



# Family & Student Handbook

***Mission Statement:*** *Fostering the joyful pursuit of intellectual, social, and emotional expansion through a challenging curriculum that nourishes highly capable middle school students to develop identity, self-empowerment, and community.*

**Accredited by:**

Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS)

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Greetings,

Preparing the students of NOVA Middle School to participate fully in the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century is a huge undertaking. We strive to determine, as best as possible, the skills and abilities that will be required of people in ten to twenty years. We are committed to infusing the curriculum content and instructional strategies with elements that foster the development of critical, creative, and flexible thinking essential to problem solving and decision making. We continue to invigorate the school community by focusing on the development of deeper and authentic social and emotional development so that our students are better equipped to meet the personal, social, moral, and ethical challenges they will encounter as citizens of the 21st Century. Our task is not to educate our students in a system designed for the past but rather to prepare them with a set of experiences and skills for the future.

The Family Handbook describes the procedures and policies we have put in place to help the school function. The Handbook doesn't contain the answers to every question because there are still questions to be asked. Just like our students the school is still, and it is my hope that it will always be, a work in progress. So, keep asking questions!

Best,

Barbara Mitchell Hutton  
Head of School



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# General School Information and Procedures

## Daily Schedule

### Hours of Operation

School starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m.

- This year we are piloting a before-school program from 7:45 to 8:15 a.m. each day. If you need to drop off between 7:45 and 8:15, the door will be open and we will have a classroom available for students to quietly work, read, write, or draw.

### Morning Drop Off of Students

Parents should enter the parking area from Wilson Street and pull as far forward as possible before dropping off students. Exiting the parking area is only allowed on Wilson. Please be mindful of not causing congestion.

### After School Pickup

Unless participating in a NOVA after school activity, students must leave campus by 3:30 p.m.

- The front office will be open every day until 4:00 p.m. and is able to respond to emergencies or carpool problems.
- Most after-school extra-curricular activities end at 4:00 pm. Please be prompt when picking up students from after-school activities.

### Parking

The staff parks in the employee parking area to the east of the building, directly off 22nd Ave. All other parking areas are available for parents or visitors.

### Bicycle Riding and Walking to School

- Bike riders crossing 22nd Avenue should walk their bikes using the crosswalk.
- Students are also asked to walk their bikes in the parking lot.
- To avoid theft, students must LOCK their bike. Additionally, the City of Olympia offers bike registration to provide documentation in the event it is ever lost or stolen. For information on registering your bicycle, call (360) 753-8300.

### Carpools

To build community and reduce environmental impact, carpools are urged. While carpools are the responsibility of the families involved to organize and maintain, NOVA will be glad to help by providing a carpool map at the beginning of the school year along with names and phone numbers of potential carpool participants.

### School Closures & Late Starts

The safety of families is our primary concern in hazardous weather and driving conditions. NOVA follows decisions made by the Olympia School District concerning school closures or late starts.

- Early dismissal due to weather will be made independently of the Olympia School District.
- NOVA will post announcements on the School's website and notify families by text and email. Families may also receive a call through a phone messaging service.

## **Attendance**

Regular and punctual attendance is expected, because it is a bedrock responsibility that is required of students as they grow in their future academic, career and social lives.

### **Tardy Policy**

Students who regularly arrive late to school are at a disadvantage, as they inevitably miss important education and disrupt the learning of others as they enter the classroom learning environment and get organized. A student arriving after 8:30 a.m. is considered tardy and must sign in at the Front Office.

- Families of students who are routinely tardy will be notified and steps will be taken to resolve the situation.

### **Absences**

A student is considered absent when not accounted for in morning attendance. Please call the office before school if your child will be absent. If your child is absent and the school has not been notified, a call will be placed to your home or place of work in order to verify the absence.

- Students are responsible for all work and concepts that are covered when absent, unless the teacher specifically indicates that the assignment is *Excused* on TeacherEase. Direct communication through email between the student and the teacher is strongly encouraged for the student to be aware of all expectations.

