

# Northern Schoolhouse

## Parent Guide

2022 - 2023



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*We are delighted to welcome your family into our schoolhouse  
You will find all the information you need in this helpful guide*

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# MISSION & VALUES

*“The Dao of great learning lies in making bright virtue brilliant;  
in making the people new; and coming to rest at the limit of the good.”*

—Confucius

## Why Us

Our promise is to uphold the universal power of virtue, bringing it to the forefront of our families and community.

We’re building a new model of education—inspired by the best forms of learning through history: vivid storytelling, direct experience of nature, the richness of the arts, and classical traditions.

We bring you peace of mind that your child will learn in a wholesome atmosphere. We bring you confidence that your child is on the path of growing their character and intellect. We welcome your family to join us in breathing life into an old campus and embarking on a new schooling journey.

## MISSION

We aim to inspire goodness and beauty in the hearts of children.

Your child’s character is shaped by what they pay attention to. We teach them to cultivate the Three Paths of Attention: Knowledge, Genius, and Heart. By attending to Knowledge, they steadily progress in their academic studies. By attending to Genius, they strengthen their ability to think and create. By attending to Heart, they become a kind person who contributes to their family and community.

While we continually present your child with high-level classical content, we value a warm and positive environment every step of the way. We blend the direct study of timeless material with the joy of learning. These are lofty goals, but they are fully attainable.

You will love the growth and happiness you will see in your child.

## THE FIVE SHIPS

The most important thing we can give our children is a superb education—to help them dispel ignorance and take the first steps on their path toward wisdom.

The Five Ships are our principles for helping our students sail through the world toward excellence:

1. **Noble Spirit:** Embracing morality and spirituality as essential to being human
2. **Intellectual Excellence:** Sharpening the power of insight and understanding
3. **Material Refinement:** Upholding dignity and beauty from the outside in
4. **Aspirational Will:** Discovering purpose and setting sincere intentions
5. **Traditional Center:** Applying the best of the past to nourish the future

These Five Ships are part of our entire educational paradigm, from the Schoolhouse to the Academy.

# SPECIAL FEATURES

## MIXED AGES

The timeless "one-room schoolhouse" model provides a recipe for upholding the culture we value. Instead of separating grade levels, we divide our students into two levels, roughly corresponding to ages 6-8 and ages 8-11. The mixed ages model has been used for millennia in learning environments across cultures.

Nowhere in society are people segregated by age—except in public school. Increased accountability, a natural social environment, admiration for authority, and learning to be a mentor are among the many advantages to breaking down the barriers of unnatural age-segregation.

## FAMILY CENTERED

Supporting strong families is among our central values. We promise to:

- Provide full disclosure of our curriculum
- Respect each family's faith or spiritual orientation
- Encourage students to discuss sensitive questions and topics with their parents
- Remain mindful of precious evening, weekend, and vacation family time
- Provide opportunities for our families to connect with each other and form a strong community

## MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY

With the advancement of media technology, we have also seen a spike in youth and adult depression, among other issues. At the schoolhouse, our children enjoy a learning environment free from the subtle burdens of digital technology.

While it's not the place of school officials to dictate parent choices, our team strongly advises our parents to be conservative with your child's exposure to media and digital technology. Exposure to screens has been found to disrupt appetite, sleep habits, and overall focus and clarity in adults as well as in children.

To give your child the best conditions to succeed. We recommend holding off on screens altogether during the school week, saving screens for a weekend activity. Furthermore, we recommend that screen time also be social time, versus a socially isolated activity.

## **DRESS CODE**

Teaching children to recognize and appreciate beauty is one of our central values. In the spirit of providing a clean and clear, classical aesthetic, as well as protecting the purity and modesty of children, we require the following classical-casual dress code:

- Clothing that is free from all words/messages and images/graphics (patterns are acceptable)
- Tops must have sleeves (no exposed shoulders)
- Shorts and skirts must fall just above the knee
- Clothing and shoes must be weather appropriate, as the children spend a lot of time out of doors every day (layering works well in unpredictable weather)
- Rain ponchos and a pair of galoshes for rainy days (we aim to be outside in all weather)
- Children should have a clean set of clothing in their bag (in case of messes)

## **LUNCH & SNACKS**

Families provide their child with a snack, lunch, and water bottle each day. Children have access to their snacks during the morning lessons—we know it's hard to learn on an empty stomach. Children have a full hour to finish their lunch in their own time. Morning snack time will be occasionally supplemented by the Schoolhouse. Please notify your child's teacher of any food allergies..

