



2024-25 NISKAYUNA

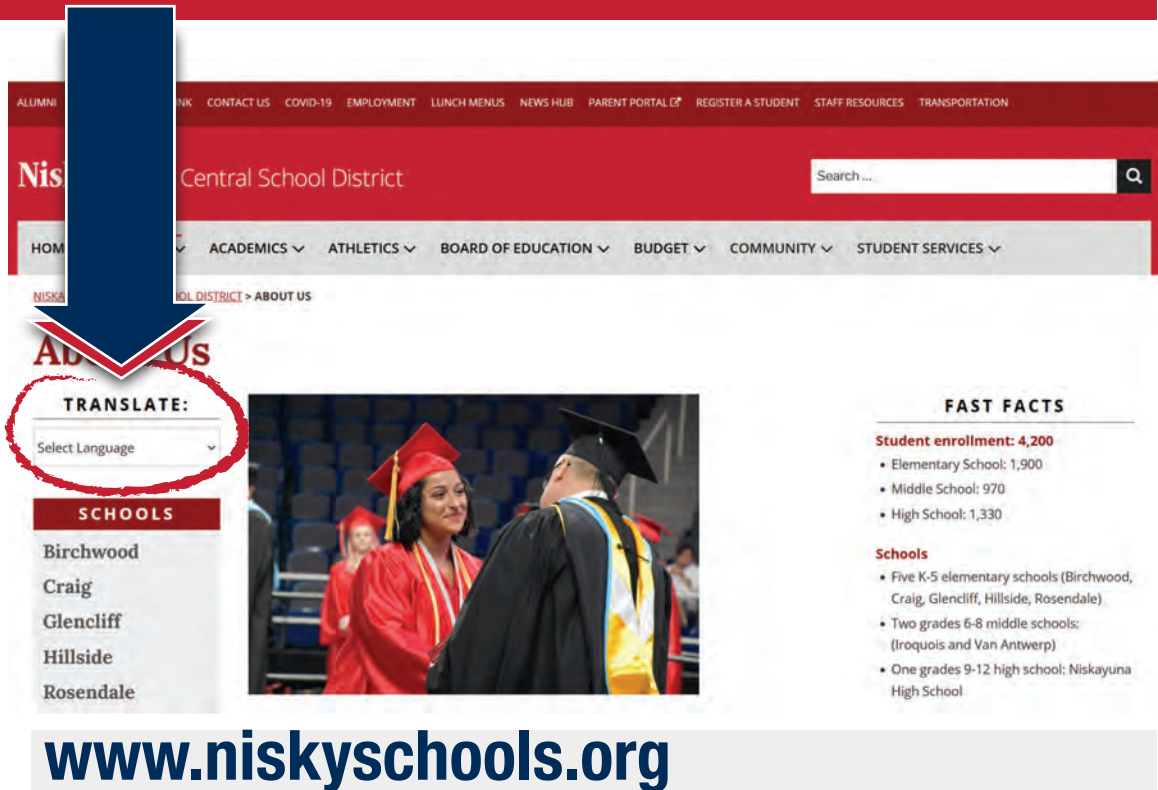
Back-to-School

Startup Guide



Translating our Website

We want all members of our community to know that our website, www.niskyschools.org can be translated. Please see the graphic on this page to select the language of your choice. If you have any questions or concerns related to receiving information in a language other than English, please contact our Director of English as a New Language Michael Elliott at melliott@niskyschools.org.



我们网站上的语言翻译

我们希望我们社区的所有成员都知道我们的网站 www.niskyschools.org 可以翻译，请参见本页的图片选择语言。从以上选择您的语言。如果您对接收非英语语言的信息有任何疑问或顾虑，请联系我们在 melliott@niskyschools.org 上的英语（作为一门新语言）总监 Michael Elliott。

ਸਾਡੀ ਵੈਬਸਾਈਟ 'ਤੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ

ਅਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੱਸਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੀ ਵੈਬਸਾਈਟ www.niskyschools.org ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਹਿਯੋਗੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਾਪਦਾਨ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦੀ ਚੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰ ਸੂਚੀਤ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਚੋਣ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਪੇਜ 'ਤੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗੀ ਗਰਾਫਿਕ ਵੇਖੋ। ਜੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਤੋਂ ਛੁੱਟ ਸਹਿਯੋਗੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਸਵੀਕਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਿਯੋਗੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਡਾਇਰੈਕਟਰ ਆਫ਼ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ ਐਸ ਐਲ ਐਲ ਮੈਲੀਅਟ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ। melliott@niskyschools.org 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Traducción de idiomas en nuestro sitio web

Queremos que todos los miembros de nuestra comunidad sepan que nuestra página web, www.niskyschools.org puede ser traducida. Por favor, vean el gráfico de esta página para seleccionar el idioma. Arriba para seleccionar el idioma de su elección. Si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud relacionada con la recepción de información en un idioma que no sea el inglés, por favor contacte con nuestro Director de Inglés como Nuevo Idioma Michael Elliott en melliott@niskyschools.org.

Dịch Ngôn Ngữ trên Trang Web của Chúng Tôi

Chúng tôi muốn tất cả thành viên cộng đồng biết rằng trang web của chúng tôi, www.niskyschools.org có thể được dịch. Vui lòng xem hình ảnh trên trang này và chọn ngôn ngữ bên trên để chọn ngôn ngữ của quý vị. Nếu quý vị có bất kỳ thắc mắc hay quan ngại nào liên quan đến việc nhận thông tin bằng một ngôn ngữ không phải tiếng Anh, vui lòng liên hệ với Giám Đốc Chương Trình Tiếng Anh Như Một Ngôn Ngữ Mới, Michael Elliott tại melliott@niskyschools.org.

Superintendent's Message



Carl J. Mummenthey
Superintendent of Schools

Dear Family and Friends,

It brings me great joy to welcome you all back for the 2024-25 school year!

Over the past two years, it's become clear to me that it's the people that make this place and our schools so special. Our community's unwavering commitment to fostering inclusive and supportive environments clearly encourages our students to accomplish their academic and extracurricular goals in ways we all can take great pride.

This year, our leadership team will be focused on examining our policies and procedures relating to school safety and security, introducing our 2024-27 district strategic plan, and facilitating smooth transitions for our newly appointed school and district leaders.

Additionally, our capital project work is continuing across all our campuses. We plan to move our district offices from Van Antwerp Middle School to our new location on Balltown Road in mid-October and break ground on renovations at VA this school year. These developments will pave the way for our middle-level reconfiguration plan, which will allow students to have consistent school experiences at both VA (Grades 5-6) and Iroquois (Grades 7-8) middle levels.

These improvements are tremendous undertakings that require continued support from the community. I am deeply grateful for the trust you've placed in us and our leadership team will continue to work hard to earn that trust from you.

Thank you for your continued support and best wishes for a successful school year!

Respectfully,

Carl J. Mummenthey
Superintendent of Schools

Back-to-School: 2024-25

Allergy Aware, Allergy Prepared

As a district, we take the health and safety of all members of our school community seriously. At the beginning of this school year, we want to remind you of the importance of taking steps to protect people who have severe allergic reactions to some foods, like nuts.

No cafeterias in our school buildings serve products containing nuts. We recommend only nut-free foods for lunches and snacks that students bring to school.

EpiPens (Epinephrine) are available in each of our school buildings and school staff are trained to recognize the signs of a severe food allergy reaction. Those symptoms may include any or all of the following:

- **GENERAL:** dizziness, loss of consciousness, feeling of panic or doom.
- **MOUTH:** swelling of lips, face, tongue, throat, a report that the mouth “feels hot”
- **BREATHING:** wheezing, difficulty breathing, congested cough, tightness in throat.
- **STOMACH:** discomfort, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea.
- **SKIN:** hives, swelling, rash

Please remind your child to alert the nearest teacher or staff member if they or someone around them is exhibiting these symptoms.

School Arrival and Dismissal Times

LEVEL	ARRIVAL	INSTRUCTIONAL DAY BEGINS	DISMISSAL
Elementary (K-5)	7:45 a.m. <i>Students should not arrive at school prior to 7:45 a.m.</i>	7:55 a.m.	2:10 p.m.
Middle School	8:40 a.m. <i>Students should not arrive at school prior to 8:40 a.m.</i>	8:50 a.m.	3:15 p.m.
High School	8:15 a.m. <i>Buses arrive at approximately 8:25 a.m.</i>	8:40 a.m.	3:15 p.m.

Welcoming New Leadership Team Members

Ms. Rebecca Grabicki was appointed to serve as principal at Birchwood Elementary School. Ms. Grabicki has served in district-level leadership roles at Schalmont Central School and most recently as the Assistant Director of Instructional Support at Bethlehem Central School. Ms. Grabicki, a Niskayuna alumnae, resides in Niskayuna with her family. Her two children attend school in our district.

Mr. David Zadoorian was appointed to serve as principal at Glenclyff Elementary School. Mr. Zadoorian most recently served as Middle School Principal at the Fonda-Fultonville Central School District. Previously, he served as a building-level leader at Bethlehem Central School District, a school counselor at Lansingburgh Central School District, and an elementary classroom teacher.

Laurel Jones was appointed as our inaugural Director of Student Growth and Instruction Support. This is an exciting opportunity for Ms. Jones and our district as we focus on improved student outcomes for ALL of Niskayuna's students. In this new role, she will work closely with other directors, principals, and teachers in leveraging our uses of data to ensure the growth and success of our students.

