



Parent–Student Handbook

School Year 2022-2023

The vision and purpose of North County Charter School is to demonstrate that all students can learn at high levels, through an academically rigorous and innovative curriculum that incorporates the development of good character.

The school’s academic performance objectives consist of ensuring that all students receive a well-rounded education that includes mastery in Mathematics, Reading, Language Arts and Science.

NCCS Board of Directors

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TBD

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Updated on March 8th, 2023

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to North County Charter School! This handbook is to assist you in understanding the policies and procedures of our school. Please place it in a convenient place, as you will find many occasions to use it throughout the year.

Important Numbers and Contacts:

North County Charter School:

Phone: 772-794-1941

Website: www.nccharter.org

Please “like” us on Facebook

Download the NCCS Mobile App from the App Store or Google Play Store

Indian River County Transportation Department:

Phone: 772-978-8801

Policy of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of NCCS that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, marital status, or handicap, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving state financial assistance, or be so treated on the basis of sex under most education programs or activities receiving state assistance.

Open Door Policy

The school administrator has an open door policy and invites families to come in to discuss any issue. To ensure that the problem is addressed and resolved effectively, all parties involved will be included in the meeting. It is our sincere belief that the large majority of misunderstandings can be resolved through discussion, accurate fact gathering, and when approached in a positive and courteous manner.

Instructional Calendar

NCCS follows the Instructional Calendar of the School District of Indian River County for non-instructional days and early dismissal.

Emergency Closing of School

In case of weather or other situations that appear dangerous to the health and safety of students, the Superintendent of Schools is authorized to close school. Please monitor the radio, television and internet coverage in such situations. Please follow instructions for the Indian River County School district. Please also monitor the NCCS website, Facebook Page, and/or Mobile App. The Principal will also use the IRSC School Messenger service to make phone calls to families, as needed.

School Hours

The academic school day is from 8:50 AM to 3:25 PM. There is no supervision for students prior to school starting or after school ends, unless a student is registered in the Before and/or After Care Program. Therefore, students may not be dropped off any earlier than 8:20 AM and should be picked up by 3:50 PM. Being on time is an expectation at NCCS. Instruction starts promptly, so please ensure all students are in class ready to learn by 8:50 AM when the gate closes. Students arriving after 8:50 must be signed in at the front office by a parent. Tardies will be tracked and excessive tardies could be cause for dismissal. Additionally, students must be present in school for a specific number of minutes each day to be considered present, so a student could be marked absent for the day if they arrive more than half an hour late.

VPK - Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten 80/20 Rule for Attendance

- ❖ The child must attend 80% of the days for each month.
- ❖ If the child is absent more than 20% of the month (4 days), you may be asked to leave the program or pay an absentee fee.
- ❖ Only an excused tardy is allowed and must be accompanied with a doctor/dentist note. If a child has excessive unexcused tardy attendance, you may be asked to leave the program.
- ❖ VPK Wrap Program. Although not mandatory, to maintain the structure and academic success of your child, we encourage families to have their child remain in school until 3:25 PM dismissal.

Excused Absences

According to state law, absences are only excused for documented medical reasons, or for religious holidays.

A doctor's note is required, or the following absences will be considered unexcused:

- ❖ Illness of student
- ❖ Serious illness or death of family member
- ❖ Head lice or nits up to three (3) days
- ❖ Doctor or dental appointments – **appointments after school are encouraged**

Unexcused Absences

- ❖ Absent from school without parent permission
- ❖ Absences for family vacations or outings; however, to avoid potential truancy proceedings, parents/guardians should ALWAYS meet with an administrator to “explain” their trips. Although not excused, they can be considered “explained.”
- ❖ Unexcused absences beyond nine (9) days per semester are considered excessive parents will receive a letter from NCCS after the child's fifth unexcused absence, and after the 10th absence in a 90-day period. It is considered truancy at this point, and may be reported to Truancy Court. Students reaching this level will also be considered for dismissal from the NCCS program.

Parent Responsibilities*

- ❖ When your child is absent you must notify the school by note or a phone call within 24 hours to explain the absence.
- ❖ Ensure Daily attendance. **IT'S THE LAW! Florida Statute 1003.210**
- ❖ For extended or chronic illnesses, notify the school office with the appropriate documentation from your physician.
- ❖ Vacations and family trips require a written request to the principal. Such absences are considered unexcused but explained.

