2026-2027
Parent Handbook

newhorizonsacademy.org
newhorizonsacad

Springfield Campus

6201 Trust Dr.
Holland, OH 43528
Phone-567-703-1322

Wauseon Campuses

NHA Building
220 Lawrence Ave.

Sara's Garden
620 Leggett St.

Career Center
854 S. Shoop Ave.

Mailing Address–P.O. Box 150, Wauseon, OH 43567
Phone-419-335-4642
Fax-419-335-5564

New Horizons Academy

2026-2027

220 Lawrence Ave.
Wauseon, OH 43567
419-335-4642

6201 Trust Dr.
Holland, OH 43528
567-703-1322

August '26

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September '26

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October '26

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November '26

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December '26

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January '27

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

School Calendar

Aug 3-12	No School-Teacher Flex Work Day
Aug 12	No School-New Staff Orientation
Aug 13	Springfield Open House
Aug 13-14	No School-Staff Inservice
Aug 14	Wauseon & Career Center Open Houses
Aug 17	First Day of School
Aug 25	Wauseon-School Picture Day
Aug 26	Springfield-School Picture Day
Sep 7	No School-Labor Day
Sep 8	No School-Fair Day
Nov 4-5	Parent-Teacher Conferences
Nov 18	Wauseon-2-Hour Delay-Staff Inservice
Nov 19	Springfield-2-Hour Delay-Staff Inservice
Nov 25-27	No School-Thanksgiving Break
Dec 15	Wauseon-Christmas Musical
Dec 18	No School-Staff Inservice
Dec 21-Jan 1	No School-Christmas Break
Jan 15	No School-Staff Inservice
Jan 18	No School-Martin Luther King, Jr.
Feb 15	No School-Presidents Day
Feb 24	Wauseon-2-Hour Delay-Staff Inservice
Feb 25	Springfield-2-Hour Delay-Staff Inservice
Mar 22-26	No School-Spring Break
Apr 28	Wauseon-2-Hour Delay-Staff Inservice
Apr 29	Springfield-2-Hour Delay-Staff Inservice
May 16	Graduation
May 19	Last Day of School
May 20	No School-Teacher Work Day
May 21	No School-SG Golf Outing
May 24	No School-Memorial Day
May 31-Jun 25	Wauseon Summer Camp
Jul 5-31	Springfield Summer Camp

School Hours 7:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Grading Periods

Oct 16	End of 1st 9 weeks--43 days
Dec 17	End of 2nd 9 weeks--41 days
Mar 12	End of 3rd 9 weeks--47 days
May 19	End of 4th 9 weeks--43 days

Make-Up Days	Feb. 15
After 8	May. 20
Missed Days	May.21

School Board Meetings

Aug, Oct, Dec,	5:30 p.m.
Feb & June	1st Tuesday of Month

February '27

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March '27

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April '27

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May '27

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June '27

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July '27

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	30	31	

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

Many absences, even in Kindergarten, can cause children to fall behind in school.





Students who miss 10 days or more during a school year are less likely to graduate from high school.



Missing just a day or two each month can make it harder to learn to read.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school and themselves.





Being in school every day will enable children to do well in school and graduate from high school ready for work or college.

WELCOME to New Horizons Academy (NHA) at Sara's Garden! This handbook contains valuable information regarding our non-public, chartered school. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep your copy with you throughout the school year. It will answer many of the questions you may have.

Parents are asked to confirm review of the handbook, NHA's Tuition, Billing, and Additional Therapy Services rates and responsibilities, and its Computer Usage Guidelines by signing the Parent Signature Page, the Tuition & Billing Page, and the Computer Usage Guidelines Page in the back of the handbook and returning it to the school office or by confirming your review in PowerSchool when you update your child's annual emergency information.

GOVERNANCE

New Horizons Academy is organized and operated under the policies and procedures established by Sara's Garden—The Sara Joy Rychener-Burkholder Hyperbaric Center in Wauseon, Ohio and is overseen by the

New Horizons Academy School Board–

President—Carrie Radzik
Vice President—Steve Webster
Members—
Russ Dominique
Lance Lycourt
Dana Riley

Administrative Team–

CEO/Executive Director—Matthew Rychener
Superintendent—William D. Hanak

Career Center
Career Center Principal—Amy Murphy
Transition Services Coordinator—Todd Fruth

Springfield
Principal—Jon Mignin
Behavioral Specialist—Christie Shindorf

Wauseon
Principal—Marty Friess
Special Education Coordinator—Beth Foor
Director of Behavioral Services—Jaydelin Vasvery

MISSION STATEMENT

New Horizons Academy's mission is to provide the highest quality of educational programming available and empower children with disabilities to recognize and optimize their full potential.