### **Excused Absences**

Typically, student illness, death in the family, a family emergency, religious holidays, and school-related activities are considered excused absences. While appointments with your child's physician and/or dentist will be considered excused absences, we urge you to make appointments after school or when school is not in session in order to minimize the disruption of the class and the impact on your child's learning.

- Absences for other reasons (e.g., family vacations, sporting events, repeated extra-curricular activities, personal convenience, or extending school holidays) will most likely be considered unexcused.

### **Illness**

Please do not send your child to school sick! Students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Any student who shows or complains of illness-related symptoms will be asked to contact family so they can go home.

- Please refer to the Health & Safety section in this manual for information regarding use of medicine at NOVA.

### **Leaving Campus**

Prior to leaving campus for an excused absence (e.g. medical appointment), a student must be signed-out at the front office.

- Students must sign back in at the front office upon returning to campus.

## **Planned Absences**

Students scheduled to be absent must gather signatures from all teachers with arrangements for when assignments will be due upon return on an *Advance Absence Form*. A copy must be submitted to the Front Office.

## **Planned Extended Absences**

Families sometimes take vacations requiring students to miss more than a few days of school. Given the value of each day of the short school year, missing days affects a student's ability to learn, participate in group projects and pass exams. *Parents and students should be aware that grades may dip due to planned extended absences, because much of what is learned at NOVA is based on collaboration, experience and problem solving and cannot be made-up effectively. The school should not be expected to re-teach material or make major accommodations for avoidable absences.*

Please notify the school office a minimum of three weeks in advance to begin the process of planning for an extended absence for your student. The *Planned Extended Absence Form* must be used to gather the work necessary (along with due dates) to successfully return to class along with signatures from each teacher. After completion, parents must sign the Planned Extended Absence Form and return a copy to the Front Office.

## **At NOVA Middle School**

### **Lunch Program**

Every student needs to bring lunch and may also bring a snack to eat during the morning break. Microwave ovens and water heaters are available for student use. Designated areas in the Trow provide an inside lunch area for students. In pleasant weather, many students choose to eat lunch outside on the picnic tables.

### **Taco Tuesdays/Sub Thursdays/Snacks**

NOVA Middle School contracts with vendors to provide ready-to-eat food on Tuesdays and Thursdays. At the beginning of each trimester, students can arrange to purchase tacos or burritos on "Taco Tuesdays" or submarine sandwiches for lunch on Thursdays. These special orders are optional. Information on Taco Tuesday and Sub Thursday becomes available once the school year begins.

NOVA Middle School is committed to sustainability, so students are required to follow guidelines for recycling and composting on school grounds.

### *Emergency Lunch Provision*

If a student comes to school without a lunch, he or she may come to the office to request a container of soup for lunch. Our soup supply is intended as an "emergency lunch provision" and not to be used as a regular replacement for forgotten lunches.

### **Lockers**

Each student has a locker for storing personal belongings and backpacks. As lockers are NOT locked, it is very important that valuable items not be stored in lockers. Students are responsible for keeping lockers clean.

## **Physical Education**

Physical Education at NOVA will emphasize lifetime recreational activity and fitness. PE classes are scheduled in the afternoon and will be held on campus (rain or shine) in the fall and spring. Students should have a change of clothes and appropriate shoes in their lockers, especially in rainy weather. During the winter, the school will use local recreational facilities for indoor PE classes.

## **Lost and Found**

Parents or students should clearly label with the student's name jackets, lunch boxes, packs, water bottles, and other items that can be lost. Items, such as clothing and shoes, will be in the Lost and Found; items, such as flash drives, books, and water bottles, will be in the front office. Check these areas out periodically. At the end of each trimester, unclaimed items will be donated to a non-profit such as Rosie's Place or St. Mike's.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

NOVA is a middle school striving to expose our students to a wide range of experiences and opportunities; therefore, we have designed a variety of extra-curricular activities. While sometimes attending these extra experiences can be logistically difficult, it has been our experience that the students who participate more fully in the school find themselves feeling connected much more quickly than those who do not.