Luke Rakoczy has assumed the principalship at Rosendale Elementary School. Mr. Rakoczy brings a wealth of experience to this new role, along with a strong student-centered style of leadership and a deep understanding of and commitment to our greater Niskayuna community.

John Moskov has been appointed as principal of Van Antwerp Middle School. Mr. Moskov, a Niskayuna alumnus and longtime district teacher and leader, brings a strong background in instructional practice, social-emotional learning and a deep understanding of Niskayuna schools, students and families.

Be SMART: Resources on Secure Gun Storage

Providing our students and staff in the Niskayuna Central School District with a safe educational environment remains one of our top priorities. We are all aware of incidents of gun violence in our state and across the nation. A national survey found that 57 percent of teens are concerned that there will be a shooting in their school.

Studies of all types of school-based gun violence across decades all point to the same significant point of intervention—addressing students unauthorized access to guns in the home. For example, a recent Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center study of targeted school violence incidents from 2008 to 2017, found that 76 percent of the firearms were obtained from the home of a parent or close relative.

Unsecured guns in the home pose a risk to students beyond gun violence in schools. Every year, 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else. That's roughly one unintentional shooting per day. Gun suicide among children has reached the highest rate in more than

20 years. In the overwhelming majority of these incidents, the gun used was one that belonged to someone in their home.

One study found that 70 percent of parents believe their teen cannot access the gun(s) in their home. Yet, the study also found that half of teens said they could gain access to a loaded gun in their home in under an hour, including one-third who said they could do so in under five minutes. Research shows that secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens. Storing firearms securely protects any child in the home as well as students throughout the school district and community.


You can learn more and download helpful resources; including a secure storage fact sheet, talking to your children about guns, and facts and resources on child firearm suicide, at besmartforkids.org/resources.org.



Scan to learn more and download helpful resources

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Secure
all guns in your home and vehicles;

Model
responsible behavior around guns;

Ask
about the presence of unsecured guns in other homes;

Recognize
the role of guns in suicide; and

Tell
your peers to be SMART.

For more information on what you can do to keep kids safe, visit BeSmartForKids.org

Stay Connected through ParentSquare

The district uses an application called ParentSquare for school-to-home communication. This communications platform is designed to keep parents and family members informed and encourage greater engagement and connection with our schools. ParentSquare provides a centralized location for many types of communication between you and the school.

In particular, ParentSquare provides a safe way for district administrators, school principals, teachers, staff, and parents to:

- Send and receive school and class information
- Share classroom pictures and files
- See calendar items
- Sign up to volunteer when applicable
- Schedule parent-teacher conferences
- And much more . . . all in one centralized place!



Some Tips for Using ParentSquare

#1 Activate Your Account

We use the email address we have for your family to create your account. Click the link in the activation email you receive from us.

#2 Download the App

It's easy to stay in the loop with the ParentSquare App. Download it for your iOS or Android devices.

#3 Set Preferences

Click your name in the top right to customize how you receive notifications, as well as language preferences.

#4 Get Photos & Files

Click "Photos & Files" to access pictures, forms, and documents that have been shared with you.

#5 Appreciate Posts

Click "Appreciate" in your email/app or website to thank a teacher or staff member for their message.

#6 Find People

Click "Directory" in the sidebar to find contact information for school staff.

#7 Get in Touch

Click "Messages" in the sidebar to privately get in touch with staff and teachers.

#8 Participate

Click "Sign-Ups & RSVPs" to see opportunities when applicable. Click bell on top to check your commitments.

Our Schools

BIRCHWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

897 Birchwood Lane
Niskayuna, NY 12309
Phone: (518) 344-2910
Fax: (518) 344-5610
Principal: Rebecca Grabicki

Birchwood Elementary School opened its doors to students in September 1956. Today, the school serves approximately 400 students.



ROSENDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2445 Rosendale Road
Niskayuna, NY 12309
Phone: (518) 377-3123
Fax: (518) 377-1098
Principal: Luke Rakoczy

Rosendale Elementary School opened its doors to students in September 1956. Today, the school serves approximately 400 students.



CRAIG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2566 Balltown Road
Niskayuna, NY 12309
Phone: (518) 377-0156
Fax: (518) 377-1075
Principal: Dr. William Anders

Craig Elementary School dates back to a one-room school house located at the top of Aqueduct Hill in the 1800s. Craig opened its doors to students in its current location in 1949 and today serves approximately 400 students.



IROQUOIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

2495 Rosendale Road
Niskayuna, NY 12309
Phone: (518) 377-2233
Fax: (518) 377-0655
Principal: Thomas Fyvie
Assistant Principal: Christopher Adamek

Iroquois Middle School opened in September 1969. Today, the school serves approximately 550 students.



GLENCLIFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

961 Riverview Road
Rexford, NY 12148
Phone: (518) 399-2323
Fax: (518) 399-4072
Principal: David Zadoorian

Glencliff Elementary School opened its doors in 1956, and today serves approximately 350 students. Located in Rexford, Glencliff students come from Schenectady and Saratoga Counties. This area includes parts of Clifton Park, Glenville, Niskayuna and Rexford as well as the village of Alplaus.



VAN ANTWERP MIDDLE SCHOOL

2253 Story Avenue
Niskayuna, NY 12309
Phone: (518) 370-1243
Fax: (518) 370-4610
Principal: John Moskov
Assistant Principal: Stacey Muscato

Van Antwerp Middle School was originally built in 1877 as a one-room schoolhouse. Today, the school serves approximately 400 students.



HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1100 Cornelius Avenue
Niskayuna, NY 12309-6540
Phone: (518) 377-1856
Fax: (518) 377-1099
Principal: Dr. Shireen Fasciglione

Hillside Elementary School opened its doors to students in 1956. Today, Hillside serves nearly 400 students.



NISKAYUNA HIGH SCHOOL

1626 Balltown Rd.
Niskayuna, NY 12309
Phone: (518) 382-2511
Fax: (518) 382-2539
Principal: John Rickert
Asst. Principal (Gr. 9): Joseph Coleman
Asst. Principal (Gr. 10-11): Anthony Malizia

Niskayuna High School opened in 1957. Today, the school serves a student population of approximately 1,350 students in grades 9-12. Thirteen academic departments offer a rich variety of programs.



Contact Information

District Administration

Superintendent

Carl Mummenthey x50706
cmummenthey@niskyschools.org

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

Jessica Moore x50703
jmoore@niskyschools.org

Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services

Timothy Fowler x50737
tfowler@niskyschools.org

Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations

Matt Leon x50709
mleon@niskyschools.org

Chief Equity Officer

Latisha J. Barnett x50741
lbarnett@niskyschools.org

Director of Human Resources

Matthew Petrin x50736
mpetrin@niskyschools.org

Director of Student Growth and Instructional Support

Laurel Jones x50723
ljones@niskyschools.org

School Phone Numbers & Principals

Birchwood

Principal Rebecca Grabicki 344-2910
rbauergrabicki@niskyschools.org

Craig

Principal William Anders 377-0156
wanders@niskyschools.org

Glenclyff

Principal David Zadoorian 399-2323
dzadoorian@niskyschools.org

Hillside

Principal Shireen Fasciglione 377-1856
sfasciglione@niskyschools.org

Rosendale

Principal Luke Rakoczy 377-3123
lrakoczy@niskyschools.org

Van Antwerp

Principal John Moskov 370-1243
jmoskov@niskyschools.org

Assistant Principal Stacey Muscato x20717
smuscato@niskyschools.org

Iroquois

Principal Thomas Fyvie 377-2233
tfyvie@niskyschools.org

Assistant Principal Chris Adamek x19717
cadamek@niskyschools.org

Niskayuna High School 382-2511

Principal John Rickert x21702
jrickert@niskyschools.org

Assistant Principal Anthony Malizia x21709
amalizia@niskyschools.org

Assistant Principal Joseph Coleman x21704
jcoleman@niskyschools.org

District Directors, Operations & Services

Director of Art & Design

Sara Bussert 382-2511 x21738
sbussert@niskyschools.org

Director of Athletics, Health and Physical Education

Larry Gillooley 382-2511 x21761
lgillooley@niskyschools.org

Director of Counseling & Athletic Programming

TBA

Director of English Language Arts and Library Media

Megan Collins 377-4666 x50751
mcollins@niskyschools.org

Director of Music

Eric Hughes 382-2511 x21711
ehughes@niskyschools.org

Director of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

TBA

Director of Social Studies, World Language, and English as a New Language

Michael Elliott 377-4666 x50755
melliott@niskyschools.org

Assistant Director of Student Support Services

Brianna Meikle x50737
bmeikle@niskyschools.org

Director of Student Support Services, K-6

Julie Bouyea x21736
jbouyea@niskyschools.org

Director of Student Support Services, 7-12

Andrea Marques-Clarke x50735
amarquesclarke@niskyschools.org

Director of Information Technology

Henry "Gus" Geidel 382-2511 x21741
hgeidel@niskyschools.org

Communications Office

Emily Burkhard 377-4666 x50707
eburkhard@niskyschools.org

Lindsay Quackenbush x50704
lquackenbush@niskyschools.org

Food Service Director

Ross Tuskey 598-8151
rtuskey@niskyschools.org

Transportation Director

Richard Kirk 370-0160
rkirk@niskyschools.org

Director of Facilities

Anthony Lento 344-2934 x34702
alento@niskyschools.org

Building Use Coordinator

TBA

How Can We Help You?

What to do when you have a question or concern

We want to address your questions and concerns quickly and effectively. In order to do so, please contact the staff member most directly involved first. If the question remains unresolved, please proceed to the next level.

