



Student/Parent Handbook  
and Catalog  
2017-18

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The School Board and School Administration reserve the right to amend this Parent-Student Handbook.

Amendments to handbook will be promptly uploaded to the school website if changes are made.

Welcome to Northgate Academy!

We are delighted that you have chosen to study online at Northgate Academy. We have assembled a wonderful team of educators and administrative support staff to help you in your journey.

The climate at Northgate Academy is geared toward student success. Students choose Northgate Academy because they are seeking a high quality high school education. Students attend Northgate Academy because they want to learn and grow as they progress toward high school graduation. At NGA, we are preparing the next generation of Christian leaders. We take our role as educators very seriously. We are highly dedicated to student success and we expect the best from our students. Whatever season of life you may be in, we are here to help every step of the way on your journey toward high school graduation.

Parents are encouraged to check in with our counseling staff regularly. Parents always have access to student progress and achievements. We work hard to keep parents informed of your child's progress. As a parent, you play a vital role with your child's education. You should consider Northgate Academy to be your partner in educating your child. Parents remaining engaged in their child's education is one of the most effective ways of letting the child know that he/she is important and that his/her education is a top priority.

This handbook has been prepared as a source of information to assist the parents and students of Northgate Academy concerning the policies and procedures mandated by the School Board.

After reviewing this handbook, consider saving it on your computer's desktop for future reference. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school administrative office.

The faculty and staff of Northgate Academy extend a warm welcome and we hope that your experience at Northgate Academy will be positive for both you and your child.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Mark A. Ulven, Ed.D.*

President

Northgate Academy

## **Philosophy of Education**

Northgate Academy is a Christian learning community in the tradition of evangelical college preparatory high schools. As such, Northgate strives to foster a culture of excellence in learning based on biblical teachings, in a flexible and nurturing online learning environment.

Education as the process of teaching and learning, involves the whole person, by developing the knowledge, values, and skills which enable each learner to become successful with academics and in life.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Northgate Academy is to raise up the next generation of Christian leaders, through the training and nurturing of students in their spiritual, academic, emotional, and social development. This is realized through delivering a Christ-centered education, founded on biblical truth, which leads to the development a world-view that will greater impact the world for Christ.

### ***Northgate Academy will:***

Emphasize excellence in teaching and learning.

Foster high school level competencies in communication, critical thinking, information literacy, and mathematics in all programs.

Promote the synthesis of academic knowledge and the Christian worldview so that students will experience a maturing of their spiritual, intellectual, social and value-driven behavior.

Encourage a commitment to the Christian life as it is lived out, a life that leads people to Jesus Christ as the Lord of the universe and their own personal Savior.

## **History**

Northgate Academy is part of the Excel Education Systems School District. Excel Schools have been offering accredited online high school programs since 2005. Northgate Academy is the faith based division of Excel Education Systems and was founded to better serve the homeschool community and those seeking a Christian based, high school education.

## **Equal Educational Opportunities**

Equal educational and opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to color, race, nationality, sex, ancestry or age. Any student may file a discrimination grievance by contacting the Office of the President in accordance with the school's Grievance Procedure.

### **Contact Information:**

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### **Statement of Faith**

#### **Fundamental Truths**

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

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### **Accreditation Information**

Northgate Academy is part of the Excel Education Systems independent school district. Northgate Academy is a candidate for accreditation with AdvancED, the parent organization of The North Central Association CASI, the Southern Association of Colleges and School CASI, and the Northwest Accrediting Commission.

AdvancED is a nationally recognized accrediting agency dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide. AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 34,000 schools and school systems—employing more than four million educators and enrolling more than 20 million students—across the United States and 70 other nations. Parents and interested community members can learn more about the AdvancED Accreditation Process at [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org)

Northgate Academy is an A Rated, Accredited Member, of the Better Business Bureau. Membership with the Better Business Bureau (BBB) ensures that organizations agree to the quality and trust standards as set forth by the BBB. Northgate Academy is committed to service excellence.

### **Academic Expectations**

Northgate Academy is a school that is quite different from a traditional bricks & mortar school. Because of the school's unique nature, students must take primary responsibility for their own learning. Self-motivation, dedication to learning, and regular participation are essential. The staff at Northgate Academy is available and actively involved in supporting the students' education, but in reality, it is the student who determines his or her own level of success.

### **Transfer Credits**

During the initial placement process, each full- or part-time student will have the opportunity to transfer in credits from their previous high school experiences. Transfer credits can be accepted from American public high schools, or regionally accredited private schools in America. In order for transfer credits to be accepted at Northgate Academy, the student must have sealed, official transcripts mailed to the Northgate Academy office. Once the official transcripts are received, a formal credit evaluation will be completed and the results of the evaluation will be emailed to the student. Regardless of how many credits a student transfers to Northgate Academy, at least 25% of the total course work needs to be taken with Northgate Academy in order to receive a diploma from NGA.