Each year various extra-curricular activities are offered, depending on the student interest, and the amount of adult time available. Students should consider the after-school opportunities and make choices based on their interests, talent and schedule. Dates, times, and specific information will be published as soon as they are known.

## **Communications**

We value open, direct and constructive communication from the school community. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please don't hesitate to call, email or meet with faculty in-person. Parents are encouraged to direct their questions, comments or concerns directly to the appropriate teacher or administrator by email, personal phone call (preferably before or after school, or by leaving a message with the Front Office), or by a note.

- Teacher email addresses are available from the Faculty webpage, located in the Community section of our website. Teachers will respond within 24 hours to emails sent during the week.
- If you have broader concerns regarding school issues, please discuss them with the Head of School.

## **Contacting Students**

Call the Front Office at (360) 491-7097 and a staff member can relay a message to a student during the school day. *Please do not ask to have your student come to the phone unless it is a real emergency.* If you prefer to send an email, the email for the front office is: nova@novaschool.org.

- Students may also access a courtesy phone at breaks or lunch to return calls to family members. Students will not be allowed to use the school telephones for personal or social arrangements.
- Students will not have access to cell phones during the day.

## **Parent Visitors**

*Parents are always welcome in the classroom.* You are welcome to stop in at any time. You might want to give us some advance notice, so that the time you spend observing a particular lesson or content is of particular interest to you, but it is certainly not required. Parents and guests are also welcome to attend assemblies and special activities, such as Quiz Bowl. These will be announced in the Thursday Bulletin.

## **School Directory**

The NOVA Middle School Directory is published each year and is made is distributed in paper and emailed PDF formats. Please contact the front office by phone or email should any contact information change. The directory is provided solely as an internal resource for NOVA families and cannot be distributed outside or used for solicitation by anyone inside or outside the NOVA community.

## **Thursday Bulletins**

Parents will receive a Bulletin every Thursday via email with important announcements, program highlights, and service opportunities. Thursday Bulletins can be found in the Current Families section of NOVA's website.

## **Website – [www.novaschool.org](http://www.novaschool.org)**

All NOVA families are encouraged to check the school's website on a regular basis for updated news and event information. The Current Families section contains forms and curriculum overviews. The online Calendar will be updated with events including dates and times of extracurricular activities.

## **Mailings**

NOVA periodically sends hard copy letters, forms, and progress reports. Most of these hard copy mailings will also be posted on the NOVA website in the Current Families section for the convenience of our parents and students.

## **Student Academics & Homework**

### **Homework**

Homework is an important part of the overall academic program at NOVA. Assignments are designed to reinforce concepts introduced in the classroom and explained by the teacher. It will be a learning experience in itself for many students to develop the discipline to organize their assignments, use their calendar, budget their time, and not procrastinate on homework.

- NOVA faculty meets weekly to ensure homework loads across classes are reasonable and conducive to learning.

### **Student Assignment Planner Calendars**

Students are provided "planners" and are instructed on proper work and project scheduling. 6th and 7th graders are required to use the student calendar provided by NOVA; 8th graders may use whichever calendar system works best for them.

## **Student Evaluation**

The intent of our evaluation system is to help each student and every parent have a clear idea of the student's strengths and weaknesses. Most assignments at NOVA are graded or evaluated on a point basis with a percentage score indicating the level of success. Many assignments are accompanied by a rubric which defines criteria for grade level work.

Assignment evaluations are combined with examination results to form a percentile grade for the trimester for every Core (Math, History/Social Studies, Language Arts, Science, and Spanish) class. Percentile scores can easily compute to A,B,C type of grades.

### **TeacherEase On-Line Communications ([www.teacherease.com](http://www.teacherease.com))**

TeacherEase is the easiest way for NOVA Middle School student families to follow student progress and is an online accessible record of received and evaluated assignments and exam results. Individual student comments and classroom comments can also accompany these postings. TeacherEase requires that every family have a current working email entered in the system to ensure communications with teachers and access to student progress.