STATEMENT OF BELIEF

Our special needs students are children first with all of the needs, desires, and feelings of children without disabilities. They are more like other children than different. Their disabilities are inconveniences that keep them from enjoying full lives, and therefore must be overcome or compensated for so that they can grow and move out into the world.

At New Horizons Academy, kids come first. We exist for our students; our students do not exist for the school. Students don't have to fit into the classes; the class and program are made to meet the individual student's needs.

Classes are cross-categorical and grouped (with occasional exceptions) by developmental age. Each student has something to offer his classmates. Students are taught patience, tolerance, and compassion. Each student learns that he does some things better than other classmates do and some things not as well. They learn that a person's value is not related to what he can or can't do.

Parents know their children the best and can provide us with important information about our students. We listen to their pain and joy; support their efforts and treat them with respect, concern, compassion, and gentleness.

PHILOSOPHY

We at New Horizons Academy believe in the value of group specialized instruction for nearly all young children with special needs. It is during the early childhood years that personality development occurs. The self-concept that children develop will affect their learning and interactions for the rest of their lives. A young child with special needs in a regular classroom often finds himself as the only "problem" in the class, always needing extra help and always being the different one. At New Horizons Academy, this child has classmates, who do some things better than he does and classmates who do some things not as well. The child is not different or special; he is just one of the kids—free to develop an "I CAN" attitude.

Mainstreaming assumes the children will learn from normal exposure to a stimulating environment. We believe that our students would not be behind if they could learn from normal classroom exposure. In a New Horizons Academy classroom, children receive personalized, individualized instruction, which is in alignment with their individualized education plans (IEPs) or AEP's. This is done in a school environment with an incredibly low staff to student ratio usually less than 1:2.

PROGRAM

New Horizons Academy provides both educational and therapeutic programming. Our classes run like general education classrooms rather than special education classrooms.

- Our small class sizes allow us to provide individual attention to our students.
- We provide a highly structured environment to maximize learning.
- Through applied behavior analysis (ABA), we manipulate the learning environment to promote success.
- Our teachers are trained and experienced in normal childhood development and education, as well as special education.
- All of our staff have had criminal background checks from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and have been licensed by the State Board of Education (SBOE).
- Our program includes lunch (which is sent from home) to allow for feeding programs, as well as social and language experiences.

- We emphasize self-concept development to facilitate an "I CAN" attitude.
- We promote more effective communication (verbally and through augmentative and alternative communication-AAC, which encompasses gestures, facial expressions, communication boards, speech-generating devices, and AAC assisted apps).
- We utilize functional daily life skills and vocational skills to promote greater independence.
- We facilitate the development of character traits such as patience, compassion, and an acceptance of human differences.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF SCHOOL TOPICS

Absence Notification—If a child is absent, the parent or guardian must call the school by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. If the school has not been contacted, the administrative assistants will attempt to reach them by phone. If they cannot be reached to confirm the absence and the reason for it by 10:15 a.m., the school is required to call local law enforcement for a safety check.

All written excuses following an absence should be sent to the school office.

Any child leaving early should have a note from his or her parents or guardians. If a parent calls the school requesting an early release for a student, the administrative assistants will notify the classroom staff. All students, leaving early, must sign out in the school office and exit the building through the main lobby.

Accidents—All staff receive training in first aid, communicable diseases, and CPR. In the case of a minor accident/injury, staff will administer basic first aid. If the injury/illness is more serious, first aid will be administered, and the parents will be contacted immediately by the administrative assistants to assist in deciding upon an appropriate course of action. If any injury/illness is life-threatening, EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available medical records. Staff will not transport children in their vehicles. Only parents or EMS may transport children. An incident report will be completed, and given to the person picking up the child on the day of the incident/injury or if emergency transportation is required within 24 hours.