### **Full-time vs. Part-time Students**

Northgate Academy serves both full- and part-time students and is equally committed to its students, regardless of their level of involvement. Part-time students might take just a few courses – or even just one. Full-time students complete five or six 1.0 credit courses per year. You will choose your full- or part-time status when you enroll in the school.

### **Time & Learning Requirements**

Not unlike a bricks & mortar school, the amount of time students spend on Northgate Academy courses will vary from student to student, and even course to course. However, at Northgate, students will have 12 months with which to complete a course. There is flexibility within that time frame as long as the student, parent and teacher are in regular communication.

On average, students should expect to spend approximately 45 minutes to an hour per day per course to complete the course within the 4-6 month semester schedule. Modeled after a college semester, a full-time student can complete the standard core curriculum requirements for two grade levels within 36 weeks or a typical two-semester school year.

### **Course Extensions**

In extremely rare situations, the school will approve a 2 month extension allowing a student more time to finish a class. In order for a student to be approved for an extension, the student must have stayed in weekly contact with the teacher, making reasonable progress towards course completion (as determined by the approval committee), and submit a legitimate reason (in writing) for needing the extension. The explanation must be signed by both the student and parent and submitted to the teacher, who will forward the request to the approval committee. Examples of a legitimate reason would involve an unforeseen family, personal or medical emergency or natural disaster. Lack of time to communicate or participate will not constitute a reason for granting an extension.

### **Communication & Login (including “attendance” and absences)**

Regular participation in Northgate Academy classes is critical to student success. Regular participation will help to keep students motivated and keep them in touch with their instructors. Although there is no “attendance” in the same way as it is defined at a typical bricks & mortar school, students should log in to each of their courses for substantive participation at least three times each week.

All high school students may establish a Skype account to communicate with their instructors. This free, downloadable software allows for direct one-on-one chats with the instructor in real time. With the purchase of a Webcam, you and your instructor can have live face-to-face conversations over the computer. The Skype Web address is [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com). Instructors will contact students by email, phone, or Skype on a weekly basis to answer questions and discuss student progress.

If a student knows they will not be participating in a course due to vacation, travel or other commitment, they must notify their instructors at least one week in advance of the planned absence. In the case of a prolonged emergency absence, the student and/or parent should notify the school as soon as possible.

## School Calendar

The Northgate Academy calendar is easy to describe. The school is open whenever you want it to be. The school does close for the traditional seasonal holidays; however, students can still participate in their classes during these times.

Our technology makes the school accessible 24/7/365, except for scheduled system maintenance. Our instructors hold regular office hours in which they are available to answer questions or assist in any way. It is recommended to find out what these office hours are so that the student and teachers can maintain regular contact.

We believe this flexibility for students and families, combined with the consistent availability of instructors, is one of the greatest strengths - and most unique features - of Northgate Academy.

## Course List

The following is a list of the courses Northgate Academy currently offers.

### **English:**

English 9

English 10

English 11

English 12

### **Mathematics:**

Pre-Algebra

Algebra I \*Required

Geometry

Algebra II

Pre-Calculus

### **Science:**

Physical Science

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

**Social Studies:**

U.S. Government

U.S. History

World History

World Geography

Economics

**Electives:**

Health in a Christian Perspective \*Required

Kings of Israel

Bible Doctrines for Today

Jesus and His Followers

Family & Consumer Science

Life Management under God

Book of the Revelation

Genesis: The First Things

Spanish 1

Spanish 2

Art History \*Required

\* If there are courses you wish to take that are not yet part of the Northgate Academy curriculum, please contact your counselor. In many cases, we can provide additional high-quality online courses beyond those listed here.

**Academic Counseling**

Academic counseling is available for all full- and part-time students. We will assist with course selection, post-secondary guidance, and other academic counseling issues. Please call the school at 1.800.620.3844 for any academic counseling needs.

**Career and College Counseling**

As a Northgate Academy student, you have free access to expert Career and College Counseling services through our school and [www.myplan.com](http://www.myplan.com). This website has a wealth of resources for

Northgate students ranging from Career Exploration and Assessment Tests, to College and University information and even educates students in selecting a major of study. Students access myplan.com through their student portal where the directions and access codes are available.