- Every NOVA student is given a username and password to access TeacherEase. Parents will receive their own password for access.

### **Conferences/Progress Reporting**

NOVA Middle School operates in trimesters, with official report cards mailed home at the end of each trimester. During the Fall (October) and Winter (March) Trimesters, every student family meets with members of the faculty for Parent-Teacher conferences. At these conferences, student progress will be reviewed and individual goals may be set to help focus the student, teacher, and parents on those areas of most importance.

### **Academic Probation**

Students at NOVA are expected to be successful with their schoolwork. For NOVA, this means a student is giving their best effort. Most students will maintain at least an 80% average (B-) in Core classes and receive satisfactory effort marks (3 or above) in the Core and Enrichment classes. In cases where a student begins to struggle to meet this requirement, faculty and staff (which can include the Head of School, any or all faculty members, and the School Counselor) will meet with parents and the student to form an individualized plan.

### **Student Council**

NOVA's Student Council is elected in the fall and active throughout the year, planning a variety of student events and, at times, advising staff on student concerns. Student Council officers and class representatives are elected annually in early fall. Student Council meetings are established on a specific day and time during the week that is convenient for everyone. The Student Council plans and sponsors a number of all school social events. Each Student Council group chooses other projects and efforts that are important to them.

### **Winterim Week**

In March, a Winterim Week will be offered. This is a four-day break from all regular classes during which we provide a number of workshop choices to students and includes one half-day of service to the community. Teachers, community members, and interested parents provide workshop choices which touch upon topics, recreational activities, and hobbies that we find difficult to fit into our regular academic curriculum. Students will hear about the choices in January and will indicate their preferences at that time. Winterim Week has proven to be a wonderful way for staff, students, and parents to interact in a personal and informal way.

## **Student Technology Policies**

### **Computer Use Agreement**

The intent of the computer technology and the NOVA Middle School network is to enhance the educational and administrative work of the school. All users of NOVA's network and computers have the responsibility to use these systems in a considerate, ethical, and responsible manner. The ethical and legal standards that users should follow originate directly from standards of common sense and consideration. Students will be taught and guided toward responsible use at school, but since the changes in technology use are so rapid, we expect parents to assist us in this area. Please talk to your child specifically about the various issues contained in the *NOVA Middle School Computer User's Agreement*, distributed to families during the school year, and reinforce the importance of responsible computer and internet use.

### **Cell Phone Use**

NOVA Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school. However, cell phones may not be used after 8:30 a.m. or before 3:15 p.m. Making and/or receiving phone calls or texting on student cell phones is strictly prohibited between 8:30 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. Use of student cell phones is also restricted to outside the building. Students who violate these rules will have their cell phones collected and turned into the front office. The cell phones will be returned only to the parents of the students who brought the phones to school. If there is a need for immediate emergency contact during the school day, students can receive permission for cell phone use from any member of the faculty or staff.

### **Electronic Devices at School**

With the exception of e-readers, digital cameras and cell phones (as detailed above), all other electronic devices are not permitted on campus. They can serve as great distractions during the school day and can be easily lost or damaged. Students will receive specific permission from teachers if any kind of electronic device is required for a school project. Without such permission, these devices will be confiscated and held at the front office for parents to pick up at a later time.

## **Health, Safety and Happiness**

### **Immunizations**

State law requires that NOVA Middle School keep immunization records on file for each student enrolled. Students entering 6th grade must have required immunizations as per state law. Please make sure that your child is fully immunized, including TDAP booster. Our School Nurse can explain requirements.

### **Medications**

State law does not allow us to dispense prescription *or over-the-counter medications* without specific written instructions from your doctor/dentist or other health care provider and a signed permission slip from the parent. Any student requiring medication and/or needing to carry an EpiPen or inhaler will need to have a current, signed "Authorization to Administer Medication" form on file at NOVA.