Admissions & Enrollment–New Horizons Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, gender, or religion in its admissions, educational policies, scholarships, and school-administered programs. Sara's Garden complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, gender or sex. Sara's Garden does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, military status, ancestry, age, gender, genetic information, or any other legally protected characteristic, in its programs, services, and activities, including employment opportunities.

New Horizons Academy enrolls children aged three to twenty-one with a variety of diagnoses including—

- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
- Developmental Delay
- Physical Disabilities
- Vision/Hearing Impairments
- Orthopedic Impairments
- Seizure Disorders
- Speech & Language Disorders

- Neurological Disorders
- Genetic Abnormalities
- Autism
- And Other Learning Disabilities.

Admission and enrollment are selective based upon the child's disability, individual needs, and suitability for the program as determined by the Admissions Team made up of therapists, conductors, behavioral specialists, and school administrators.

For new students, all admissions are on a provisional nine-week basis. If after that period of time, it is determined that New Horizons Academy (NHA) is not a good fit for the student or does not meet his or her needs, the student will be withdrawn and transitioned back to his or her home school district.

After an individual student assessment/evaluation and notification of acceptance into New Horizons Academy, parents or guardians must complete enrollment paperwork through PowerSchool. The enrollment process must be completed before the student may begin the school year. Enrollment paperwork includes–
Registration forms
Emergency medical contacts and information
Proof of residency
Copy of the student's birth certificate
Current immunization record or signed immunization exemption form
Any custody paperwork or documentation
Evaluation Team Report (ETR)
Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Autism Education Plan (AEP)
Scholarship application
Signed scholarship acceptance

Animals on School Property—All animals brought onto Sara's Garden property for any school purpose, including service animals, must meet every veterinary requirement set forth in state law and county regulation/ordinance, including but not limited to rabies vaccination or other inoculations required to be properly licensed.

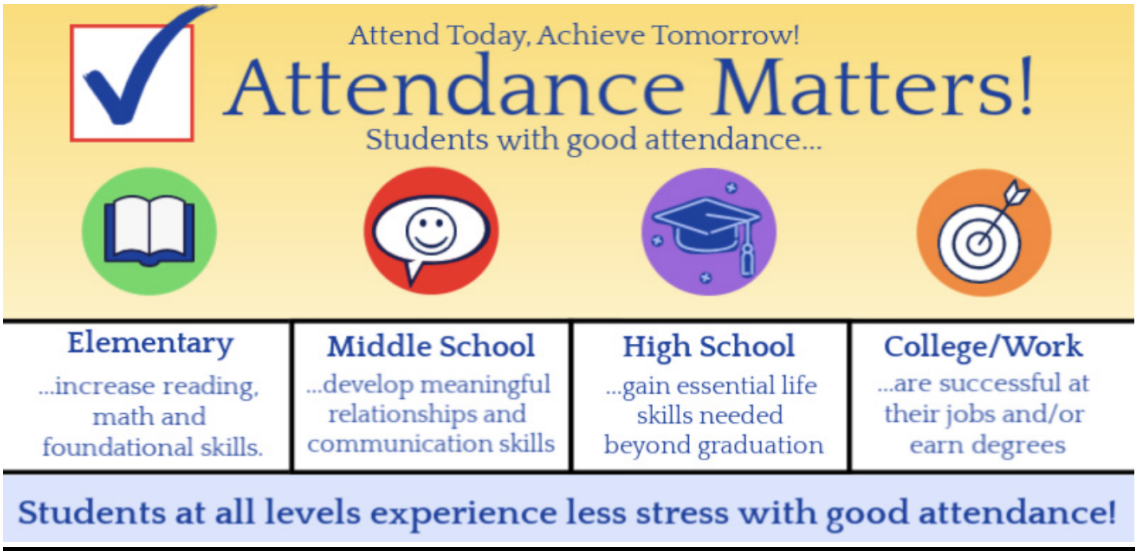
Other than service animals, animals permitted at NHA and elsewhere on Sara's Garden property shall be limited to those necessary to support specific curriculum-related projects and activities. The CEO, superintendent, or principal may permit non-service animals to be present in classrooms to support curriculum-related projects and activities only under the following conditions:

- A current satisfactory health certificate or report of examination from a veterinarian for the animal is on file,
- Precautions deemed necessary to protect the health and safety of students and other staff have been taken,
- The animal is treated humanely and is appropriately housed in a cage or tank,
- The surrounding area is kept clean and sanitary,
- Other staff members and/or parents of students in areas potentially affected by the animal will be notified in writing and adjustments made to accommodate verified health-related concerns,
- Except where required by law, the presence of a non-service animal shall be disallowed if documented health concerns of a student or staff member cannot be accommodated.