Student Responsibilities*

- ❖ Arrive at school on time and ready to learn.
- ❖ Upon return from an absence, request make-up work from your teacher(s).
- ❖ Become involved in school activities.

Chronic absences are reported to Indian River Truancy Court

Who Will This Affect: Elementary and middle school children with at least five (5) unexcused absences within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences within a 90-day period.

What Can Happen: A petition can be filed against a parent or guardian who is legally responsible for getting the child to school each day. The parent or guardian will be summoned to court to explain to the Judge why the absences have occurred. The Judge can order a parent or guardian to send the child to school and may order the child to have no tardies or discipline problems. In addition, the Judge may order the parent to participate in a parenting program, seek family counseling, meet with the child's teacher, volunteer at school or provide community service or other activities to benefit the child.

Students Leaving Campus

Every minute counts!! We highly discourage early pick-up. Again, students must be present in school for a specific number of minutes each day to be considered present, so a student could be marked absent for the day if they leave more than a half an hour early. If it is unavoidable, you must sign your child out in the office. Identification should be provided at time of pick up. Unless notified differently, a student will be released only to the person(s) listed on the emergency card.

Attendance Policy

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem like much but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling, that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of school
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?

He/she is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling, that's...
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 minutes per day	1 hr. 40 mins per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

EVERY DAY COUNTS

Transportation

If there is to be a change in the transportation of your child, please notify the office as soon as possible. Please remember that the office is very busy between 2:45 -3:15, so it may be difficult to answer calls at this time, so your patience is appreciated.

Dismissal

Car Riders

For your safety and the safety of the children, **please remain in your vehicle** and wait for a school staff member to load your child into your car. Please have your car tags hanging in your front window.

Parent Walk-up pick up:

Parents who chose to walk **up must stay outside of the security gates**. Students will be released to their parents through the gate by a staff member, but only AFTER the car/bus line is finished. We feel it is unsafe to walk up, so please make every attempt to be in the car line during dismissal.

Bus Riders:

All students riding a bus will obey the rules listed on the Bus Contract included in the Enrollment Packet. **Riding a bus is a privilege and can be revoked or suspended for inappropriate behavior.** A student will be reported by the driver to an administrator who has authority to suspend him/her temporarily or permanently from riding the bus. Any bus related concerns, that happen after the school office closes at 4:30 PM, should be referred to the IRC Transportation Department directly. Transportation Department Phone: 772-978-8199.

Student Safety

Speeding on school grounds is **PROHIBITED**. Please abide by all pedestrian crossing signs and posted traffic direction signs. You will be completely responsible for any harm caused to any person for traffic violations on school property.

Visitors

Any person entering the campus must be admitted by school personnel at the security gate and may receive permission to visit after the visitor makes known the purpose of the visit. A form of identification will be required to sign in as a guest or volunteer, by appointment or invitation only. This School Board rule applies to all visitors, including parents. If your child has a doctor's appointment, you must come to the office to sign him/her out. A member of the staff will call your child's classroom, and your child will be released. If you wish time to discuss your child's work with the teacher, we suggest you make an appointment. You may call the school at any time to arrange appointments. Children not registered as students are not permitted to visit classes during the school day unless prior approval has been granted.

Tornado, Fire Drills, Code Red Drills

Drills are necessary for the safety of students and staff. Everyone should learn the exit routes. Fire drills are conducted at least once a month and students are taught to report to a "safe place" outside the building with their classmates. Teachers will take attendance to ensure all students are accounted for.

Health and Medicine

When it is necessary for a student to receive prescription medication during school hours, the school will assume this responsibility only when medication is in its original container and is accompanied with an official prescription signed by a doctor and a permission slip signed by a parent and completed with instructions for the administration. This includes all over the counter medication. In case of an accident or serious illness, school personnel will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or physician in the emergency contact file. If the person listed on the emergency card cannot be reached, school personnel may see that the child reaches the nearest emergency room. In case of an accident or illness, where immediate treatment of a child is not needed but where the child cannot remain at school, school personnel will attempt to contact a parent or guardian or the person listed to care for the child until the parent can be reached. For this reason, it is important that parents keep the school administration office informed of any change in home and work telephone numbers.