### **Illness/minor injury**

Please make every effort to keep your child home from school when sick. Sending ill children to school detracts from the value of the NOVA Middle School education by

spreading illness to other students and faculty. A student must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

If students become ill or are injured during the school day, we will make them comfortable and call their parents to make arrangements for them to be taken home.

### **Emergencies/Serious Injury**

Each student must have both the "Emergency Medical Care Authorization" and the "Emergency Release" forms on file at the school. These documents authorize NOVA Middle School to act for you in case of an emergency and inform the staff of phone numbers for parents, doctors and designated alternates for parents. It is the responsibility of parents to notify NOVA of any changes to contact numbers or their child's health care requirements.

### **Student Accident Insurance**

NOVA Middle School's accident insurance covers all students for any injury or accident that might occur while participating in school supervised activities. It also covers travel going directly to and from school activities but does not duplicate benefits payable by other insurance coverage. If you have other medical coverage, submit your claim to your other insurance company first. To file a claim, report accidents at once to school personnel and fill out a claim form.

### **Emergency Drills**

Fire, earthquake, and lockdown drills will be held regularly at NOVA Middle School in accordance with local and state regulations.

### **School Counselor/Advisory**

NOVA Middle School has a professional counselor on staff who is on-site at NOVA two half-days a week. During the Fall Trimester, the School Counselor will meet individually with every sixth grader to introduce herself, gauge how each student is acclimating to middle school, and build a rapport for any possible future interactions.

The counselor will meet individually with students who have been referred to her for short-term counseling and support. Students may be referred in a variety of ways. Parents or teachers may suggest she meet with a student, and students often ask to see her themselves. She is also available to meet with parents who have concerns about their son or daughter. She is also able to facilitate referrals outside of the school for students or families in need of longer-term counseling/support.

### **Social and Emotional Health**

Social and Emotional Health, often referred to as So-Emo, meets once a week. So-Emo is planned as a time for students to have a chance to talk about their experiences, their feelings, and explore some common problems in a non-threatening setting. The class is basically a group discussion class, structured around affective topics that are of common interest to middle school age students: friends, stress, parents, perfectionism, school issues, gender issues, etc. It is also a place to discuss potential school problems and to educate our students about ethical and social concerns like difficult class dynamics, bullying, plagiarism, and cheating. Sometimes there will be activities, role-plays, or games. Social and Emotional Health is an integral part of the NOVA experience.

## **NOVA Middle School Code of Conduct**

NOVA students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for themselves, the school and members of the community at-large. Students are required to take responsibility for their own actions as they affect themselves and others -- both within and outside of the NOVA Middle School community. Rules are few but are consistently enforced.

### **Expectations**

1. Demonstrate respect for rights, feelings, and property of all students, adults, and the school itself.
2. Behave in a manner that does not interfere with the academic expectations, learning opportunities, or the positive emotional and social climate of the school.
3. Contribute positively to our school community. Exercise positive membership in the school community with the understanding that there are responsibilities, rights, and privileges inherent in membership in a group.
4. Take responsibility for their actions as they affect both themselves and the group.
5. Use appropriate language at all times.
6. Seek appropriate ways to express anger or frustration.
7. Complete assignments and homework responsibly and to the best of their ability.
8. Conduct themselves in ways that ensure the safety of everyone at NOVA.

### **Consequences of Minor Violations of Behavioral Expectations**

In the event of minor behavioral violations, it is the school's intention to teach students better, more positive habits. All the rules and consequences are designed to preserve the positive educational environment that NOVA strives to provide for the entire school community. Under the direction of the Head, the school reserves the right to institute a wide range of consequences appropriate to the specific case. Parents will be informed concerning the School's course of action.

### ***Code of Conduct Disciplinary Actions include, but are not limited to:***

#### ***Emergency Removal***

The immediate removal of a student from class, subject or activity when the student's presence poses an immediate or continuing danger or threat of substantial disruption.

#### ***In School Suspension***

The removal of the student from the regular education program in a supervised, isolated, alternate in-school setting.