### **Northgate Academy Staff**

Northgate Academy is very proud of its extraordinary teaching staff. All of our instructors are experts in their content area as determined either by teaching licenses, advanced degrees in their field, or both. All of our instructors are also committed to online education and providing families the choices and flexibility inherent to the delivery method. Northgate Academy instructors and counseling team will carefully monitor each student's progress and provide instruction via email, discussion boards, chat rooms, telephone and other distance education tools. Instructors will also work to motivate and engage students who suffer from waning enthusiasm. Instructors will also work with parents in multiple ways to help them support their student's learning.

### **Awarding of Credits and Diplomas**

#### **Grading and Reporting**

Northgate Academy uses a traditional A-F grading system. Instructors assign final grades based on the following Grading Scale:

**A = 90-100%**

**B = 80-89%**

**C = 70-79%**

**D = 60-69%**

**F = under 59%**

#### **Other Grade Markings:**

**IN** – Incomplete - Major coursework left uncompleted. Final grade is withheld until sufficient coursework is complete and submitted. Temporary F assigned within one month after last engagement. Final F assigned two months after last engagement.

**W** – Withdrawn - Student officially withdraws from the class.

\*All students with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher will graduate with honors.

## **Credit Requirements for Graduation**

For full-time students who wish to earn a Northgate Academy College Prep diploma, NGA requires a total of 21.5 credits to graduate. NGA offers a standard 21.5 credits diploma, and a 24 credit college prep diploma. Although this matches a typical traditional high school, at Northgate Academy, students can easily complete these credits by following a typical six-course, 18-week semester schedule. \* Students may choose from the 24 or the 21.5 credit diploma programs.

The credits must include at least the following:

### ***24 Credit College Prep Curriculum***

- 4.0 credits of English
- 3.0 credits of Math
- 3.0 credits of Science
- 3.5 credits of Social Studies
- 0.5 credits of Personal Fitness
- 0.5 credits US Government
- 9.5 Elective credits

### ***21.5 Standard High School Curriculum***

- 4.0 credits of English
- 3.0 credits of Math
- 3.0 credits of Science
- 3.5 credits of Social Studies
- 0.5 credit of Health
- 0.5 credit of PE
- 1.0 credit of Art
- 6.0 Elective credits

\* Students planning to attend college are encouraged to enroll in either the SAT or ACT prep courses during their sophomore or junior years depending on when they intend to take either of these exams. Northgate Academy is registered with the College Board and has been assigned school **ID# 240003**.

Any student who intends on graduating from Northgate Academy but has not yet reach their 17th birthday, will be required to complete Standardized testing prior to high school graduation. Northgate Academy will not issue a high school diploma to any student under the age of 17 without accompanying Standardized test scores. For students under the age of 17, SAT/ACT scores must be sent to the High School and will become part of the student's permanent file. Please contact the school counseling office for further details.

### **Credit Granting/Instructional Time Policy**

Northgate Academy issues credit to students when they have completed all required course work with an overall final grade of 60% or higher and a final exam grade of 60% or higher. Credit breakdown is as follows: (1.0) credits = 180 instructional hours (0.5) credit = 90 instructional hours.

\* In order to satisfy accreditation requirements, students must complete at least 25% of their required graduation courses at Northgate Academy in order to be granted their high school diploma from NGA.

### **Transfer Credits & Transcripts**

Northgate Academy welcomes transfer credits from any public, private school or qualified homeschool. Students should request an official transcript be sent from their current or previous school to Northgate Academy at the following address:

Office of the Registrar  
Northgate Academy  
3350 Annapolis Lane N Suite C  
Plymouth, MN 55447

Upon receipt of an official transcript, an NGA counselor will review the transcript and award transfer credits as appropriate. Such transfer credits will appear on the student's Northgate Academy transcript as transfer credits with a notation regarding where the original credit was earned.

### **Homeschool Transfer Credits**

Northgate Academy will accept most homeschool credits via portfolio and transcript review, as well as completion of the NGA HAS online exam. We will work hard to help you transfer your homeschool credits to our school.

Reiterated from page 4:

During the initial placement process, each full- or part-time student will have the opportunity to transfer in credits from their previous high school experiences. Transfer credits can be accepted from American public high schools, or regionally accredited private schools in America; or qualified homeschools. In order for transfer credits to be accepted at Northgate Academy, the student must have sealed, official transcripts mailed to the Northgate Academy office. Once the official transcripts are received, a formal credit evaluation will be completed and the results of the evaluation will be emailed to the student. Regardless of how many credits a student transfers to Northgate Academy, at least 25% of the total course work needs to be taken with Northgate Academy in order to receive a diploma from NGA.

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31).

