throughout the process, unless there are extenuating circumstances, allows the process to move forward in the most efficient fashion.

**Notification to Parents/Guardians:** The Coordinator will determine whether the Complainant and/or Respondent's parent(s)/guardian(s) need to be notified of a report of harassment or discrimination. The Coordinator, in their professional discretion, may determine that it is not necessary or appropriate to involve a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). However, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of both the Complainant and the Respondent(s) must be notified, unless otherwise directed by law enforcement or required by law, if the report involves physical assault or unwelcome sexual touching.

A Respondent's parent(s)/guardian(s) must also be notified if it is possible that the Respondent will be suspended or expelled if found responsible for misconduct.

The Complainant may request that their parent(s)/guardian(s) not be notified of a complaint involving them. Such requests will be considered by the Coordinator, however, the Coordinator in their professional judgment will determine whether it is appropriate to honor such a request.

If notification is required or warranted, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the Complainant and/or the Respondent(s) should be notified of the report before the close of the current school day, but must be notified not later than two school days after the report is filed, unless otherwise directed by law enforcement or required by law.

A parent/guardian may be invited to attend an interview with their student at the student's request, or if the Coordinator determines that a parent/guardian's presence is necessary or would be helpful to the investigation. A parent/guardian's role at an interview is primarily as a supportive presence. Parent(s)/

guardian(s) may not speak on behalf of the student or disrupt the interview.

**Prohibition on Retaliation:** NCS will not tolerate retaliation. Retaliation is prohibited by Title IX and this Policy. An individual reporting Prohibited Conduct is entitled to protection from any form of retaliation following a report that is made in good faith, even if the report is later not proven to be true. This Policy also prohibits harassment of Respondents. In addition, retaliation is prohibited against individuals participating in an investigation under this Policy (such as a witness). The School will take immediate and responsive action to any report of retaliation or additional harassment and will pursue disciplinary action as appropriate.

#### **External Resources:**

If you are in a life-threatening situation, please call 911 immediately.

**Sexual Assault Services of Planned Parenthood of the North Country New York**  
66 Brinkerhoff Street  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
1-877-212-2323  
518-561-4430

**New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault**  
1-800-942-6906

**Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)**  
[www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)  
1-800-656-HOPE

RAINN provides live, secure crisis support for victims of sexual assault and their families.



# NORTH COUNTRY SCHOOL

## 2020 – 2021 Academic Calendar

Friday, August 21	Faculty Equity and Inclusion Workshop
Monday, August 24	Faculty Meetings Begin
Wednesday, September 2	International, Domestic Air Travelers, and Students Coming from States Listed on NYS Travel Advisory List Arrive
Tuesday, September 13	Domestic Boarding and Day Students Arrive
Wednesday, September 14	Fall Term Begins
Saturday, November 21	Thanksgiving Celebration, Students Depart by 3 p.m.
Saturday, November 21 - Sunday, November 29	Campus Stay for International Students
Monday, November 30	Winter Session Begins
Wednesday, December 16	Winter Break Begins
Sunday, January 3	Boarding Students Return
Sunday, February 28	Boarding Students Depart
Wednesday, March 17	Boarding Students Return
Thursday, March 18	Spring Term Begins
Friday, May 28	Graduation Weekend and Student Performances
Saturday, May 29	Graduation Ceremony