Applied Behavioral Analysis—ABA is a program through which students' behaviors are modified. ABA will be used in all classrooms and throughout the school buildings. The behavioral specialists will orient staff to ABA and train them to meet the specific needs of students. Together, they will develop both classroom and individual student behavioral plans.

Arrival—Students may begin arriving at **7:45 a.m.** with school beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Attendance—The educational program at NHA is based upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Attendance is required during the days and hours that the school is in session. The first school and classroom rule is **BE PRESENT!**



In order to achieve optimal learning, regular attendance is crucial. However, the staff do understand that situations may arise which cause the student to be absent. In such situations, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Student's Absence
    - Call the school office by 9:00 a.m. that day to report the absence.
    - If the school has not been notified and cannot reach the parent to confirm the absence and the reason for it, the school is now required to call law enforcement for a safety check by 10:15 a.m.
    - **Send a note to school the next day, explaining the absence.**
    - If the child misses more than three days, is hospitalized, goes to the emergency room, has surgery, or receives stitches, the medical provider must complete the Special Instructions for Student Care Form and send it in with a doctor's note with the child's limitations clearly spelled out in it.
    - Excessive absences without notification may result in dismissal from New Horizons Academy.

2. Late Arrivals
    - In order to receive the full benefits of educational programming, students should arrive on time…by 8:30 a.m.
    - If arriving after 8:30 a.m., the student will need to sign in at the school and will be marked tardy for the day.

- If a student is running late, please call the office to notify the school of their expected arrival time.

3. Student Absence or Tardiness Due to Weather Conditions
    - Parents should listen to local news stations for delay or cancellation notices.
    - Parents should complete the text alert notification form and return it to the school office for both weather and school notices.
    - With students from over 25 different Northwest Ohio school districts, please be aware of the weather conditions in your area. Even if NHA has not closed, if it is not safe to drive your child in, please call the school office, and notify us of the road conditions in your area. If notified or your home school district closes and transportation is no longer provided, it will be considered an excused absence. On days where transportation is not available, parents are still welcome to bring their children to school.
    - All calamity days beyond the state-mandated instructional hours will be made up as noted on the school calendar followed by successive days after the school year.
    - Due to excessive calamity days, NHA reserves the right to utilize on-line instruction following its On-Line Day Plan. Completion of these assignments are required for attendance credit. Failure to complete the assignments will result in unexcused absences.

To reduce truancy, attendance tracking is by **hours** not days.

- Ohio law considers students who miss 38 hours of school in one month or 65 hours in a school year, excessive. School districts are required to notify parents when their child reaches that threshold. Any future absences will require evidence that explains why the absence from school was necessary (e.g. court document, doctor's note). Final authorization of an absence will be determined only after the required additional information is presented.

- If a student is absent for 30 **unexcused** hours in a row, 42 unexcused hours in a month or 72 unexcused hours in a school year, the student will be considered habitually truant from school.

- Once a student has met the threshold of habitual truancy, the district will develop a Parent Attendance Intervention Plan (PAIP), made up of school personnel, parents or guardians, and the child or student. The student and parent are required by law to be active participants in the development of the plan to improve school attendance. **Failure to participate and comply will result in the immediate truancy filing** on the student and possible filing against the parent/guardian through juvenile court and the possible dismissal from NHA with a transition back to the student's home school district. Additionally, if the parent/guardian fails to participate, it may result in a mandatory referral to Children's Services.

Please be sure to report your child's absences to the school by contacting the school office. NHA considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed from school:

- Personal illness with a written doctor's note verifying the illness.
- Illness in the family, necessitating the presence of the child.

- Quarantine at the child's home.
- Death in the family.
- Work at home due to the absence or incapacity of a parent or guardian.
- Observation of a religious holiday.
- Medically necessary leave.
- Lack of transportation or poor road conditions due to weather-related issues.
- Out-of-state travel or educational opportunity **must be pre-approved by the superintendent or principal with the completion of the attached Advance Request for Absence Form and all assignments made-up ahead of time.**

NHA requires, from the parent of an absent student, a written statement and/or a phone call, explaining the cause for the absence.