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

## **Title I, IEP, 504 and Special Education Services**

Northgate Academy is a private high school and does not receive funding from the State or Federal Government. Furthermore, as an online learning institution, our courses are asynchronous and are offered in an independent, self-paced format. Northgate Academy offers standard high school courses. The very nature of Special Education and IEP services requires more hands-on support for students. NGA does not employ Paraprofessionals or offer support for Title I, IEP, 504 and Special Education Services. Students seeking services should contact their local school district offices.

## **Behavior Expectations**

Northgate Academy expects exemplary behavior in all of its environments. Students come to Northgate Academy for a safe and productive environment, and any behavior that, in the judgment of any staff member, negatively impacts that environment can cause the student to be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Progressive Discipline**

In any case of inappropriate behavior or violation of any school policies, the following progressive discipline plan is used. Depending on the seriousness of the offense, the discipline process may begin at any Step in the plan:

**Step 1** Instructor/advisor conference with student. Occasional breaches of netiquette that impact the learning environment.

**Step 2** Instructor/advisor conference with student, parent, and President. Consistent breaches of netiquette that impact the learning environment.

**Step 3** Instructor/advisor conference with student, parent, and President. Student may be placed on probation, resulting in increasingly severe consequences for any subsequent violation. Terms of the probation will be determined by the President in consultation with the advisor, instructor and parent. Moderate violation of the acceptable use policy in a way that does not impact any other student or the function of the school.

**Step 4** A conference will be held with the student, the parent/guardian, the President, the student's advisor, and any instructors involved in the trigger incident(s). Depending on the results of the conference, the student may be placed on probation, expelled from a class, or expelled from school. **In particularly severe cases (such as repeated cases of plagiarism, harassment, or violation of acceptable use policies), expulsion may occur without the conference.**

## **Appropriate Communication & Netiquette**

Netiquette refers to rules of etiquette for Internet-based communication. Netiquette is intended to help staff and students communicate clearly in this environment with a minimum of misunderstandings or other unintended consequences. The basic rules of netiquette to which Northgate Academy subscribes are:

- 1) All course postings should be in standard written English when possible (except in foreign language classes, of course). Since Northgate Academy is an academic environment, slang is generally inappropriate. For brief, informal postings in discussion boards and text chats, it is not necessary to use standard written English; typos and grammar errors are to be expected.
- 2) Avoid using ALL CAPS. In an online text environment, using all capital letters is considered shouting.
- 3) Postings should be meaningful and demonstrate clear, critical and analytical thinking whenever possible. Remember that every posting in a course is part of academic work. Avoid comments that lack substance, such as “I agree” or “Good point.” Make sure that each posting adds substantially to the conversation. This helps make discussions more efficient for everyone.
- 4) Respond respectfully to people, especially when you disagree with them. The academic online environment is conducive to rich, thoughtful discussion. To encourage that, all perspectives should be honored and respected. Instead of “you’re crazy!” try asking clarifying questions, such as “I hadn’t thought of it that way – can you explain that a little more?”
- 5) Remember that your online skills may be less or greater than your peers. Be tolerant of others’ mistakes – and your own.
- 6) Be yourself! Don’t be afraid to inject your personality into your work.

## **Student/Parent Handbook of Policies**

Northgate Academy has many policies, but none are more important than those pertaining to the safety, security, integrity and comfort of its staff and students. The following academic integrity, harassment and acceptable use policies are critical to this philosophy and are included here in their entirety. All students and parents will sign a pledge that they have read, understood and agreed to follow these and other school policies.

## **Academic Integrity & Plagiarism**

### **I. Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity throughout the school. Any learning environment is based on trust, honesty, and integrity. Northgate Academy’s unique online learning environment is no exception.

## II. General statement of policy

Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The school will respond vigorously to all violations of this policy.

## III. Violations

Violations against academic honesty include but are not limited to:

- Impersonating another student or adult, or having any person impersonate the student in any way.
- Copying and submitting another person's as one's own, whether or not that person is part of the Northgate Academy community.
- Representing someone else's work as one's own.
- Including, without citation, work from any other person or source.
- Any other action intended to obtain credit for work not one's own.
- Any form of cheating on any test or assignment.

## IV. Student Responsibilities

Students take full responsibility for all work submitted in their name or from within their account. Students are responsible for understanding academic integrity, plagiarism, and related issues. If a student does not understand such issues, they are responsible for discussing them with an advisor or instructor at the earliest possible time and within one week of starting any Northgate Academy course.

## V. School response

All violations or suspected violations of this policy will result in a report by the instructor to the school President and a phone call to the parent by the President, the instructor, or both.