We encourage parents to provide healthy and hearty lunch and snack options, as the children need fuel for their physical and intellectual activity during the school day. Encouraging healthy eating habits in your child will benefit them for the rest of their life.

We require that parents avoid sending sugar snacks with their child to school, including candy, gum, soda, etc. Sugar intake is counterproductive to your child's clarity and focus. This does not mean you can't send a cookie with your child for after lunch—we trust you to exercise your judgment.

# ENROLLMENT & TUITION

## APPLICATION PROCESS

- Get familiar with our program by viewing our website, reading this guide, attending an open house, or scheduling a tour. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.
- Use the website to submit your application, along with a non-refundable \$80 application fee. Please also include a record or transcript from your child's current school.
- Once we receive your complete application, we will call you to schedule a family interview, where we will go over the Parent Guide and answer any further questions you may have.
- We will finalize our roster in late June, when you will be notified of admission or waiting list status. Upon admission, you will receive an enrollment contract and tuition agreement to be signed and returned.

We consider all applications without regard to race, religion, ethnicity or nationality. New York State Law requires that families furnish an immunization record from the child's pediatrician prior to admission.

## CLASS PLACEMENT

We try our best to strike a balance between age and gender in each of our classrooms, as well as keep our student-teacher ratio low. Your child will be placed in their class with this balance in mind. Our maximum class size is twelve students, with a lead teacher and assistant teacher in each class.

As an entirely new school, we plan to begin the year with just two classrooms. As we grow, we plan to open two additional classrooms. In the event that we open a new classroom mid-year, your child may be moved in order to maintain classroom balance.

# ACADEMIC CALENDAR

## FEATURES

We've designed our unique academic calendar to bring simple organization to the year, to welcome our parents into the Schoolhouse often, to encourage our families to form community, and to maximize opportunities for families to enjoy their free time.

- Our school year is broken up into five TOURS, eight weeks each
- Each Tour concludes with a SUMMIT
- After each Tour, everyone enjoys a 5-day RESET WEEKEND
- Please refer to 'SPECIAL DAYS' for explanations

Northern Schoolhouse 2022-23 Academic Calendar												
<i>Tour Begins</i>		<i>Friday Faire</i>			<i>No School</i>			<i>Summit</i>		<i>Northern Explorers</i>		

AUGUST						SEPTEMBER						OCTOBER								
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3							1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30	31					

### AUGUST

22: Tour I begins (First day of school)

### SEPTEMBER

5: No School (Labor Day)

### OCTOBER

11: Summit & Family Faire  
 12-14: Reset Weekend  
 17: Tour II begins



NOVEMBER							DECEMBER							JANUARY						
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				

**NOVEMBER**

11: No School (Veterans Day)  
 21-25: No School (Thanksgiving Break)

**DECEMBER**

13: Summit & Winter Showcase  
 14-30: No School (Winter Break)

**JANUARY**

2: Tour III begins  
 16: No School (Martin Luther King, Jr., Day)

FEBRUARY							MARCH							APRIL						
			1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4							1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30						

**FEBRUARY**

21: Summit & Family Faire  
 22-24: Reset Weekend  
 27: Tour IV begins

**MARCH**

20-24: No School (Spring Break)

**APRIL**

25: Summit & Family Faire  
 26-28: Reset Weekend

MAY							JUNE							JULY						
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3							1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30	31					

**MAY**

1: Tour V begins  
 29: No school (Memorial Day)

**JUNE**

20: Summit & Summer Showcase  
 (Last day of school)

**JULY**

10: Northern Explorers, Session I begins  
 24: Northern Explorers, Session II begins

# SCHEDULES

## REGULAR DAILY SCHEDULE

Drop off: 8:45  
Lessons: 9:00 - 12:00  
Lunch: 12:00 - 1:00  
Arts & Culture: 1:00 - 2:50  
Library / Play: 3:00 - 3:30  
Pick up: 3:30

## FRIDAY FAIRE SCHEDULE

Drop off: 8:45  
Classroom: 9:00 - 9:10  
Workshop I: 9:10 - 10:00  
Workshop II: 10:10 - 11:00  
Workshop III: 11:10 - 12:00  
Lunch: 12:00 - 1:00  
Workshop IV: 1:00 - 1:50  
Classroom: 1:50 - 2:00  
Early Pick-up: 2:00  
Study Hour: 2:00 - 3:00  
Pick-up: 3:00

## SUMMIT SCHEDULE

Drop off: 8:45  
Rehearsal: 9:00 - 12:00  
Lunch: 12:00 - 1:00  
Presentations: 1:00 - 3:00