For excused absences, NHA will allow the student the opportunity to make-up and complete missed schoolwork for credit.

Behavior—Learning self-control and discipline are important to the overall development of children. The school will set clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for each child in attendance. The first is **BE PRESENT!** Positive reinforcement and redirection will be used in the classroom.

- **Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports** ("PBIS")—a school-wide systematic approach to embed evidence-based practice and data-driven decision making to improve school climate and culture in order to achieve improved academic and social outcomes and increase learning for all students. PBIS encompasses a range of systemic and individualized positive strategies to reinforce desired behaviors, diminish recurrences of challenging behaviors, and teach appropriate behaviors to students.

- **Positive Behavior Support Plan**—the design, implementation, and evaluation of individual or group instructional and environmental modifications, including programs of behavioral instruction, to produce significant improvements in behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of problematic behavior. If a child demonstrates behavior that requires additional attention from staff, the school may choose to develop and implement a behavior management plan. This plan would be developed in consultation with the parents.

Should children exhibit consistently unacceptable behaviors, which cannot be contained by staff or a caregiver, the child will be asked to leave for the duration of that class period. If the behaviors persist, the child may be given a time out in the quiet room; and in extreme cases, the child may not be allowed to return to class until the next day. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, hitting, biting, scratching, yelling, threatening, and the use of inappropriate language.

Professional staff members are permitted to physically restrain and/or seclude a student, but only when there is immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others, there is no other safe and effective intervention possible, and the physical restraint or seclusion is used in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate and protects the safety of all children and adults at school.

- **Seclusion**—may be used only when a student's behavior poses an immediate risk of physical harm to the student or others or when attention-seeking behaviors have

become so severe that they cannot be contained within the classroom, when they prevent others' ability to learn, and when there is no other safe and effective intervention possible. Seclusion may be used only as a last resort safety intervention that provides the student with an opportunity to regain control of his/her actions. Seclusion must be used in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate, for the minimum amount of time necessary for the purpose of protecting the student and/or others from physical harm, and otherwise in compliance with this Policy and ODEW's corresponding policy.

Seclusion of preschool-age children is generally prohibited with the exception in the classroom or in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space, for a brief amount of time appropriate to the child's age and development with the child always within sight and hearing of a staff member.

Seclusion shall be implemented only by qualified personnel who have been trained in accordance with this policy to protect the care, welfare, dignity and safety of the student. Restraint and seclusion shall only be done in accordance with this policy, which is based on the standards adopted by ODEW.

If a child is a threat to themselves or others, staff will restrain the student from self-injury, injury to another student or staff member, and/or damage to NHA property. Staff will utilize the Handle With Care (HWC) model when student restraint is needed. All staff are trained and certified in the Handle With Care (HWC) de-escalation and restraining method and program.

Handle With Care is recognized by professional regulatory bodies, including: IDEA, ADA and 504 CARF (The Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission) COA (The Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services) Joint Commission (formerly JCAHO) and DOH HWC's program complies with all US Rules and Laws regarding the use of restraint and seclusion

Extreme and/or violent behavior is cause for immediate dismissal based upon the principal's and superintendent's discretion.

Buildings—In Wauseon, the NHA building will house STARS, elementary, conductive education (CE), pre-pace, occupational therapy (OT), speech/language pathology (SLP), applied behavior analysis (ABA), sensory integration (SI), Title I, social work, tutoring, kitchen, laundry room, the Hope Center, and pull-out rooms.

The Sara's Garden building will house the middle school and high school classrooms, library, music room, conference room, and Handcrafted Hope.

The Career Center will house vocational skills labs, functional daily life skills classrooms, work study opportunities, ABA, the event center, gym, kitchen, laundry room, conference room, and Special Grounds Coffee.

In Springfield, NHA will house STARS, elementary, middle school and high school classrooms, CE, OT, SLP, ABA, SI, pre-pace, vocational skills labs, library, kitchen, laundry room, conference room, and pull-out rooms.

Cafetorium—All student lunches will take place in the Hope Center Hall, Springfield lunch area, or the Career Center gym.