The school's response to violations of this policy may include, but is not limited to:

- Denying credit for any assignment in which the violation occurs.
- Denying credit for any course in which the violation occurs without refund for that course.
- Suspension or expulsion

## **Academic Policies**

\* Access to Final Exams - Students will not have access to their final exams until at least 60 days from enrollment in the class. Exceptions in extraordinary situations may be considered, in which case, after 30 days after enrollment, the student takes the final proctored exam. Please call and get more information from a Northgate school counselor. If a student fails a final exam, a re-take cannot be granted for thirty (30) calendar days from the time of the first attempt.

\* Academic Probation - If a student fails a course, they are placed on Academic Probation. If a student fails a second course, they are subject to being dismissed from the school. Counselors monitor these students' progress closely and are always available to help with academic support. It is critical that students on Academic Probation understand the urgency of their situation and increase communication with their instructors and counselors to make every effort to improve their academic standing. Northgate Academy staff are dedicated to helping our students!

\* Northgate Academy counselors can load a maximum of 6 courses at a time. Also, students can only be enrolled in one core course at a time. For example, NGA will not enroll students in English 11 and English 12 simultaneously. In the case of a student needing both English credits, the student would need to complete English 11 first, and then the student could take English 12.

## **Harassment Policy**

### **I. Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning environment that is free from any form of harassment including but not limited to: religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence. The school prohibits any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence or any type of behavior, verbal or written or electronic, which causes chronic or continual annoyance.

### **II. General statement of policy**

A. It is the policy of the school to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment and violence. The school prohibits any form of religious, racial, sexual, or chronic harassment and violence or bullying.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil or staff member to harass a pupil or staff member through conduct or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion and race or considered a chronic annoyance as defined by this policy. (For purposes of this policy, school staff includes school advisory board members, staff, agents, volunteers, contractors or persons subject to the supervision and control of the school.)

B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupils or staff members to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict religious, racial, sexual, or chronic violence or bullying upon any pupil or staff member.

C. The school will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written or electronic, of religious, racial, sexual, or continual/chronic harassment or violence, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil or staff member who is found to have violated this policy.

### III. Religious, racial and sexual harassment and violence defined:

#### A. Sexual Harassment; Definition.

1. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- a. submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, or of obtaining an education; or
- b. submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's education; or
- c. that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

2. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:

- a. unwelcome verbal harassment or abuse;
- b. unwelcome pressure for sexual activity;
- c. unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's educational status;
- d. unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's educational status; or
- e. unwelcome behavior, words, or emoticons directed at an individual because of gender, sexual orientation or alleged sexual orientation.

#### B. Racial Harassment; Definition

1. Racial harassment in an online environment consists of pictorial or verbal conduct relating to an individual's race when the conduct:

- a. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic environment;
- b. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
- c. otherwise adversely affects an academic opportunities.

C. Religious Harassment; Definition.

1. Religious harassment consists of pictorial or verbal conduct which is related to an individual's religion when the conduct:

- a. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic environment;
- b. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
- c. otherwise adversely affects an individual's academic opportunities.

IV. Reporting procedures

A. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of religious, racial, sexual or continual/ chronic harassment or violence or bullying by a pupil or staff member of the school or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute religious, racial, sexual, or continual/ chronic harassment or implied violence toward a pupil or staff member should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official designated by this policy. The school encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from any staff member, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting harassment or violence the School Counselor or the President.

B. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of religious, racial, sexual, or continual/ chronic harassment or violence will not affect the complainant or reporter's future grades or work assignments.

C. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory.

D. The school will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery or disclosure obligations.

## V. Investigation

A. By authority of the school, the President, upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence, shall immediately undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by staff members or by a third party designated by the school.

B. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

C. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the school should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

D. In addition, the school may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, pupils, or other school personnel pending completion of an investigation of alleged religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence.

## VI. School action

A. Upon receipt of a report, the school will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, or expulsion.

B. The result of the school's investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures will be reported in writing to the complainant by the school in accordance with state and federal law regarding data or records privacy.

## VII. Reprisal

The school will discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who reports alleged religious, racial, sexual, or continual/ chronic harassment or bullying or violence or any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, or who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment or violence. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment or viral transmission to the individual's computer.

## VIII. Right to alternative complaint procedures

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, initiating civil action or seeking redress under state criminal statutes and/or federal law.

## IX. Dissemination of policy and training

- A. This policy shall be conspicuously posted on the school website in areas accessible to pupils, parents and staff members.
- B. This policy shall appear in the student and staff handbooks.
- C. The school will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and staff members.
- D. This policy shall be reviewed at least annually for compliance with state and federal law.