When someone contacts a Board of Education member or a district administrator before working through the process, they will be referred to the staff member most immediately involved with that particular issue. The Board of Education will become involved, if necessary, in the final stage of the process.

Below is an example of who to contact first and how to proceed if your questions or concerns are not addressed.

Teacher



Department Director



Principal



Assistant Superintendent



Superintendent



Board of Education

If you do not know who to contact first, please call your child's school and ask. The district website, www.niskayunaschools.org contains contact information for staff members at each school.

Our Board of Education

It is the primary responsibility of the Board of Education to set policies for the school district. While individual Board members listen to concerns, they can only act as an entire body when conducting official Board of Education meetings. The superintendent and administrative staff are legally empowered to administer the school district and operationalize the policies and decisions of the Board of Education. The entire Board can be reached by e-mail at schoolboard@niskayschools.org

BOARD MEMBERS

Elisabeth Cococcia, *President*

Jessica LaFex, *Vice President*

Ehasuyi Gomes

Howard Schlossberg

Sarah Tishler

Judith Tomisman

Kimberly Tully

Board meetings are generally held in the District Office Board Room at 6 p.m. unless otherwise announced before a meeting. A public livestream is provided for meetings. The Board meeting dates and times listed below may be subject to change. Please visit the district calendar at www.niskayunaschools.org for the most updated information, including how to access the livestream.

Board of Education Meeting Schedule 2024-25

- September 10, 2024, Regular Meeting
- September 17, 2024, Special Meeting
- October 8, 2024, Regular Meeting
- October 15, 2024, Regular Meeting
- November 12, 2024, Regular Meeting - Hillside Students First Hillside
- December 10, 2024, Regular Meeting - National Merit Recognition HS
- January 7, 2025, Regular Meeting
- January 28, 2025, Regular Meeting
- February 11, 2025, Regular Meeting - Iroquois Students First Iroquois
- February 25, 2025, Regular Meeting
- March 11, 2025, Regular Meeting - Craig Students First Craig
- March 25, 2025, Regular Meeting
- April 8, 2025, Regular Meeting - Birchwood Students First Birchwood
- April 23, 2025, Regular Meeting
- May 6, 2025, Regular Meeting - Public Budget Hearing
- May 20, 2025 - Annual Budget Vote
- May 27, 2025, Regular Meeting - Tenure Candidate Reception
- June 10, 2025, Regular Meeting - Retiree Reception
- July 8 or 15, 2025 Organizational Meeting

District Calendar

Niskayuna 2024-25 School Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2024

- 2** Labor Day – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 5** First Day of School Grades 1-8
Kindergarten & 9th Grade Orientation
- 6** High School Classes Begin
First Full Day of Kindergarten

OCTOBER 2024

- 3** Rosh Hashanah – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 11** Emergency Early Release Day Drill
- 14** Columbus/Indigenous People's Day – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 25** K-5 Early Dismissal, Parent-Teacher Conferences (10:45 a.m. dismissal)
- 30** K-6 Parent Teacher Conferences (K-5 10:45 a.m. dismissal; Grade 6 12:17 p.m. dismissal)

NOVEMBER 2024

- 5** Election Day – Superintendent's Conference Day – No Classes
- 7** K-8 Early Dismissal, Parent-Teacher Conferences (K-5 10:45 a.m. dismissal; 6-8 12:17 p.m. dismissal)
- 11** Veterans Day – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 12** K-5 Parent Teacher Conference (10:45 a.m. dismissal)
- 27-29** Thanksgiving Holiday – No Classes – Offices Closed

DECEMBER 2024

- 23** Holiday Recess - No Classes - Offices Open
- 24-25** Christmas Observed – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 26-31** Winter Holiday Recess – No Classes – Offices Open

Student Recess: Dec. 23 through Jan. 1

Cultural and Religious Celebrations

In addition to the dates listed here, our students celebrate and participate in a variety of cultural and religious events and holidays throughout the year. We embrace the rich diversity of our school community and understand that in many cases our students participation in these traditions come before school activities. We will also avoid conflicts between specific celebrations and holidays and school events. You will find many cultural and religious celebrations highlighted on the school calendar on our website.

Note: Calendar dates are subject to change. Please visit the calendar on the district website at niskayschools.org/calendar for the most updated information.

JANUARY 2025

- 1** New Year's Day – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 2** Classes Resume
- 20** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 21-24** Regents Testing
- 24** No High School Classes – Regents Rating Day
8th Grade Orientation
- 29** Lunar New Year – No Classes – Offices Closed

FEBRUARY 2025

- 17** President's Day – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 18-21** Winter Recess – No Classes – Offices Open
- 26** K-6 Early Dismissal, Parent-Teacher Conferences (K-5 10:45 a.m. dismissal; 6 12:17 p.m. dismissal)

MARCH 2025

- 7** K-8 Early Dismissal, Parent-Teacher Conferences (K-5 10:45 a.m. dismissal; 6-8 12:17 p.m. dismissal)
- 31** Superintendent's Conference Day – Eid al Fitr

APRIL 2025

- 14-17** Spring Recess – No Classes – Offices Open
- 18** Good Friday – No Classes – Offices Closed

MAY 2025

- 26** Memorial Day – No Classes – Offices Closed

JUNE 2025

- 4, 10** Regents Testing
- 17-27** Regents Testing
- 12** Last Regularly Scheduled Day at the High School
- 13, 16** High School Local Exams
- 19** Juneteenth – No Classes – Offices Closed
- 24** K-5 Half-Day
- 25** Last Student Day for K-8 (Half Day)
- 26** Graduation
- 27** Regents Rating Day

Student Support: Counseling and Mental Health

The Niskayuna K-12 Counseling Department is committed to providing a caring and supportive program. We inspire our students to develop academically, socially, and emotionally to become strong and responsible citizens who are well prepared for an ever-changing world.

Director of K-12 Counseling & Athletic Programs

TBA

Elementary Contacts:

Birchwood

PSYCHOLOGIST: Samantha Lee slee@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Bailey Pangman bpangman@niskyschools.org

Craig

PSYCHOLOGIST: Beth Sabourin esabourin@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Debbie Shephard dshephard@niskyschools.org

Glenclyff

PSYCHOLOGIST: Jessica Mucilli jmucilli@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Jessica Reiff jreiff@niskyschools.org

Hillside

PSYCHOLOGIST: Maggie Williams mwilliams@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Sarah Mae Sinisi ssinisi@niskyschools.org

Rosendale

PSYCHOLOGIST: Janell Timmany jtimmany@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Jessica Brennan jbrennan@niskyschools.org

Middle School Contacts:

Iroquois

IROQUOIS COUNSELING CENTER: (518) 377-2361

GRADE 6 COUNSELOR:

Brian McAllister bmcallister@niskyschools.org

GRADE 7 COUNSELOR:

Kate Carroll kcarroll@niskyschools.org

GRADE 8 COUNSELORS:

Kate Carroll (A-L) kcarroll@niskyschools.org

Brian McAllister (M-Z) bmcallister@niskyschools.org

PSYCHOLOGIST: Mary Cloutier mcloutier@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Alexa Ruchel-Brierley aruchelbrierly@niskyschools.org

Van Antwerp

VAN ANTWERP COUNSELING CENTER: (518) 370-1243, option #2

GRADE 6 COUNSELOR:

Kevin McFerran kmcFerran@niskyschools.org

GRADE 7 COUNSELOR:

Meghan McCarthy mmccarthy@niskyschools.org

GRADE 8 COUNSELORS:

Meghan McCarthy (A-L) mmccarthy@niskyschools.org

Kevin McFerran (M-Z) kmcFerran@niskyschools.org

PSYCHOLOGIST: Brandon Sinisi bsinisi@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Alyce Malone amalone@niskyschools.org

High School Contacts:

Each student at Niskayuna High School is assigned a counselor to help navigate the difficulties and pave the way to graduation. Counseling assignments are based on grade and last name. Students can find their counselor and contact information below.

PSYCHOLOGIST: Jennifer Reitinger jreitinger@niskyschools.org

PSYCHOLOGIST: Justine Coman jcoman@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Allison Nunez anunez@niskyschools.org

SOCIAL WORKER: Meg Farquharson mfarquharson@niskyschools.org

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING CENTER: (518) 382-2511, ext. 21724

School Counselors

Tim Albanese

talbanese@niskyschools.org

➤ Class of 2025 – Grade 12: Aad - Dob

➤ Class of 2026 – Grade 11: A - Di

➤ Class of 2027 – Grade 10: Afg - Dun

Mimi Hajjar

ahajjar@niskyschools.org

➤ Class of 2025 – Grade 12: Dog - Lin

➤ Class of 2026 – Grade 11: Do - Ka

➤ Class of 2027 – Grade 10: Ea - Lag

Anne Hughes

ahughes@niskyschools.org

➤ Class of 2025 – Grade 12: Li - Rom

➤ Class of 2026 – Grade 11: Ke - Pe

➤ Class of 2027 – Grade 10: Lan - Raj

Carnita Melvin

cmelvin@niskyschools.org

➤ Class of 2028 – Grade 9: A - Z

Leah Wertz

lwertz@niskyschools.org

➤ Class of 2025 – Grade 12: Ros - Z

➤ Class of 2026 – Grade 11: Po - Z

➤ Class of 2027 – Grade 10: Rei - Z

Nancy Bushee

nbushee@niskyschools.org

➤ High School Assistance Team 9

➤ High School Assistance Team 10

➤ Individualized Success Program

➤ Academic Skills Lab

➤ Alternative Education

Crisis Lines & Community Resources

SUICIDE AND CRISIS LIFELINE 988

24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals

HELP BY TEXT TEXT HOME TO 741741
Connect with a Crisis Counselor

CAPITAL REGION CHILD & ADOLESCENT MOBILE CRISIS . . . (518) 292-5499

CAPITAL REGION ADULT MOBILE CRISIS (518) 292-5461

ELLIS MEDICINE CRISIS SERVICES . . . (518) 243-4000, 1101 NOTT STREET
Available 24/7 via phone

RAPE/SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTER, ELLIS HOSPITAL'S EMERGENCY
ADOLESCENT CRISIS UNIT (518) 243-4306

CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-342-3720

TREVOR LIFELINE (LGBTQ YOUTH) 1-866-488-7386

Food Services

DIRECTOR OF FOOD
AND NUTRITION:
Ross Tuskey

Phone: (518) 598-8151
rtuskey@niskayschools.org

We take pride in serving healthy, delicious meals every day. Lunch menus are posted on the district website. Children in families meeting federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. More information is included in this booklet.