#### ***Probation***

A notice of warning that behavioral problems are interfering with normal social growth or with the positive school climate. Conditions of probation are laid down in a simple contract to serve as clear warning that repeated infractions may result in suspension or expulsion.

#### ***Suspension***

The denial of attendance for any single class, for any full schedule of classes or school activities for a stated period of time.

#### ***Expulsion***

Permanent removal of a student without possibility for reinstatement.

## **Zero Tolerance Behaviors**

The following infractions have been judged to be so serious in nature and/or so disruptive upon the operation of the school that students may be subject to emergency removal, suspension, or even expulsion for a first-time offense. Because each situation is handled individually, the school reserves the right to employ whatever disciplinary consequences are deemed appropriate.

### Possession, Use, Sale, or delivery of Drugs, Drug paraphernalia, Alcohol or Tobacco

Student possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or inappropriate use of prescription drugs is unacceptable and against the law. These substances are prohibited at school, in transit to and from school, and at all school-related functions.

### Weapons/ Firearms/ Dangerous items/ Threats/Implied threats

Dangerous weapons, other items, or threats that could be dangerous or perceived as dangerous by students or staff are prohibited at school, in transit to and from school, and at all school-related functions.

### Physical Assault/Fighting

Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to another person.

### Harassment/Bullying

Persistent disturbing, tormenting, or pestering resulting in another person's serious discomfort, anxiety, intimidation, or feeling threatened.

### Defiance/Disobedience

Openly disregarding, showing contempt for, or refusing to obey school personnel.

### Leaving Adult Supervision

NOVA students are not allowed to leave the school property during school hours without permission. During all school related activities, students must not leave direct supervision of the adults who are chaperoning.

### Lewd Behavior or Language

Repeatedly using inappropriate language or exhibiting/expressing indecent or obscene sexual behavior.

### Vandalism

Purposeful and harmful tampering with someone else's property.

## **Plagiarism and Cheating**

The internet has made plagiarism easier and has blurred the lines for some students about ethical academic behavior. School efforts to encourage students to collaborate have also blurred the lines between what is "helping" and what is closer to cheating. NOVA students will be directly instructed in what are and are not examples of cheating and plagiarism. They are expected to learn and then consistently follow the school expectations regarding both plagiarism and cheating. Students will be taught how to paraphrase without plagiarizing and will also be reminded about what constitutes cheating. Students will also be taught how to cite sources when necessary to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism and cheating in any form is a violation of the NOVA Middle School Code of Conduct. Any suspected case will be investigated fully with penalties for cheaters and accomplices ranging from no credit on assignments to outright expulsion based on the decisions of the Head of School.

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition is set by the Board on an annual basis to cover the costs of basic school operations. *Please plan to honor the due dates of the payment plan you have chosen. In accordance with a Late Payment policy approved by the Board, a \$50 late payment fee will be charged for past-due invoices.* Either mail in your tuition payments or drop them off at the school office. You may contact Paula Bjornson, the School's Business Manager, at [pbjornson@novaschool.org](mailto:pbjornson@novaschool.org) for information about your account. Invoices for tuition are sent by e-mail.

### **Fees For Optional Items**

Some extracurricular activities may have an associated cost. There are also optional items for purchases such as Tuesday or Thursday lunches, NOVA logo wear and individual student photo packages.

- Ensure Payments are accounted for correctly by putting payments (checks or cash) in envelopes along with indication of your child's name and what the payment covers.

### **School Service Hour Requirements**

Family involvement has always been part of the culture at NOVA. Per the School's contract, each family is committed to *20 hours of School Service* per year. These School Service hours are vital to the effective functioning of the school and add to the program by making field trips and other special opportunities possible. Service Hours can be arranged in any number of ways depending on the talents and scheduling needs of families.