## **Acceptable Use Policy**

### I. Introduction

Obviously the use of the Internet is critical to the function of this school. Students and staff will all be using the school's software and servers via the Internet. This policy is designed to ensure that all students and staff use the school's system appropriately and help maintain a comfortable, safe, and well-functioning school.

### II. General statement of policy

In making decisions regarding student access to the School computer system including electronic communications, the School considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Students may access the school software, including the course management system, and the student management system and tools contained therein. The School expects that staff will blend thoughtful use of the School computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

### III. Limited educational purpose

The School is providing students with access to the School computer system, which includes access to the school software, including the course management system, the student management system and school email service. The School system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for project activities, course activities, and educational research. Users

are expected to use school course management system access to further educational goals consistent with the mission of the School and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose system.

#### IV. Use of system is a privilege

The nature of the School requires frequent use of the School system. However, the use of the School system is a privilege, not a right. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the School system may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate School policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws. In the case of suspension or cancellation of access privileges for a student, the student and the student's parent or guardian must make arrangements for work to continue until the suspension or cancellation is revoked, or the student may withdraw or be expelled from school.

#### V. Unacceptable uses of the School Computer System

A. The following uses of the School system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:

1. Users will not use the School system to access, review, upload, download store, print, post, receive, transmit or distribute:
  - a. pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material or other visual depictions that is harmful to minors;
  - b. obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language;
  - c. materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process;
  - d. information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption to the educational process;
  - e. materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment, bullying or discrimination.
2. Users will not use the School system to knowingly or recklessly post, transmit or distribute false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

3. Users will not use the School system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.

4. Users will not use the School system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change the School system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the School's security system, and will not use the School system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users. Users will not tamper with, modify or change any safety or security features, including filtering software, virus protection software, spy ware detection/elimination software, or other safety and security utilities.

5. Users will not use the School system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.

6. Users will not use the School system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately, without permission of the person who sent the message. Users may, but shall not be required to, post basic contact information about themselves within a secure, password-protected area of the School's systems for academic purposes.

7. Users must keep all account information and passwords on file with the designated School official. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the School system or any other system through the School system, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user. Messages and records on the School system may not be encrypted without the permission of appropriate school authorities.

8. Users will not use the School system to violate copyright laws or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.

9. Users will not use the School system for conducting business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the School. Users will not use the School system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use the School system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate school official.

B. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user will immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school official.

#### VI. Limited expectation of privacy

A. Parents/Guardians have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files by submitting a request to the school President. Parents/Guardians have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time. Because the Internet and school computer system are essential for participation in this school, any such request will also serve as a request to withdraw the student from the school.

B. The School will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities or activities not in compliance with School policies conducted through the School system.

#### VII. Internet use agreement

A. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents/guardians, and employees of the School.

B. By voluntarily enrolling into Northgate Academy, all students agree to the proper use of the Internet while engaged in NGA courses.

#### VIII. Limitation on school liability

Use of the School system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The School will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on School diskettes, tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or miss-deliveries or non-deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The School is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the School system. The School will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the School system or the Internet.

## IX. User notification

A. All users will be notified of the School policies relating to Internet use via the student handbook, staff handbook, and parent handbook. All students, parents and staff will sign the AUP notification form.

B. This notification will include the following:

1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with School policies.
2. Disclaimers limiting the School's liability relative to:
  - a. Information stored on School diskettes, hard drives or servers.
  - b. Information retrieved through School computers, networks or online resources.
  - c. Personal property used to access School computers, networks or online resources.
  - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of School resources/accounts to access the Internet.
3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
4. Notification that, should the user violate the School's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
5. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

### **Northgate Academy Internet Safety Policy**

#### Introduction

It is the policy of Northgate Academy to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

#### **Definitions:**

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

### **Access to Inappropriate Material**

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

### **Inappropriate Network Usage**

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Northgate Academy online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking”, and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

### **Supervision and Monitoring**

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Northgate Academy staff to supervise and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children’s Internet protection Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of Northgate Academy or designated representatives.

### **Adoption**

The School Board of Northgate Academy adopted this Internet Safety Policy at a meeting, on July 5th, 2014.

CIPA definitions of terms:

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE. The term “technology protection measure” means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. OBSCENE, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
3. Harmful to minors.

HARMFUL TO MINORS. The term “harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
  2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
  3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.
- SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT. The terms “sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

## **Technical Information**

### **Technology skills**

No advanced technical skills are needed to participate in Northgate Academy courses. Students should be comfortable using the Internet, and they should be able to send email, use email attachments, and be familiar with an office productivity software suite such as Google Docs, Microsoft Office, Open Office.org, or other similar word processing programs.