Cell Phones and Personal Communication Devices (PCD's)--Ohio House Bill 250 (HB 250) requires that every school district in Ohio establish and/or update its official cell phone policy reducing the use of and minimizing student contact with cell phones in K-12 schools to minimize educational disruptions during school hours while Senate Bill 158 (SB 158) prohibits student cell phone use in public schools during school hours.

For purposes of this policy, *personal communication devices (PCD)* include computers, tablets (iPads and similar devices), electronic readers (e-readers, Kindles and similar devices), cell phones (mobile/cellular telephones), smartphones (iPhones, Android devices, etc.), and/or other web-enabled devices of any type.

Except as authorized by the principal or superintendent, students are prohibited from using PCDs during the school day. Students are directed to turn in their PCDs, especially cell phones and smartphones, to the school office upon entrance to the building to be stored in specific, designated baskets or containers. They may be retrieved at the end of the school day upon exiting the school building or as designated by the principal or superintendent.

Students shall have no expectation of confidentiality with respect to their use of PCDs on school premises/property. Students may not use PCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school without express permission from the principal, superintendent, or CEO.

Students may not use a PCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated. Permission for possession of a PCD by a student at school during extra-curricular activities is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise abuses this privilege. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the PCD.

A person who discovers a student using a PCD in violation of this policy is required to report the violation to the principal and/or superintendent. Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their PCDs. The Board of Directors and/or its employees assume no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage to, or misuse or unauthorized use of, PCDs brought onto its property.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the school office.

Child Abuse Reporting— All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If any staff member has suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they **MUST**, under Ohio Law, make a report to the local Department of Job & Family Services.

Conduct Consequences—Any student found in violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be held accountable for his or her behavior. Consequences are at the discretion of the principal and superintendent, which may include apologies, time-outs, suspensions, reimbursement for damaged and/or destroyed property and clean up, or if found necessary withdrawal from NHA. The behavioral consequence will be consistent with the student's violation and both age and developmentally appropriate. The overriding factor will always be the health, safety, education, and welfare for all NHA students.

School staff will complete incident reports for all violations with parents notified of the school issues and/or problems. If parents have any questions regarding the behavioral consequences, they may contact the school office.

- **Withdrawal—**Whether a student is withdrawn from NHA by a parent or guardian or at the recommendation of the school, he or she will be transitioned back to the home school district for further services. Copies of all academic and behavioral records will be provided to the home school district to prevent any disruption in educational services and to make the transition back as smooth as possible.

- Parents have the right to withdraw their child from NHA for any reason by completing a school withdrawal form (A copy is included in this handbook.).

- **Prorated Billing—**In the event a student is withdrawn, Sara's Garden and NHA will prorate the school's tuition billing for the Jon Peterson and/or Autism Scholarship. All prorating will be done in one-month segments as explained in and signed off on the Tuition & Billing Signature Page. If a student is withdrawn mid-month, Sara's Garden and NHA will bill the cost of tuition for that month. During this withdrawal period, parental signatures are not required nor needed for the final tuition billing.

Conductive Education (CE)— Conductive Education (CE) is an intensive, holistic approach to educating individuals with neuromotor disabilities. Developed by Dr. Andras Peto in the 1940s, CE combines physical activity with cognitive tasks, emphasizes communication, and places the individual in a group setting to maximize active learning.

To participate in conductive education programs, the CE permission to participate form and waiver form must be completed and turned into the school office **before** the student may begin CE. The Conductor will communicate, consult with, and train appropriate staff to integrate the CE curriculum into the regular classroom to promote continued student improvement.

Conductive Education (CE) Clothing—For conductive education programs, students must come to class wearing comfortable clothing that is flexible, stretchy, and which permits the moving of joints (elbows, knees, ankles, etc.). Items like t-shirts, leggings, and lightweight sweats are usually best.

Confidentiality of Student Records—To provide appropriate educational services and programming, NHA must collect, retain, and use information about individual students. Simultaneously, the Board of Directors recognizes the need to safeguard students' privacy and confidentiality and to restrict access to students' personally identifiable information. The Board is responsible for the records of all students who attend or have attended school at NHA. Only records mandated by the state or federal government and/or are necessary and relevant to the function of NHA will be compiled.

