



September 22nd, 2023

Dear Northwood Community,

My name is Averyel Sawyer, and I am the new Northwood Academy Director of Operations. I wanted to send this message to you to introduce myself to those I have not directly connected with, thank you all for your continued support, and update you on some of Northwood's attendance and lateness procedures.

Shout-Outs and Thank You's

YOU!

The families, students, guardians and the entire Northwood community. The new CEO, Mr. Langston, and I were able to connect with many of you during Back to School Night and had a great time listening to your concerns, suggestions, feedback, and greetings. One thing that absolutely exemplifies Northwood is the unbelievable community support which puts Northwood above many similar schools within the city. Thank you so much and stay tuned for more information about upcoming Northwood events!

Lateness and Attendance Policy Update

We have recently made upgrades to our Student Information System (SIS), called Focus. We have added modules to the system that allow for daily communication with parents about attendance and lateness policies. Please see below for more information:

- Students who arrive after 7:55am are marked late by homeroom teachers and office staff.
- Student attendance is taken by staff by 8:30am daily. If a Northwood student is absent or late, there will be an automated phone call sent out to the primary guardian on file indicating that your child(ren) is/are absent for the day. You should expect to get these calls before 12:00pm daily. On Wednesdays, you should expect these calls by 11:30am.
- With student absence, all absences that are not followed with a note, will be deemed as unexcused absences. Students who do return and produce a note will cause the system to mark the absence as excused. **Unexcused** absences count towards absences that must be reported for truancy purposes, as mandated by the School District of Philadelphia.
- The Focus system will automatically send out letters to families whose students accrue **unexcused** absences for 3 absences, 6 absences and 10 absences. Please note that any student over 10 **unexcused** absences will be automatically referred to our truancy partner, ProjectGO. For more information about the Northwood Academy truancy process, please refer to the student handbook.

Early Dismissal cut off time for non-emergencies is 2:00pm (Wednesdays 11:00am).

This is in response to safety concerns and disruption of end of day activities. We have a limited number of staff who are deployed to the afternoon posts, and it is becoming difficult to manage end-of-day responsibilities and retrieve students to bring to the main office during that time. If you know that you have an appointment or scheduled early dismissal, the best way to notify Northwood is email Mrs. Robinson (trobinson@northwoodcs.org) or Mrs. Cook via email (rcook@northwoodcs.org). Again, in the event of an emergency we will make every accommodation for you to retrieve children who must leave early past the early dismissal cut off time.

Lunch Drop-Off

Parents, if you are dropping off lunch for your student(s), please make sure the lunch bag/container/lunchbox is labeled with your student's name and grade. This will make it easier for lunches to be delivered to the appropriate student during their lunchtime period.

And Feedback!

Thank you for taking the time to review these policies. Please let me know if you have further questions and have a wonderful day/weekend.

Sincerely,

Mr. Averyel Sawyer, M. Ed.

Director of Operations

asawyer@northwoodcs.org