### **Necessary hardware & software**

Students need only general computer hardware and office software to participate in Northgate Academy. Any up-to-date computer with a current Web browser should suffice. All Northgate Academy courses are designed to be used with a 56K modem or faster. Students with 56K or slower connections may want to print lessons and do some of their work off line. Students taking language courses will be happiest with some form of high-speed Internet access.

For best results, student computers should have at least the following characteristics:

### **Browser Plug-ins:**

- Sun Java 1.4.2 JRE or higher
- Sun Java 3D 1.3 or higher
- Flash 7.0 or higher
- Acrobat Reader 5.0 or higher
- ActiveX
- DirectX
- Media Player
- QuickTime

**PC Requirements:**

- Pentium II (233 MHz minimum, higher recommended)
- 128k Internet connection. A broadband connection is recommended.
- Windows 2000, 98, NT, XP, ME (Windows ME does not support software used in the following courses: Web Design 1 and 2)
- 256 MB Ram
- 12x CD-ROM (CD/DVD Recommended)
- Display setting 1024x768 resolution
- Printer required
- Internet Explorer (Web browsing software) - version 5.5 or higher
- Students need a method to save work to a removable disk (Floppy, Zip, CD-ROM)
- Audio: Sound card with speakers, microphone, headset, or webcam (needed in some courses)
- Microsoft Office/Microsoft Word (highly recommended) and/or WordPad

**Macintosh Requirements:**

- Power Mac G3
- OSX
- Students need a method to save work to a removable disk (Floppy, Zip, and CD-ROM)
- 128 MB Ram
- 12x CD ROM (CD/DVD Recommended)
- 128k Internet connection. A broadband connection is recommended.
- Display setting 1024x768 resolution
- Printer required
- Safari browser and/or Mozilla Firefox
- Flash 7 player
- QuickTime
- Audio: Speakers and microphone, headset or webcam (needed in some courses)
- Microsoft Office/Microsoft Word (highly recommended)

## Financial Information

### Tuition

Full-time enrollment for the traditional (9-12) high school diploma is \$ 1,290 **per school year**; or \$ 129 per month on the installment plan. Pricing is all-inclusive, and there are no extra or hidden fees.

Enrollment for our **adult high school diploma** (18+ years old) is \$ 999 or \$ 99.90 per month on the installment plan, for the complete adult high school program. Our pricing is all-inclusive, and there are no extra or hidden fees.

Individual credit recovery or summer school standard courses are priced at \$ 199 flat fee.

\*Pricing is subject to change, always refer to [www.northgateacademy.com](http://www.northgateacademy.com) for updates.

### Payment plans

Northgate Academy offers flexible and affordable payment plans to all full-time, part-time and adult students. Full payment may be made upon enrollment or through automatic monthly withdrawals from a personal credit or debit card account.

### Other expenses

Northgate Academy offers an all-inclusive pricing model. This means that everything is covered in the tuition and there are no extra charges.

### Refund Policy

There are two components to the Northgate Academy refund policy. The first is the Northgate Academy Guarantee:

Northgate Academy guarantees that the credits you earn meet state academic standards and are accepted by post-secondary institutions including colleges, universities, junior and community colleges, the military, and most employers. If they are not accepted, we will work with the institution to facilitate the acceptance of these credits. If the institution still does not accept these credits, Northgate Academy will refund the money paid for any non-accepted credits.

The second component to the refund policy is in regards to students who sign up for one or more courses, but then choose not to engage. Refunds will be made according to the following schedule: A full refund is offered for students enrolled for less than 5-days. After the 5h calendar day of enrollment, no refunds are issued.

\*\*In most cases, you will have no trouble using a diploma from Northgate Academy for employment, college entrance, etc. We cannot guarantee that all credits will be acceptable for

transfer to other schools. We ask that all students check on acceptance before enrolling at NGA. We do offer a 100% money back guarantee on all programs.

### **Application Process**

Not surprisingly, the entire application and enrollment process for Northgate Academy takes place online and via the phone. At <http://www.northgateacademy.com> you'll find the application and registration forms for both full- and part-time students. Once those forms are submitted, a staff member will contact you to complete the enrollment process. If you have any questions at any time during the process, please call the school at (763) 412-4701 or (800) 339-7132 during normal school hours or email us at [info@northgateacademy.com](mailto:info@northgateacademy.com) and we will respond to you as quickly as possible.

### **Enrollment Policy**

Students will be considered “enrolled” with Northgate Academy after they have filled out the online application, tuition agreement, provided all necessary documentation to the school office (transcripts, etc.), and had consultation with Student Services Coordinator. After reviewing the student’s transcripts, the Student Services Coordinator will place the student in appropriate course sequences based on pre-requisites and other factors. Pre-requisites do not pertain to credit recovery students.