Food Program

The Department of Education National Breakfast and Lunch Program regulates the food served on a daily basis. School menus will be sent home regularly. If your child does not choose to eat the school lunch, parents are responsible for providing a healthy alternative meal for that day. SWEET SUGARY FOODS, CANDY, CHOCOLATE, SODA AND CARBONATED DRINKS ARE NOT PERMITTED. Please refer to the NCCS Wellness Policy for more detailed information.

Educational Records of Students

A parent or guardian is given the right, upon written request, to be shown any record relating to the student, which is maintained by the school, and to be given an explanation of such record. Access must be granted within a reasonable period of time. Records maintained are: Cumulative, Health, Individual Basic Skill Record, Teacher Class Record, Test Scores, and Attendance Records.

Assessment

Students in grades K through 5 will participate in several tests annually. Diagnostic tests will be administered in the Media Center, or in classrooms. All test scores are used to assist us in developing the appropriate programs for the students. Students will also participate in state mandated standardized tests as required by statute. Attendance during test days is very important.

Promotion, Placement, and Retention

A student will be eligible for promotion from kindergarten through grade five when the school's instructional staff determines that the student has satisfactorily demonstrated achievement as established in the Elementary Pupil Promotion Policy. A student who does not demonstrate achievement in compliance with this policy will be referred to the placement committee for retention or alternate placement. A meeting will be held to notify parents if their child is being retained before the end of the school year. *Please note that 3rd graders in Florida must achieve a minimum proficiency score of a "2" on the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST-ELA) in order to be promoted to the 4th grade, with certain exceptions.

A student will be eligible for promotion when he/she has met the following:

1. The student must receive a satisfactory evaluation by the teacher demonstrating mastery of curriculum standards for that grade and demonstrating satisfactory progress in the language arts program.

2. Section 1008.25 Florida Statutes (F.S.) requires any third grade student scoring Level 1 on the grade 3 FAST-ELA to be retained. Some students may qualify for a good cause exemption and be promoted to fourth grade.

Care of Textbooks, Library Books, and Other School Property

Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books loaned or checked out to them during the year. They are to be kept clean and handled carefully. All lost or damaged books must be paid for. If a lost book is found, money paid will be refunded.

School Supplies

Each student is given a list of school supplies needed for his/her classroom. Please ensure your child has these supplies. You may be asked during the year to replenish your child's supplies.

Identification of Personal Property

Parents are requested to mark all valuable articles and clothing (i.e., jackets, lunchboxes etc.) so they may be returned to the child. Students are encouraged to keep personal items such as video games, radios, and toys at home. **The school will not be responsible for the loss of such items.** Any unclaimed items will be donated at the end of each school year.

Uniform Policy

Uniform shirts may be purchased from North County Charter School in the front office. Uniform violations may result in loss of privileges and ultimately, suspension and/or dismissal. These consequences are simply a method of communicating the importance of following established rules and of respecting authority.

NCCS Uniform Polo shirt with collar

Navy blue

Burgundy

Green

Shorts, Skirts/Skorts, Jumpers, or Pants

Navy Blue

Khaki

Black

- Closed toe sneakers are required. No boots, sandals or crocs allowed.
- Pants/skirts/shorts are to be worn above the hip bone with no visible undergarments.
- Shirts are to be tucked in at all times.
- Haircuts or hair colors out of the ordinary are not permitted.
- Jewelry or accessories that could contribute to injury are not permitted.
- Jeans permitted on Fridays with a Spirit Shirt only.
- Skirts/shorts must be appropriate length.
- Leggings prohibit, unless under a skirt.

Behavior and Discipline

Compact Agreement

Parents and students enter a compact agreement upon enrollment in North County Charter School. Violation of contract by either the parent or the student may result in student dismissal and reassignment to his/her home zoned school. Our purpose is to help students choose the correct actions and to learn from past experiences. It is necessary that children learn to develop self-discipline in order to further their learning.