Lunch Menus

Download the new **LINQ Connect** app available on Google Play and Apple App Store to view menus and manage your student's meal account.

Lunch menus are also available on the district website in both electronic calendar and printable formats.

Complete Your Application for Free or Reduced Price School Meals

All families are encouraged to complete an application for free or reduced-price meals to see if they are eligible. Only one application is needed per household. When families qualify for free or reduced-price meals, there are additional benefits, including:

- Discounted home internet service from Spectrum
- Free or reduced-cost AP, SAT, ACT exam fees
- Free or reduced-cost college application fees
- Free or reduced costs for college courses taken in high school

You can conveniently apply online through your **LINQ Connect** account at www.linqconnect.com for your child to receive free or reduced price school meals. Your application will be sent from a secure website directly to Niskayuna Central School District.

Paper applications are included in this booklet and are available in all school offices, the district office and on the district website.

2024-25 Meal Prices

Breakfast

Elementary School – \$2.00
Middle School – \$2.00
High School – \$2.50

Lunch

Elementary School – \$3.40
Middle School – \$3.65
High School – \$3.65

LINQ Connect Meal Account Platform

We're excited to inform you that our meal payments portal has been upgraded to a new platform called LINQ Connect.

To view and manage your student's meal account, you must create a new login on the LINQ Connect website. Please follow the steps below to create a new login with LINQ Connect:

LINQ Connect has many useful new features:

- Set low-balance reminders
- Set up automatic meal payments and transfer funds between students
- Create spending limits for the account
- Manage your account using the LINQ Connect app available in the Apple App store and Google Play
- View school lunch menus directly in the app

The LINQ Connect platform can also be used to apply for free/reduced school meals in addition to paper forms that are mailed home and available at each school building.

Please note, LINQ Connect charges a transaction fee of \$2.95 for each transfer of funds to your meal account from an external payment source such as your credit/debit card. **Deposits to your meal account may also be made by check to your child's school.**

Visit www.linqconnect.com/ to view and manage your student's meal account. You will need to create a new login if this is your first time using the new platform.



NISKAYUNA CSD ANNUAL NEWS RELEASE - PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Niskayuna CSD today announced a free and reduced price meal (Free Milk) policy for Niskayuna area school children. Local school officials have adopted the following family eligibility criteria to assist them in determining eligibility:

2024-2025 INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS OR FREE MILK

Free Eligibility Scale						Reduced Price Eligibility Scale					
Free Lunch, Breakfast, Milk						Reduced Price Lunch, Breakfast					
Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly	Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	\$ 19,578	\$ 1,632	\$ 816	\$ 753	\$ 377	1	\$ 27,861	\$ 2,322	\$ 1,161	\$ 1,072	\$ 536
2	\$ 26,572	\$ 2,215	\$ 1,108	\$ 1,022	\$ 511	2	\$ 37,814	\$ 3,152	\$ 1,576	\$ 1,455	\$ 728
3	\$ 33,566	\$ 2,798	\$ 1,399	\$ 1,291	\$ 646	3	\$ 47,767	\$ 3,981	\$ 1,991	\$ 1,838	\$ 919
4	\$ 40,560	\$ 3,380	\$ 1,690	\$ 1,560	\$ 780	4	\$ 57,720	\$ 4,810	\$ 2,405	\$ 2,220	\$ 1,110
5	\$ 47,554	\$ 3,963	\$ 1,982	\$ 1,829	\$ 915	5	\$ 67,673	\$ 5,640	\$ 2,820	\$ 2,603	\$ 1,302
6	\$ 54,548	\$ 4,546	\$ 2,273	\$ 2,098	\$ 1,049	6	\$ 77,626	\$ 6,469	\$ 3,235	\$ 2,986	\$ 1,493
7	\$ 61,542	\$ 5,129	\$ 2,565	\$ 2,367	\$ 1,184	7	\$ 87,579	\$ 7,299	\$ 3,650	\$ 3,369	\$ 1,685
8	\$ 68,536	\$ 5,712	\$ 2,856	\$ 2,636	\$ 1,318	8	\$ 97,532	\$ 8,128	\$ 4,064	\$ 3,752	\$ 1,876
Each Add'l person, add	\$ 6,994	\$ 583	\$ 292	\$ 269	\$ 135	Each Add'l person, add	\$ 9,953	\$ 830	\$ 415	\$ 383	\$ 192

***Students in New York State that are approved for reduced price meals will receive breakfast and lunch meals and snacks served through the Afterschool Snack Program at no charge.**

SNAP/TANF/FDPIR Households: Households that currently include children who receive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) but who are not found during the Direct Certification Matching Process (DCMP), or households that currently receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) must complete an Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals/Milk, listing the child's name, a valid SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR case number and the signature of an adult household member. Eligibility for free meal benefits based on participation in SNAP, TANF or FDPIR is extended to all children in the household. When known to the School Food Authority, households will be notified of their children's eligibility for free meals based on their participation in the SNAP, TANF or the FDPIR programs. No application is necessary if the household was notified by the SFA their children have been directly certified. If the household is not sure if their children have been directly certified, the household should contact the school.

Other Source Categorical Eligibility: When known to the School Food Authority, households will be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals based on the individual child's designation as Other Source Categorically Eligible, as defined by law. Children are determined Other Source Categorically Eligible if they are Homeless, Migrant, Runaway, a foster child, or Enrolled in Head Start or an eligible pre-kindergarten program.

Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income. A separate application for a foster child is no longer necessary. Foster children may also be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits for other children. Including children in foster care as household members may help other children in the household qualify for benefits. If non-foster children in a foster family are not eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits, an eligible foster child will still receive free benefits.

If children or households receive benefits under Assistance Programs or Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs and are not listed on the notice of eligibility and are not notified by the School Food Authority of their free meal benefits, the parent or guardian should contact the school or should submit an income application.

Other Households: Households with income the same or below the amounts listed above for family size may be eligible for and are urged to apply for free and/or reduced price meals (or free milk). They may do so by completing the Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals/Milk sent home with the letter to parents. One application for all children in the household should be submitted. Additional copies are available at the principal's office in each school.

Applications may be submitted any time during the school year to Susan Frank Capital Region BOCES, 900 Watervliet Shaker Road, Albany, NY 12205 | susan.frank@neric.org. Please contact Susan Frank at (518) 464-5133 with any questions regarding the application process.

Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the School Food Authority if they choose to decline the free meal benefits. Households may apply for benefits at any time throughout the school year. Children of parents or guardians who become unemployed or experience a financial hardship mid-year may become eligible for free and reduced price meals or free milk at any point during the school year.

Children in households receiving Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits may be eligible for free or reduced price meals through the application process.

For up to 30 operating days into the new school year (or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first) an individual child's free or reduced price eligibility status from the previous year will continue within the same School Food Authority. When the carryover period ends, unless the household is notified that their children are directly certified or the household submits an application that is approved, the children's meals must be claimed at the paid rate. Though encouraged to do so, the School Food Authority is not required to send a reminder or a notice of expired eligibility.

The information provided on the application will be confidential and will be used for determining eligibility. The names and eligibility status of participants may also be used for the allocation of funds to federal education programs such as Title I and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), State health or State education programs, provided the State agency or local education agency administers the programs, and for federal, State or local means-tested nutrition programs with eligibility standards comparable to the NSLP. Eligibility information may also be released to programs authorized under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) or the Child Nutrition Act (CNA). The release of information to any program or entity not specifically authorized by the NSLA will require a written consent statement from the parent or guardian.

The School Food Authority does, however, have the right to verify at any time during the school year the information on the application. If a parent does not give the school this information, the child/children will no longer be able to receive free or reduced price meals (free milk).

Under the provisions of the policy, the designated official will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent is dissatisfied with the ruling of the designated official, he/she may make a request either orally or in writing for a hearing to appeal the decision. **Mr. Carl Mummenthey, Superintendent** whose address is 1239 Van Antwerp Road, Niskayuna NY 12309 has been designated as the Hearing Official. Hearing procedures are outlined in the policy. However, prior to initiating the hearing procedure, the parent or School Food Authority may request a conference to provide an opportunity for the parent and official to discuss the situation, present information, and obtain an explanation of the data submitted in the application or the decisions rendered. The request for a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish the right to a fair hearing.

Only complete applications can be approved. This includes complete and accurate information regarding: the SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR case number; the names of all household members; on an income application, the last four digits of the social security number of the person who signs the form or an indication that the adult does not have one, and the amount and source of income received by each household member. In addition, the parent or guardian must sign the application form, certifying the information is true and correct.

In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, disability or limited English proficiency.

Nondiscrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

Date Withdrew _____



F _____ R _____ D _____

Niskayuna CSD 2024-2025 Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals/Milk

To apply for free and reduced price meals for your children, read the instructions on the back, complete **only one** form for your household, sign your name and **return it to the address listed below**. Call **(518) 464-5133**, if you need help. Additional names may be listed on a separate paper.

Return Completed Applications to:

Susan Frank, Senior Shared Food Service Program Specialist

Capital Region BOCES

900 Watervliet Shaker Road, Albany, NY 12205 susan.frank@neric.org

1. List all children in your household who attend school:

Student Name	School	Grade/Teacher	Foster Child	Homeless Migrant, Runaway
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. SNAP/TANF/FDPIR Benefits:

If anyone in your household receives either SNAP, TANF or FDPIR benefits, list their name and CASE # here. **Skip to Part 4 and sign the application.**

Name: _____ CASE #: _____

3. Report all income for ALL Household Members (Skip this step if you completed step 2)

All Household Members (including yourself and all children that have income).

List all Household members not listed in Step 1 (including yourself) **even if they do not receive income**. For each Household Member listed, if they do receive income, report total income for each source in whole dollars only. If they do not receive income from any other source, write '0'. If you enter '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report.

Name of household member	Earnings from work before deductions <i>Amount / How Often</i>	Child Support, Alimony <i>Amount / How Often</i>	Pensions, Retirement Payments <i>Amount / How Often</i>	Other Income, Social Security <i>Amount / How Often</i>	No Income
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total Household Members (Children and Adults)

*Last Four Digits of Social Security Number: XXX-XX- ____ - ____

I do not have a SS# ☐

*When completing section 3, an adult household member must provide the last four digits of their Social Security Number (SS#) or mark the "I do not have a SS# box" before the application can be approved.

4. Signature: An adult household member must sign this application before it can be approved.

I certify (promise) that all the information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that the information is being given so the school will get federal funds; the school officials may verify the information and if I purposely give false information, I may be prosecuted under applicable State and federal laws, and my children may lose meal benefits.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Home Address: _____

5. Ethnicity and Race are optional; responding to this section does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

Ethnicity: ☐ Hispanic or Latino ☐ Not Hispanic or Latino

Race (Check one or more): ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Asian ☐ Black or African American ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Island ☐ White

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE – FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

Annual Income Conversion (Only convert when multiple income frequencies are reported on application)
Weekly X 52; Every Two Weeks (bi-weekly) X 26; Twice Per Month X 24; Monthly X 12

☐ SNAP/TANF/Foster
☐ Income Household: Total Household Income/How Often: _____ / _____ Household Size: _____
☐ Free Meals ☐ Reduced Price Meals ☐ Denied/Paid
 Signature of Reviewing Official _____ Date Notice Sent: _____

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To apply for free and reduced price meals, complete only one application for your household using the instructions below. Sign the application and return the application to Susan Frank, Capital Region BOCES, 900 Watervliet Shaker Road, Albany, NY 12205 | susan.frank@neric.org. If you have a foster child in your household, you may include them on your application. A separate application is not needed. Call Susan Frank at (518) 464-5133 if you need help. Ensure that all information is provided. Failure to do so may result in denial of benefits for your child or unnecessary delay in approving your application.

PART 1 ALL HOUSEHOLDS MUST COMPLETE STUDENT INFORMATION. DO NOT FILL OUT MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD.

- (1) Print the names of the children, including foster children, for whom you are applying on one application.
- (2) List their grade and school.
- (3) Check the box to indicate a foster child living in your household, or if you believe any child meets the description for homeless, migrant, runaway (a school staff will confirm this eligibility).

PART 2 HOUSEHOLDS GETTING SNAP, TANF OR FDIPIR SHOULD COMPLETE PART 2 AND SIGN PART 4.

- (1) List a current SNAP, TANF or FDIPIR (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations) case number of anyone living in your household. The case number is provided on your benefit letter.
- (2) An adult household member must sign the application in PART 4. SKIP PART 3. Do not list names of household members or income if you list a SNAP case number, TANF or FDIPIR number.

PART 3 ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS MUST COMPLETE THESE PARTS AND ALL OF PART 4.

- (1) Write the names of everyone in your household, whether or not they get income. Include yourself, the children you are applying for, all other children, your spouse, grandparents, and other related and unrelated people **in your household**. Use another piece of paper if you need more space.
- (2) Write the amount of current income each household member receives, before taxes or anything else is taken out, and indicate where it came from, such as earnings, welfare, pensions and other income. If the current income was more or less than usual, write that person's usual income. **Specify how often this income amount is received: weekly, every other week (bi-weekly), 2 x per month, monthly. If no income, check the box.** The value of any child care provided or arranged, or any amount received as payment for such child care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care under the Child Care and Development Block Grant, TANF and At Risk Child Care Programs should **not** be considered as income for this program.
- (3) Enter the total number of household members in the box provided. This number should include all adults and children in the household and should reflect the members listed in PART 1 and PART 3.
- (4) The application must include the last four digits only of the social security number of the adult who signs **PART 4** if Part 3 is completed. If the adult does not have a social security number, check the box. **If you listed a SNAP, TANF or FDIPIR number, a social security number is not needed.**
- (5) **An adult household member must sign the application in PART 4.**

OTHER BENEFITS: Your child may be eligible for benefits such as Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). To determine if your child is eligible, program officials need information from your free and reduced price meal application. Your written consent is required before any information may be released. Please refer to the attached parent Disclosure Letter and Consent Statement for information about other benefits.

USE OF INFORMATION STATEMENT

Use of Information Statement: The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not submit all needed information, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the primary wage earner or other adult household member who signs the application. The social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or other FDIPIR identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs.

We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

Focus on School Safety

The safety of our students is our top priority. All members of our school community have a role in school safety, and knowing how to respond in the event of an emergency is an important part of this. Please review this information carefully and make sure your family has a plan in case of an emergency. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your child's school directly.

DEFINITIONS



Shelter-in-Place

A shelter-in-place is when students and staff are required to remain indoors, perhaps for an extended period of time, because it is safer inside the building or in a room than outside.



Hold-in-Place

A hold-in-place is used to limit movement of students and staff while dealing with short-term emergencies.



Lockout

A lockout is the course of action the school will execute to secure the school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose a potential concern outside of the school.



Lockdown

A lockdown is used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence inside or around the school. The primary objective of a lockdown is to quickly ensure all school staff, students and visitors are secured in rooms away from immediate danger.



Evacuation of a school building takes place if it is determined that it is safer outside than inside the building (fire, explosion, hazardous material spill), and staff, students and visitors can safely reach the evacuation location without danger.

Expectations of Parents & Families

- ❗ In the event of an emergency, communications will be sent from the district to families via text, e-mail and phone call when we have accurate and appropriate information to share. Updates will be posted on the district website as needed.
- ❗ In the event of an emergency situation, DO NOT rush to the school. This will create additional traffic and may impede emergency vehicles or otherwise disrupt response procedures.
- ❗ DO NOT CALL your student on his/her cell phone. Silence may be important in case there is an emergency and students need to focus on following instructions from adults at school.
- ❗ Please avoid speculating about emergency situations on social media, as this can cause more panic and disruption.
- ❗ If a situation requires transporting students to an alternate site, parents/guardians will be informed of that location via the district's messaging system and the website.
- ❗ Students may be held at an alternate site until release is approved by the district or public safety officials. Students will only be released to authorized individuals.

How can YOU prepare for an emergency?

- ❗ Have an early dismissal plan and make sure your child is aware of it, including where they will go and who will be waiting for them at the bus stop. Make sure emergency "backup" contacts (e.g. grandparents, neighbors) know their role.
- ❗ All parents/guardians MUST keep their emergency contact information and school records updated. If you have any questions, please contact the school's main offices.
- ❗ Make sure your student knows his/her bus number, regardless of if they take the bus on a regular basis. Buses may be used to transport all students in an emergency and it is important they know the number.

Focus on School Safety

Safety Program Updates and Upgrades in Recent Years



Security Camera System Replacement/Upgrade: Completed across the district in the spring of 2018



Visitor Management System: The district's Visitor Management System scans visitor's license and prints a badge. Please bring a valid photo ID when you come to the school.



New Technology: Two new systems are digitizing safety information and facilitating internal/on-site communications in case of emergency. Of note, a blue light will flash outside of a school placed on lockdown.



Safety Plans and Training in Niskayuna Schools

A district-wide safety plan and individual school safety plans are established annually. Staff and student training is a critical component of implementing the plans. Each year, students and staff are required to complete four lockdown and eight fire drills. The goal is to ensure that all are well-versed in safety procedures and protocols. These drills and procedures will continue to evolve based on best practices and our work with law enforcement. We are focused on ensuring they are meaningful and age-appropriate.



Tips for talking with children about school safety

Whether it's on the news or related to a drill or incident at school, students may have concerns or questions related to their safety at times. School counselors and social workers are available to support your child – reach out if you need help.

- ❗ Remind students that schools are safe places. Our school staff works with local police and fire departments, emergency responders, and medical professionals to keep them safe.
- ❗ Children should tell an adult they trust if they see or hear something that makes them feel uncomfortable, nervous, or frightened.
- ❗ At times it may be prudent to limit the students' exposure to the media.
- ❗ Try to stay calm and answer questions the best that you can.
- ❗ When something upsets a child, sticking to a routine and doing activities they enjoy is often helpful.
- ❗ There are opportunities for students to play a positive role in the school and community, through clubs, other activities or just helping classmates.

Adapted from tips and resources provided by the The National Association of School Psychologists and Capital Region BOCES *Parent Today*.