## FAMILY FAIRE & WINTER / SUMMER SHOWCASE SCHEDULE

Mingle & Setup: 3:00 - 4:00  
Serve Dinner: 4:00 - 5:00

Faire Activities: 5:00 - 7:00

Showcase Presentations: 5:00 - 7:00

## **FAMILY WELCOME SCHEDULE**

Meet & Mingle, Classroom Exploration: 3:00 - 4:00

Potluck Dinner: 4:00 - 5:00

Orientation Presentation: 5:00 - 7:00

# SPECIAL DAYS & EVENTS

## FAMILY WELCOME

The week before school begins in August, we hold our Family Welcome night. Families will meet our team, meet each other, and familiarize themselves with the classrooms. On this night, we also hold a community potluck and orientation presentation.

## PICTURE DAY

Dress for Picture Day is business casual:

- Boys can wear slacks or jeans with a button-down, polo, or sweater. Adding a tie or vest to the button-down is optional.
- Girls can wear dress pants, jeans, or a skirt with a blouse—or opt for a dress with tights or leggings.
- Avoid bright colors and flashy details. Consider a classic style.
- Jeans should be clean and in good condition, free of tears, fading, or fraying.
- Hair may be worn up or down, but it should be tidy.

Photos will be taken outside during the morning lesson time.

## FRIDAY FAIRE

On Fridays we give our usual studies a rest and get to work making and exploring. Students meet in their main classrooms before setting off to three morning workshops. They have a fourth workshop after lunch. Fridays have an early pick-up option (2:00), with the optional last hour being dedicated to extra study time (2:00-3:00).

Workshops are hosted by our teaching staff, parents, and our community partners. We create a custom line-up of workshops, announced in the Tour Guide. This line-up may also include field trips.

We ask each family (one parent) to volunteer for at least one Friday Faire per year, hosting a workshop from our list or one of their own design. If this feels intimidating, choose one of the simpler workshops from our list, such as Story Hour. We can help you come up with something that suits you! Please inquire. If you have a hobby you

are passionate about, consider giving a demonstration or holding a class and sharing your passion with your child and their peers. It's the unique individual gifts that enrich our children and our school's culture.

Parents will work with our Instructional Coordinator to choose their workshop topic and get on the schedule (refer to Academic Calendar for Friday Faire dates).

## **SERVICE SATURDAY**

We believe that one of the main elements of a happy and successful life is giving of ourselves to others. Service Saturdays are our way of giving back. Activity, time, and location are announced in the Tour Guide.

We invite your entire family to join us on these days for some good-old-fashioned hard work and helping out. Activities may range from volunteering at an animal sanctuary or organic farm, to cleaning up a hiking trail, or simply working in the Schoolhouse Garden.

## **SUMMIT**

During each of the five Tours, students are presented with a wide array of topics and experiences in History, Literature, Poetry, Language & Writing, Mathematics, and Science. Students keep a running portfolio of their work. In addition to the physical portfolio, students practice other material, such as memorized poems or passages, rehearsed reenactments, special presentations, and group demonstrations.

All of this work and practice culminate in a presentation to parents—the Summit. The final week of each Tour is shortened, with all day Monday plus Tuesday morning dedicated to rehearsal. Tuesday afternoon (1:00 - 3:00), parents gather in their child's classroom to enjoy the presentations and review their child's experience of the Tour.

After the Summit, parents have a chance to speak with their child's teachers to receive an overview of their child's performance in the form of written feedback the teachers have prepared.

Each Summit is accompanied by either a Family Faire or a Showcase during the evening.

## **FAMILY FAIRE**

After the Summit and parent-teacher meetings, families and staff gather for a community dinner, followed by two hours of activities—including Family Book Club and more.

## **RESET WEEKEND**

Following each Family Faire is a well-deserved 5-day Reset Weekend, Wednesday through Sunday. These long weekends give plenty of opportunities for family downtime, activities, or travel—during the off-season. Our students have the same number of class days as the standard calendar. Reset Weekends break up the calendar into doable pieces, offering time to rest, reflect, and revamp before the next Tour.

## **WINTER & SUMMER SHOWCASE**

At each Summit, parents get a window into their child’s daily lesson work. At each Showcase, parents are treated to the fruits of their child’s efforts in Art, Music, Dance, and Foreign Language, as well as special schoolwide productions.

The Showcase schedule is the same as Family Faire, with time for parent-teacher meetings after the Summit and a community dinner before the show. The Winter Showcase is the finale before Winter Break, and the Summer Showcase is the finale before Summer Break.