NCCS uses constructive and progressive discipline school-wide to create a school family and ensure all students are in a safe environment where they can learn to their fullest potential. School-wide expectations, SOAR, have been created for all areas of the school. SOAR agreements keep NCCS Safe, take Ownership, be Accountable and Respectful. In addition, NCCS has a behavior management matrix. If the behavior management matrix is unsuccessful in correcting undesired behaviors, and violations of the student compact continue, then the student may be reassigned to their home zoned school.

Behavioral Philosophy

North County Charter School teachers, administration and support staff believe the following:

1. All students can learn.
2. All students can behave.
3. Our standards of expectation are high and clearly defined.
4. Our standards of discipline are firm, fair, and consistent.
5. Our teachers and staff can be successful and be role models for our students.
6. Achievement tests are used for accountability and should be taken seriously.
7. Performance norms for the staff are high.
8. Our commitment to the school program is unconditional.
9. Corporal punishment is **NOT** used.
10. Our classes set and display classroom rules.
11. SOAR agreements are implemented and followed school-wide.
12. Behavior management matrix is followed by all staff.
13. Parents will be called to participate in the resolve or pick up their child if the behavior warrants it.

Behavioral Expectations

We expect all students to abide by the school rules and regulations and we expect certain behaviors in our classrooms. Some of these observable behaviors are listed below:

1. Students will treat others as they want to be treated.
2. Students will not keep a teacher from teaching or another student from learning.
3. Students must be in their seats on time.
4. Student must come prepared with proper materials.
5. Students must show courtesy to teachers and classmates.
6. Students must stay "on task"
7. Students must raise their hand to be called on
8. Students must follow directions
9. Hurtful behaviors (hitting, kicking, name calling, etc.) WILL NOT be tolerated.

Bullying/Harassment

NCCS has zero tolerance policy for bullying/harassment. The school principal is the person responsible for receiving all complaints. Situations shall be appropriately identified, reported, investigated, and responded to in a timely manner in accordance with the NCCS Board's Bullying Policy.

S. 1006.13, F.S. Policy of zero tolerance for crime and victimization

Zero tolerance policies require expulsion, with or without continuing education services, of not less than 1 full year, and to be referred to the criminal justice or juvenile justice system.

- (a) Bringing a firearm or weapon, as defined in chapter 790, to school, to any school function or onto any school sponsored transportation or possessing a firearm at school.
- (b) Making a threat or false report, as defined by ss. 790.162 and 790.163, respectively, involving school or school personnel's property, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity.
- (c) Battery • Homicide • Kidnapping • Sexual Battery • Weapons Possession • Alcohol • Arson
 Breaking & Entering/Burglary • Disruption on Campus • Drug Sale/Distribution
 • Drug Use/Possessions • Hazing • Physical Attack • Robbery • Larceny/Theft • Sexual Assault
 • Sexual Offenses (Other) • Threat/Intimidation • Trespassing • Vandalism

All zero tolerance violations will immediately be referred to and investigated by the Administration and School Resource Officer.

Fortify FL

FortifyFL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows you to instantly relay information to appropriate Law enforcement agencies and school officials. FortifyFL was created and funded by the 2018 Florida Legislature as part of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act. The link may be found on the school's website, and also on all student chromebook devices maintained by the school. Students and parents should only use this tool if they have reason to believe that there could be imminent danger to the school, or anyone who works at or attends the school. This should be treated just like the 9-1-1 call service.

Grievances

It is our sincere belief that the large majority of misunderstandings and problems can be resolved through discussion between the parent, teacher, and administrator. The below guidelines are designed to provide a procedure for parents when they are attempting to resolve a concern. Parents should make every reasonable effort to gather accurate facts before contacting the administrator. It may also help to have the concern described in writing.

1. Discuss the concern with the teacher.
2. Discuss the concern with the administrator.
3. Administrator will conduct an investigation to gather facts.
4. A parent conference may be scheduled with the appropriate staff at a mutually agreeable time.
5. If all possibilities have been exhausted at the school level, the administrator will advise the appropriate procedure to appeal to the Board of Directors.

Withdrawal of Students:

If you are moving out of the area or withdrawing your child from North County Charter School, you are asked to inform the office and fill out the necessary paperwork at the new school. Receipt of a records request from another school is what allows the staff at NCCS to send your child's records to the proper school, and remove them from enrollment at NCCS.