In the event of an emergency, communications will be sent from the district to families via text, e-mail and phone call when we have accurate and appropriate information to share.

Transportation

We proudly transport Niskayuna students to and from school, athletic events, and other activities safely and efficiently. Your children's safety is our first priority! If you have not done so already, please submit your requests for transportation to childcare locations to the Transportation Department as soon as possible. The request forms are on the district website. Frequently asked questions about student transportation can be found on our website.

REMINDER: Please remember, at the start of a new year, it takes time to settle into the routes, and buses typically do not run right on schedule for the opening days. We appreciate your patience. Please review your designated bus route, stop and pick-up time in PowerSchool and contact the Transportation Department directly at (518) 370-0160 with any questions. Transportation changes will require a minimum of one week to take effect.

Transportation Information for 2024-25

- Transportation will be provided from a single location and to a single location for each student for both the morning and afternoon with the exception of students who are riding designated district buses to established childcare providers in the afternoon.
- Established childcare locations that we will transport to in the afternoon are: Capital Kids Care, Schenectady JCC, St. Kateri's, TSL, Villa Fusco and Wiggles and Giggles Child Care Center. Parents may designate an established childcare location and the day(s) their child will be transported there after school and the day(s) their child will be transported on their regular bus route. In order for this to happen, parents/families must complete and return the "Transportation Request to Childcare Locations" form that is on the district website.
- Other than going to these childcare locations, students will only ride their regular, designated bus route. There will be no bus passes and/or riding to friends' houses on other routes.
- If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the director of transportation.

The routes:

What's the difference between bus numbers and route numbers?

A: The bus number is the number of the vehicle itself, whereas the route number is the white magnetic sign that is stuck on the side by the door. We use route numbers because the actual bus that transports may change (in for service, or inspection, etc.), but the route number won't. If you call with a question, it helps if you know your child's route number, not the bus number.

Bus stops:

I can't see my child at the bus stop from my house. Why can't the stop be at my house?

A: It is impossible for us to route according to sight lines from houses. Students are expected to travel a certain distance to bus stops, depending on their school grade level: elementary – 1/10th of a mile from home to bus stop; middle school – 2/10ths of a mile; high school – 3/10ths of a mile.

What are you doing to ensure my child gets to and from the stop safely?

A: It is the parent's responsibility to get the child to and from the bus stop. It is the District's responsibility to give the child a safe place to be picked up and dropped off.

The stop is up the street, on the opposite side. Does my child have to cross the street?

A: It is your choice to either let your student be on the correct side when the bus comes, or wait until the bus arrives, and then cross on the driver's signal, with the bus' lights activated. We prefer the latter, as the bus can control traffic.

Riding the bus:

Non-Public School Students: We cannot transport students from another district on our buses – there can be no exceptions to this.

My child's bus ride seems very long, and I'm only 5 minutes from school. What can be done about that?

A: All our elementary routes range from 30 to 50 minutes long, depending on the school and pick up area. However, the time from any home directly to school is probably only 5 minutes or less. We are transporting an average of 65 students per bus, sometimes making 25 stops. Everybody is close, and someone always has to be first.

The bus driver:

Who is the bus driver?

A: Before they ever transport a single student, the bus driver has:

- undergone over 70 hours of training.
- been fingerprinted (criminal background check) and drug tested.
- taken a DMV road test, followed by a Niskayuna Schools road test.
- taken a "physical performance test" that tests coordination and strength.
- had a physical.

After all this, every year they do a Defensive Driving Review, a physical, and two mandated driver "refreshers." They also are subject to random drug and alcohol testing. Every other year they must take the road test, physical performance test, and written test.



Niskayuna Transportation Department

1301 Hillside Ave.
Niskayuna, NY 12309
Phone: (518) 370-0160

Transportation Director:
Richard Kirk
rkirk@niskayschools.org

Snow days/delays:

A two hour delay has just been announced on TV. When will the bus come?

A: Two hours later than the regular pick up time. However, one or two hour delays usually present their own problems. The bus is supposed to pick up one or two hours later, but delays are usually called because of bad weather, which means more traffic. And since a delay also puts us in the middle of business traffic, the delay may make us later than the expected one or two hours.

Items on buses:

What types of items can be brought on the bus?

A: Generally, if an item does not fit in the student's lap, it will not be permitted on the bus. Any large items must be approved by the driver and consideration must be given to room available on the bus. No child will be without a seat because of a large article taking up space.

What types of items are not allowed on the bus?

A: It is mostly the bus drivers' discretion to restrict items coming aboard if they feel safety is an issue. If in doubt, call us to ask. Items not allowed include: guns (real or toy), skis and ski poles, sleds, fireworks, bicycles, spray cans, saws or axes, skateboards and scooters, matches and lighters, knives (real or toy), animals (pets), etc.

Health Services

The goal of school health services is to maintain optimum health for all children, enabling them to realize their full potential.

Physicals & Screenings

State law requires a physical examination by a New York State-licensed physician for new entrants and students entering grades prekindergarten or kindergarten, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. The state recommends that this physical be performed by the family physician. The school physician does physicals only when the family has not arranged for the examination. Health screenings (e.g. vision, scoliosis) conducted by school nurses vary by grade level. Please contact your school nurse for more information.

Q. ➤ What should I do if my child does not feel well?

A: If your child does not feel well, please keep them home from school. If they are displaying symptoms of a respiratory virus, including COVID-19, influenza and and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), please contact a healthcare provider. Symptoms of respiratory viruses include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and/or diarrhea. Whether or not a child is displaying symptoms of a respiratory virus, if they are not feeling well, they should stay home from school. Students can go back to normal activities if symptoms are getting better overall and they no longer have a fever without the use of fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours.

Q. ➤ What should a student do if they feel ill during the day?

A: If a student is not feeling well for any reason during the school day, they should go to the school nurse. The nurse will evaluate them and will contact the student's family and may make a recommendation about following up with a physician as needed.

Medication in School

In order for a school nurse to administer medication during school hours, either prescription or over the counter, the following are required by the State of New York:

1. An order from a licensed prescriber including name of medication, dosage and time to be administered;
2. Parent/Guardian permission to administer the medication;
3. The parent/guardian must assume the responsibility to have the medication delivered directly to the school nurse in a properly labeled original container.

Students who have been diagnosed with severe allergies or asthma may need to carry emergency medications on their person. This is permissible and highly advised. The physician may complete a release to self-medicate form. The school nurse will keep this on file. Please contact your child's school nurse for necessary forms.

First Aid

Basic first aid is rendered to all who may require it. If the injury is extensive, a paramedic call may be made to transport the student for medical attention. Accident/incident reports are made on all serious injuries.

Insurance

School district accident insurance covers students for accidents that occur during school activities. It is non-duplicating coverage, meaning the family must first file with its own health and accident insurance plan. Forms for medical expenses that are not thus covered may be obtained from the school nurse at the child's school.

Required Immunizations

All students enrolled in New York State schools grades K-12 must provide proof of immunizations. If you have any questions, please contact your family physician or school nurse. If you do not have a health care provider or need help getting the immunizations, we can provide information from the local health department about where your child can receive them.

School Nurses

BIRCHWOOD

Melissa Nardolillo,
mnardolillo@niskyschools.org
(518) 344-2910, ext. 10704

CRAIG

Madelyn Symons, RN
msymons@niskyschools.org
(518) 377-0156, ext. 11704

GLENCLIFF

Holly Britton, RN
hbritton@niskyschools.org
(518) 399-2323, ext. 12704

HILLSIDE

Katrina Cutting, RN
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(518) 377-1856, ext. 13704

ROSENDALE

Heather Bulger
hbulger@niskyschools.org
(518) 657-1367, ext. 14704

VAN ANTWERP

Carol Perrino
cperrino@niskyschools.org
(518) 370-1243, ext. 20707

IROQUOIS

Christine Gravelle, RN
cgravelle@niskyschools.org
(518) 377-2019, ext. 19707

HIGH SCHOOL

(518) 878-5483, ext. 21768

Patrice Adams
padams@niskyschools.org

Sascha Cade
scade@niskyschools.org

Cheryl Berkof, Clerical Assistant
cberkof@niskyschools.org
(518) 382-2511, ext. 21767

Weather-Related Closures and Delays

The Niskayuna Central School District has established protocols for deciding whether to close or delay school or cancel activities due to snow or other inclement weather. The district uses several information channels to communicate this information with parents and community members.

Information sources for school closings, delays, and early dismissals

If there are any changes in school operation hours, the district uses several information vehicles to inform parents and community members, as outlined below. School is open on its usual schedule unless otherwise announced.

- E-mail and text alerts (Parents are automatically connected)
- Our district website; weather notices are posted right on the homepage
- Local media stations and websites (Channel 6, Spectrum News Channel 9, Channel 10, Channel 13, Fox 23, WFLY (92.3 FM), WGNA (107.7 FM), WGY (810 AM), WYJB (B95.5), WRVE (99.5 FM), Daily Gazette, Times Union)

It is best to rely on more than one information source, particularly in situations where the weather may cause power outages.

District Protocols for Closing and Delaying School or Canceling Activities

Closing School for the Entire Day: If it appears that students cannot be transported safely to school or home at the end of the day, Niskayuna schools will not open. The district will make every attempt to announce snow days or delays by 5:30 a.m.

Delayed Start of the School Day: When conditions warrant, we may utilize a two-hour delay to the start of the school day. When there is a two-hour delay, the bus will arrive 2 hours later than the usual pickup time. When a two-hour delay is called, the district retains the option to close school for the full day. This decision will be made by 7 a.m., and communicated promptly. The district's philosophy is to avoid one-hour delays.