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

#### **1. What courses are available and how do we know they are of high quality?**

Northgate Academy’s courses are designed to meet State-specific standards in the areas of English, Math, Social Studies and Sciences. Our courses are developed by Ph.D., subject matter experts.

Northgate Academy is part of the Excel Education Systems School District. NGA is a candidate for accreditation by AdvancED, the parent organization of The North Central Association CASI, the Southern Association of Colleges and School CASI, and the Northwest Accrediting Commission.

#### **2. When do classes begin and how do we enroll?**

Northgate Academy operates on an open-enrollment format, which means students can sign up and begin any day of the year. To enroll, complete the application at the school Website: [www.northgateacademy.com](http://www.northgateacademy.com)

#### **3. How involved are the instructors and what are their qualifications?**

Instructors are actively involved with students throughout their courses at Northgate Academy. They use a number of technology tools to interact frequently with students and parents. All of our instructors have either advanced degrees or instructor licenses in the field in which they are teaching - and often both. In addition, we monitor the virtual classrooms and evaluate our instructors regularly to ensure that they are meeting Northgate Academy's high standards of performance. Northgate Academy offers our online tutoring center, where students can obtain synchronous, online math support at no additional charge for all students.

#### **4. Is the school's online environment safe? How is Internet security maintained?**

Northgate Academy is proud of its safe online environment. Staff members monitor all school chat rooms and discussion boards. We also have a comprehensive Acceptable Use Policy, which we enforce vigorously.

#### **5. How will we know how well our child is doing in his or her classes?**

Parents can access their child's grades at any time. The Northgate Academy Canvas LMS offers a parent portal, whereby parents can login and monitor their child's progress and grades at any time.

#### **6. How do we know the students are learning?**

Northgate Academy requires that students complete the MCA exams. These assessments are required at the beginning and end of the school year. All courses include meaningful assessments of student work, and instructors are in regular contact with all students and parents. Parents are encouraged to enter any of the courses their child is taking to observe progress. Also, just having regular discussions with your child about the classes is a good way to gauge if they are learning. Please contact your student's teachers immediately if there are concerns regarding this topic.

#### **7. Is there a face-to-face requirement? What sort of attendance is required?**

There is not a face-to-face requirement. Northgate Academy is a fully operational online high school. Although there is not a traditional attendance requirement, students will only learn to their full potential if they actively participate in all course assignments. It is recommended that high school-aged students participate a minimum of 20-hours per week. Adult students may participate according to their own schedule, but should participate weekly. Students under the age of 18 are required to meet their State's compulsory attendance requirements.

#### **8. How much does it cost?**

Tuition for the 2017-2018 school year is \$ 1290.00 per school year. NGA offers a, affordable, interest-free monthly installment plan of \$ 129 per month.

The cost for Credit Recovery, Sumer School, or a Single Course is \$ 199.00 for a half or full credit course.

\*Northgate Academy offers convenient and affordable payment plans.

You will notice the cost to attend Northgate Academy is about half the cost of comparable accredited private high schools in the US. It is our goal to keep education affordable for everyone. Since we are able to keep our costs low, we pass these savings on to our students. We have no buildings to maintain, other than our administration offices; we have no school busses to operate; we do not employ a facilities maintenance crew; we do not offer school lunch programs; so you can quickly see how we can be such an affordable option.

### **9. Will colleges accept Northgate Academy credits?**

Yes! We have found that graduates of Northgate Academy have gone on to attend a number of well-known post-secondary institutions to further their academic careers. Others have gone on to enroll in local community and junior colleges in their area, vocational/business schools, and some have even joined the military.

### **Withdrawals and Transfers**

To withdraw from Northgate Academy, please contact the school office at 763-412-4701. We will issue an official transcript for all credits earned. Tuition must be current in order for NGA will release any official records. Students seeking to transfer to another high school should request the NGA Registrar to forward official transcripts to their new high school. After the first week, students may receive an “F” for the course when withdrawn.

### **School Safety**

In the event of an emergency situation, any on sight personnel, staff or students, will report to the front office for instructions. In case of an onsite emergency services, the front office staff will call the Plymouth Police Department at (763) 509-5160, the Plymouth Fire Department at (763) 509-5120 or call 911. In the event of a fire, all personnel should exit the school offices and report to the campus entrance location on Plymouth Creek Road.

### **Visitors**

Northgate Academy welcomes visitors to our school by appointment only. If you are seeking to meet with your counselor, or principal, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment time. All visitors must sign in with the front office.

# NORTHGATE ACADEMY

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