Every effort made for the school qualifies as School Service hours *with the exception of driving students to and from school or to school-sponsored activities.*

- Service opportunities include but are not limited to: driving for field trips, chaperoning parties, assisting with hands-on projects, distributing Taco Tuesday and Sub Thursday lunches, helping to maintain the campus, and teaching Winterim project week classes.
- Opportunities for School Service will be publicized in the Thursday Bulletin sent by email as well as on the NOVA website.
- Families should keep track of the hours they have worked and turn their hours in directly to the NOVA office at the end of each month. Please keep a back-up record of hours worked, even after you have turned in your hours to the office.

Families may complete the School Service hour commitment by paying \$20 per hour. Should the service hour commitment result in undue hardships for any family as a result of personal situations, the family may re-negotiate the arrangement with the Head of School.

If you have questions regarding the NOVA Middle School Service Hour Program, please contact Julie Hankins, the School's office manager, at [jhankins@novaschool.org](mailto:jhankins@novaschool.org).

## **Expeditions and Overnight Trips**

Students are never allowed to leave the school property without the expressed permission from a member of the School's faculty or staff. Students will travel off campus regularly as members of a supervised group. Parents will specifically be notified of any trip that exceeds 25 miles.

When possible we use bus transportation. However, if we plan to use parent drivers for a field trip, we will publicize the need for drivers on the Thursday Bulletin well in advance of the field trip. Some trips may last longer than the school day and students will then need to be picked up later than usual or in a different location.

All parents are required to file a Permission/Release Form which gives permission to every student to participate in all NOVA Middle School activities. This is a requirement of our school insurance and is necessary for transporting children in private cars.

### ***Overnight Trips***

#### ***Camp Colman Fall Trip***

It is the NOVA tradition to take the entire school on a retreat to a local camp near the beginning of the school year. This year we are going to Camp Colman, a YMCA facility. Our purpose for this outing is to quickly integrate our many new students into the school and to give all students the opportunity to get together again after the summer break in an environment of recreation and camaraderie. We specifically work on cooperation and team-building. Offering to drive or chaperone this trip are fine opportunities for new parents to get an introduction to the school culture.

#### ***Year-End Trips***

It is also a NOVA tradition to take the students on an end-of-the year trip to celebrate the year and to have fun together in a less formal educational setting. The trip is either one or two nights depending on the grade level and three days or two very long days. The year-end trips this year are scheduled for June 8-10, 2020.

The year-end trip is generally considered a celebration for meeting our high expectations at NOVA as well as a chance for the students to bond in a different setting. Students are given fair warning, but the privilege to attend this trip may be rescinded if a student falls below our expectations in either respectable behavior or responsible work ethic regarding schoolwork.

## **Our Vision**

Inspiring lifelong learning for a more compassionate, engaged world

## **Our Values**

NOVA is committed to creating and sustaining a community that instills character, skills, and experiences that will last a lifetime. To that end, NOVA has identified four values that anchor the relationships and programs that support students and NOVA's vision and mission.

### **Connection**

We embrace the power of care, compassion, and relationships.

- Valuing individuality, diversity, and shared experiences.
- Fostering self-awareness, community and a global perspective.
- Cultivating social and emotional health through a safe and supportive environment

### **Commitment**

We are passionately devoted to our work.

- Nurturing a sense of responsibility, personal investment, and ownership of learning.
- Engaging fully in our interactions and with our content.

### **Intention**

We design experiences based on expertise and reflection.

- Utilizing emerging best practices for highly capable early adolescents.
- Maximizing opportunities for students to deeply explore content.
- Practicing communication that is clear, direct, consistent, and timely.

### **Joy**

We celebrate and delight in learning and discovery.

- Inspiring curiosity and growth.
- Linking intellectual challenge to satisfaction, purpose, and joy.

# **Attachment A: Family Handbook Acknowledgement**

## **NOVA Middle School Family Handbook Acknowledgement**

**Each family is asked to sign this form and return this page to the office by **September 30**. Thank you!**

Family of: \_\_\_\_\_

We acknowledge that we have read the NOVA Middle School Family Handbook. By signing this agreement, we agree to the rules and regulations of NOVA as stated in the Family Handbook which is posted on NOVA's website. We understand that we will be informed of any significant changes to the Family Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_