Afterschool and Evening Activities: If students cannot be transported to and from afternoon and/or evening activities safely, they will be canceled. Although it is not always possible, our goal is to make decisions about afterschool activities by 12:30 p.m. and evening activities by 2 p.m.

Early Dismissal During Inclement Weather

The district's philosophy is to avoid early dismissal. We do not want parents rushing home on less than ideal roadways, and we believe that keeping children at school is often the best way to keep them safe during bad weather. However, in the event that this is necessary, notification will be made as early in the day as possible.

Wind Chills and Cold Temperatures

Severe climate conditions where temperatures and wind chill dip into certain extreme ranges can cause concerns for the safety of children. When wind chills approaching -25 degrees are predicted, the district may be placed on a cold weather alert. When persistent wind chills of -25 degrees or below are predicted, we are likely to delay or close school, consistent with guidance from the New York Statewide School Health Services Center.

Additional information about cancellations

As a general rule, when school is closed for the day or there is an early dismissal, all afterschool and athletic activities and evening events, including Continuing Education classes, are canceled and the pool at Niskayuna High School is closed, unless it is otherwise announced.



➤ Special Note About Emergency Days:

As of this publication, our plan for this year is that any days where inclement weather prevents students and staff from safely coming to school will be “traditional snow days” and not remote learning days. The calendar for the year has some days built into it for this purpose.

Code of Conduct Summary

The code of conduct serves as a guide to good citizenship, promoting positive behavior and helping students understand expectations, which are based on mutual respect, citizenship, character, acceptance, honesty and integrity. The code of conduct reflects how we can all work together to support our students and their growth and development. K-12 code of conduct emphasizes these guiding principles:



- ***Restorative practices***
- ***Diversity and equity***
- ***Social and emotional learning***
- ***Pro-social behavior***
- ***Student engagement***
- ***Expectations, respect and accountability***

Summary of Key Aspects of the Code of Conduct:

- The code of conduct highlights rights and responsibilities of students; parents, guardians and caregivers; educators, principals, the superintendent and the Board of Education.
- All students have the right to a sound, quality education in a school environment that is safe, orderly and promotes learning.
- All students have the responsibility to be active participants in their learning, attend school daily, arrive on time and be prepared to learn.
- All visitors to the school must report to the Main Office to sign-in and observe the Code of Conduct. Anyone who is on school property when they are not supposed to be will be reported to the school principal and asked to leave.
- Every student should do his or her own work. It is often important in school work to give credit to other sources of information like the Internet or books. Teachers will talk to students about how to give credit to other information sources.
- The possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, synthetic narcotics, non-prescribed medications, alcohol, or the consumption of drugs or alcohol during school hours or at any interscholastic or co-curricular event is strictly prohibited.
- All forms of harassment, discrimination, hazing, bullying and cyberbullying are strictly prohibited in our schools.
- Both words and physical actions that harm others can result in student discipline. Activity that takes place off of school property, including on the Internet and social media sites, can carry consequences in school for students if the behavior disrupts the school environment.
- Weapons, including any object that appears to be a weapon, are not allowed at school. Students who bring a weapon to school can be suspended.
- It is against the law for anyone to make a bomb threat against a school in New York.

Code of Conduct Summary continued

Levels of Behavior and Responses

The code of conduct outlines levels of behavioral infractions and potential consequences. In determining how to best address inappropriate, unacceptable and unskillful behavior, we know it is necessary to evaluate all of the circumstances surrounding the behavior. Consequences will then be paired with meaningful instruction and guidance to offer students an opportunity to learn from their mistakes.

- **Level 1:** Teacher and/or staff interaction to teach correct behavior and promote self-discipline and healthy well-being.
- **Level 2:** Administrative intervention to address more serious and disruptive actions.
- **Level 3:** Administrative intervention and short-term removal for violations that potentially jeopardize order, safety and property.
- **Level 4:** Intensive administrative intervention and lengthier removal from the learning environment when safety and well-being of others is threatened.
- **Level 5:** Intensive district administration intervention and discipline with potential long-term removal from school or alternative placement for actions that may involve force and result in harm, injury or violence.

All members of the school community must assume a role in promoting behavior that enhances academic and personal success. Courteous, respectful and responsible behavior fosters a positive climate and one that promotes learning.

Interventions and consequences will be implemented in a culturally responsive and consistent manner across all schools and grade levels.

Students and families should know that the school will provide interventions inside and outside the classroom that support a restorative, rather than punitive, response. Our belief is that by addressing issues from a restorative perspective, we can guide students when their actions are less serious and minimize more severe behavior and responses.

A complete copy of the Code of Conduct is available to all members of our school community upon request and available directly on our website via the QR code below.



Dignity for All Students Act

You should feel safe at school. People should treat other people the way they would like to be treated. You should be able to learn, do your work, and have fun and be part of activities without worrying about the words or actions of others making you feel unsafe or uncomfortable. We are all different, but no one should be treated differently because of things like how they look or what their family does. It is against school rules to make anyone else feel threatened or unsafe.

A law known as the Dignity for All Students Act focuses on making sure that you and your classmates are safe and feel safe at school. It is wrong for students to be teased or treated differently because of their actual or perceived race (including traits associated with race such as hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), or sex. Every school principal is in charge of working with everyone at school to create a safe and supportive environment. If anyone is saying or doing things that are making you or others feel unsafe or uncomfortable, you should tell your principal or another adult at school. They are there to help you learn and make sure you feel safe. The Dignity for All Act Coordinator for each school is the principal. Contact information is on the district website.

Policies & Notifications

Student Records

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of accurate student records and the need to maintain confidentiality in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). With respect to a student's educational records, parents have the right to: inspect and review educational records of their children; request the amendment of records the parent/eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights; the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except information that can be disclosed without consent; and the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Dept. of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with FERPA. The full Student Records policy can be obtained from the District Office or on the district's Website.

Release of Student Information

The district may release student information defined as "directory information" without prior written consent, unless otherwise notified by parents. The district has designated directory information as: student's name, home address(es), telephone number(s), date and place of birth, honors and awards, participation in recognized activities, dates of attendance, grade and school of attendance, teacher name and class lists, future educational plans, names of parents/guardians, parent e-mail addresses, and student photo/video. Examples of the use of information include: release to the news media, in district communications such as the website, official social media sites and district newsletters and to assist with PTO-compiled school directories. Parents/guardians who do not want their child's directory information to be released should notify the building principal at the school and notify the superintendent of schools (Niskayuna Central School District) by Oct. 1 of each year.

Access of military recruiters to student information

In accordance with federal law, the district must release secondary school students' names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters or institutions of higher education unless eligible students or parents/guardians request in writing that such information not be released. If you would not like this information released, please notify the District Registrar Dana Mazzone in writing at dmazzone@niskyschools.org.

Dress Code

NCSD encourages self-expression through clothing, but prioritizes safety and learning. Students and parents are primarily responsible for dress code adherence. Staff should exemplify professional attire and guide students towards appropriate attire. The dress code prohibits vulgar, offensive, discriminatory, or substance-promoting clothing. It also bans attire that depicts violence or disrupts the learning environment. The goal is to create a comfortable and inclusive learning environment where students can express themselves freely without fear of judgment or unnecessary discipline. Further details are available on the district site via the QR code on page 23 of this booklet.

Attendance Policy

Students are entitled to a sound basic education that will enable them to enjoy life and become effective citizens. This is best achieved by regular class participation. The Attendance Policy recognizes the relationship between participation in class activities and the mastery of course material. Class attendance is recorded and reported to parents at the end of each marking period, or more frequently if needed. Principals work with staff members to regularly review student attendance and develop building and individual plans to address any issues in partnership with students and families.

Reasons for excused tardiness or absences are: Personal illness or injury, death or emergency illness in the immediate family, obligatory religious observance, required court appearance, medical and dental appointments, school sponsored events, college visits and interviews, career development or exploration programs approved by the principal, driver's road test (not permit tests), late arriving bus, impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe, music lessons, or others as authorized by the principal.

Tardiness or absence for any other reasons is unexcused. Students with an excused absence shall be given an opportunity to make up missed work. Students with unexcused absences shall be subject to the sanctions provided by the Code of Conduct. Parents shall be notified by phone or by letter whenever their child is absent, tardy or departs early without a proper excuse. Additional actions shall be taken for students with severe attendance problems, as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Child Abuse Hotline Information

If you suspect a child is being abused or maltreated (neglected), report it by calling 1-800-342-3720, a toll-free 24-hour hotline operated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call 911 or your local police department. Information about reporting child abuse and maltreatment is available online at <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps/>.

Protection of Pupil Rights

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment provides parents/guardians with certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. In particular, if a survey is funded in whole or part by the U.S. Department of Education, parents/guardians have the right to consent before students are required to complete a survey that asks about any of eight protected areas: political affiliations or beliefs; mental or psychological problems; sexual behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships; religious practices; or income.

Policies & Notifications continued

Parents/guardians will also receive a notice and an opportunity to opt students out of: any other survey that asks about the above protected areas; Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam/screening with the exception of physical exams or screenings required or permitted by state law (e.g. hearing, vision, or scoliosis); and activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing.

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect any surveys that ask about the above protected areas, as well as surveys created by third parties to collect personal information from students for marketing purposes, and instructional materials used as part of the curriculum. Parents/guardians will also be provided with reasonable notification of specific activities or surveys covered by this policy and the ability to opt their child out. Anyone who believes their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Family Policy Compliance Office; U.S. Department of Education; 400 Maryland Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20202.

Use of Pesticides & Request for Notification

The Niskayuna Central School District uses an Integrated Pest Management approach to control structural and landscape pests and to minimize pesticide exposure to students, employees and visitors. While infrequent, in the event that conditions warrant a pesticide application, it is performed by state-licensed applicators and the district maintains a copy of the label of each pesticide used. The district maintains a registry of all individuals who request to receive 48-hour prior notification of pesticide applications on school property. To receive these notifications, please contact the Niskayuna Central School District Communications Office, or communications@niskayschools.org.

Asbestos Management Plan

In accordance with the EPA Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act, the district has in place an asbestos management plan to identify and manage asbestos building materials. The Asbestos Management Plan for the district is available at the District Office. Information about required inspections and any scheduled asbestos project occurring this school year is contained within the Asbestos Management Plan.

Prohibition of Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment, Hazing and Retaliation

The Board of Education is committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity and equality. Board policy prohibits all acts of discrimination, harassment and bullying (including cyberbullying), as well as retaliation, by anyone on school property or at school functions. Acts of discrimination, harassment, hazing, bullying or retaliatory behavior should be reported to any staff member, administrator, or the Title VII/Title IX Officer, Chief Equity Officer Latisha Barnett, lbarnett@niskayschools.org or (518) 377-4666, ext. 50741. Inquiries concerning policies regarding harassment and discrimination

should also be directed toward the Title VII/Title IX Officer. Copies of the Board of Education policies are available in the District Office, in all school main offices, and on the district website.

Prohibition of Sexual Harassment

The Niskayuna Board of Education has a policy prohibiting sexual harassment in the Niskayuna Central School District. Sexual harassment is generally defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Any student, employee or school district officer who believes sexual harassment has occurred should report the alleged misconduct immediately so that corrective action may be taken as necessary. Students or parents should report any alleged misconduct to the Title VII/Title IX Officer, Chief Equity Officer Latisha Barnett, lbarnett@niskayschools.org or (518) 377-4666, ext. 50741, or the building principals. Employees should report any alleged misconduct to the Director of Human Resources. The District recognizes that sexual harassment is a sensitive issue and that students may choose to inform any trusted staff member of suspected discrimination or harassment.

The School District will act to promptly, thoroughly, and equitably investigate all complaints, whether verbal or written, of sexual harassment and will promptly take appropriate action to protect individuals from further sexual harassment. All such complaints will be handled in a manner consistent with the District's policies, procedures, and/or regulations regarding the investigation of discrimination and harassment complaints.

The sexual harassment policy and guidelines are available in school offices or through Title VII/Title IX Officer Chief Equity Officer Latisha Barnett, lbarnett@niskayschools.org or (518) 377-4666, ext. 50741.

Insurance

School district accident insurance covers students for accidents that occur during school activities. It is non-duplicating coverage, meaning the family must first file with its own health and accident insurance plan. Forms for medical expenses that are not thus covered may be obtained from the school nurse at the child's school.

Meal Charge Policy and Unpaid Charges

The district's approach to meal charges and handling unpaid charges is summarized below and outlined in detail in Board of Education Policy No. 5660.

The District's point-of-sale system will track all charges and payments. The District will provide students with the student's meal of choice of the available reimbursable meal choices for that school day upon request, unless the student's parent or guardian has specifically provided written permission to the school to withhold a meal. This does not include a la carte items, adult meals or similar items. Students who use prepaid meal accounts are given a grace period during which they are allowed to charge

(CONTINUED)

Policies & Notifications continued

meals after their prepaid funds have been exhausted. The parent will be notified that the account balance is exhausted and unpaid meal charges are due. No a la carte items may be charged.

The District will not publicly identify a student who cannot pay for a meal or who has accrued meal debt, discuss any outstanding meal debt in the presence of other students, or take any action directed at a pupil to collect unpaid meal fees. Unpaid meal charges will be addressed directly with the student's parent or guardian who is responsible for providing funds for meal purchases.

When a student owes money for five or more meals, the district will make every attempt to determine if the student is directly certified to be eligible for free meals, make at least two attempts to reach the student's parent or guardian to fill out a meal application, contact the parent or guardian to offer assistance with a meal application, determine if there are other issues within the household that have caused the child to have insufficient funds to purchase a school meal, and offer any other assistance that is appropriate.

In addition, discreet notifications of low, exhausted, or deficit balances may be sent to parents at appropriate intervals during the school year. The notification may include a repayment schedule, but will not charge any interest or fees related to meals charged during the grace period.

Board Policy No. 5660 also addresses the return of unused funds on a student's school meal account.

Idling of Vehicle Engines on School Grounds

State law requires school districts to take steps to minimize the idling of the engines of school buses and other school vehicles on school grounds. While students are boarding and departing school buses, the engine should be turned off. Students should be instructed about the importance of getting on and off buses in an orderly and efficient fashion to minimize loading and offloading time. Bus engines should also be off while parked at sporting events and other school activities. Exceptions can be made in cases of emergency, mechanical issues or for necessary heating.

Safe Schools Plan

Under the New York State Project SAVE law (Safe Schools Against Violence in Education), the Niskayuna Central School District has adopted a district-wide safe schools plan. Approved by the Board of Education, the plan consolidates many existing district safety procedures as well as new information required by Project SAVE. Items in the comprehensive plan include: district-wide safe schools plan, information about building-level safety plans, codes of conduct,

emergency response plans, a character education plan, crisis response procedures and building safety team responsibilities. The district plan is available on the website.

Student Evaluation, Promotion and Placement

Decisions about student promotion and placement are at the discretion of the school administration. These decisions are guided by recommendations of teachers and staff members, past academic performance, and parent/guardian input. Past academic performance refers to a variety of indicators of student achievement and growth. Promotion and placement decisions are not based solely on student performance on New York state assessments in grades 3-8 English language arts or mathematics. Parents and/or persons in parental relation to students shall receive an appropriate report of student progress at regular intervals. The District will not include on a student's official transcript or maintain in a student's permanent record any individual student score on a state administered standardized English language arts or mathematics assessment for grades 3 through 8. The district's promotion and placement policy was adopted by the Board of Education following a review by the district administration.

Participation in Graduation Ceremonies by All Eligible Students

New York State Education Law requires the Niskayuna Central School District to inform students and parents/guardians of the district's policy that all eligible students are allowed to participate in a high school graduation ceremony and associated graduation activities with their graduating class (i.e., the 12th-grade class with which such student entered into ninth grade). This includes students who have been awarded a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential or Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential.

Body Mass Index

As part of a required school health examination, a student is weighed and his/her height is measured. These numbers are used to figure out the student's body mass index or 'BMI'. The state requires BMI and weight status group be included as part of the student's school health examination. A sample of school districts will be selected to take part in a survey by the State Department of Health. If our school is selected to be part of the survey, we will be reporting information about our students' weight status groups. Only summary information is sent; No names and no information about individual students are sent. However, you may choose to have your child's information excluded from this survey report. Please contact your school nurse if this is the case.

WE ARE AN ALLERGY PREPARED SCHOOL

EpiPens (Epinephrine) are available in this building. If you or someone around you is experiencing a severe allergic reaction, alert the nearest teacher or staff member.

RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS OF A SEVERE FOOD ALLERGY REACTION

Serious allergic reactions may include any or all of these symptoms:

- General: dizziness, loss of consciousness, feeling of panic or doom
- Mouth: swelling of lips, face, tongue, throat, a report that the mouth “feels hot”
- Breathing: wheezing, difficulty breathing, congested cough, tightness in throat
- Stomach: discomfort, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea
- Skin: hives, swelling, rash



www.niskayunaschools.org

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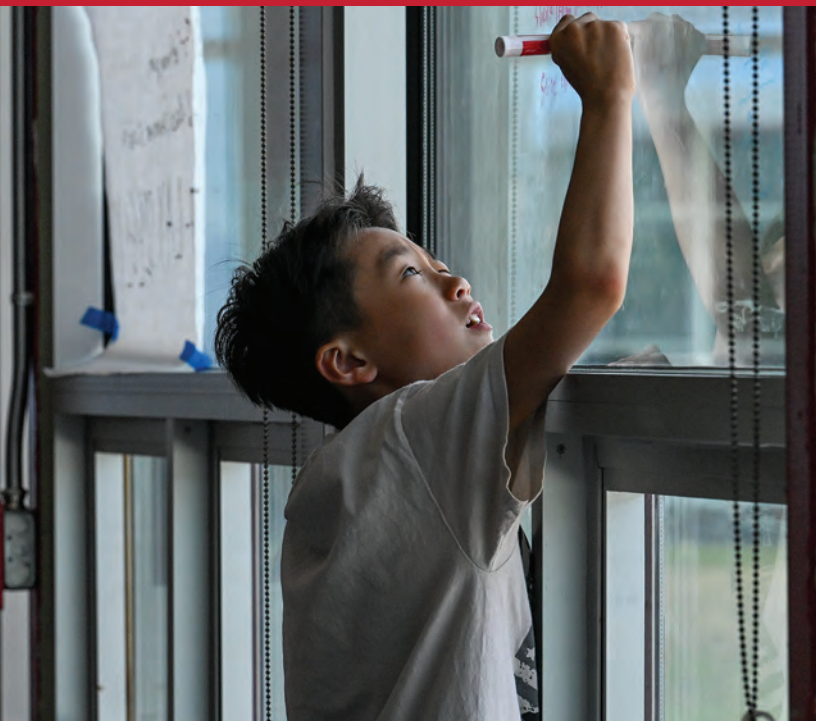
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Matthew Petrin,
Director of Human Resources

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