Corporal Punishment—Corporal punishment is **NOT** permitted as noted in the school's policies. Corporal punishment is defined as physical contact that is applied for the purpose of discipline. Examples of **unacceptable** corporal punishment include:

- Spanking, hitting, or paddling a student
- Grabbing a student by the neck and/or face
- Physically shaking a student

If a child is a threat to themselves or others, staff will restrain the student from self-injury, injury to another student or staff member, and/or damage to NHA property. Staff will utilize the Handle With Care (HWC) model when student restraint is needed. All staff are trained and certified in the Handle With Care (HWC) de-escalation and restraining method and program.

During any disciplinary situation, **students shall always be within view of an adult. No student shall be out of eye contact of a staff member.**

Criminal Background Checks–Prior to employment, all staff must undergo and pass a FBI/BCI fingerprint/background check. Upon employment, all staff must register for ODEW's Rapback Program and follow-up every five years with criminal background checks.

Cyberbullying–Cyberbullying means an intentional electronic, written, or act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in or affects a school setting that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with the student's education
2. Creation of a threatening environment
3. Substantial disruption to the orderly operation of the school

All staff, students, parents, and/or guardians are required to promptly report such incidents to the principal, superintendent, CEO and/or compliance and Title IX coordinator. Complaints of cyberbullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action including restorative practices, shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the school's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

Curriculum—NHA provides a tailored, individualized, teacher-assisted learning environment for its students. We recognize the need for a more individualized focus to address the physical, emotional, and social barriers that may affect students' educational advancement. We individually assess each student's needs and abilities and create a learning plan that is unique to them, which may include academic assistance, behavioral plans, and/or life skills training. To meet individual instructional needs, NHA uses a number of different curricula. If you have any questions about them, please talk to your child's teacher, principal, or superintendent.

Our curricular focus is always on progress and improvement, where students keep working on their individualized goals rather than just on promotion from grade to grade. It is all about student progress, improvement, and mastery!

New Horizons Academy's curriculum has a goal of exposing the students to all of the learning experiences that are a part of the Ohio Core Learning Standards and extended Ohio Center for Autism and Low-Incidence (OCALI) standards. The students will be expected to participate in ODEW end-of-course (EOC) state testing and alternate assessments to evaluate their educational progress. This includes:

- Learning about themselves, each other, their families, homes, community, state, nation, and world;
- Learning how to get along with adults and other children;
- Learning to share when appropriate and to assert themselves when needed;
- Learning to solve problems effectively and fairly;
- Learning to communicate their needs, wants, and ideas effectively and appropriately;
- Learning to express themselves through music, art, and play;

- Learning about their own bodies and how to move through space;
- Developing self-confidence, body strength, and coordination;
- Developing good school and learning behaviors including: paying attention, sitting still, taking turns, following directions, respecting authority, etc.;
- Increasing vocabulary;
- Learning writing, reading, math, science, and social studies;
- Building self-esteem, self-confidence, and an "I CAN" attitude.

STAR (PreK) Classrooms—With such a strong emphasis on early intervention and behavioral reinforcement, the STAR curriculum emphasizes speech and communications, gross and fine motor, sensory integration, pre-literacy and early literacy, integers and counting, cooperation and group work, and social and life skills.

Daily Life Skills & Vocational Skills—To help our students become as independent as possible, our middle school to high school classrooms have a special focus on daily life skills and vocational skill development with additional academic standards and resources provided through OCALI.

College Credit Plus (CCP)—Through ODEW, NHA's junior high and high school students may apply for assistance to cover dual-high school and college enrollment classes. To do this, students must first pass Accuplacer or ACT minimum testing requirements, be accepted into a college or university, and meet all basic admission and pre-requisite requirements for coursework. If interested, please contact the Development Director.

On-line, Telehealth Services, and Distance Learning—On-line learning is not NHA's first academic or instructional choice for its special needs students, but it has developed a very strong, differentiated, on-line, instructional program. This includes but is not limited to MobyMax, Zearn Math, Google Meets, Google Classroom, Pearson's, and individual telehealth services. If required to provide on-line, distance learning due to governmental orders, NHA will do everything possible to meet our students' needs through these alternative educational tools and delivery systems.

Custody Agreements—If there are custody issues, you must provide the school with a copy of the court papers. These papers must indicate and include who has custodial rights to the child, educational determination for the child, medical authorization for the child, visitation rights to the child, and who has permission to pick up the child. NHA will not be held liable or responsible for providing parental access to a child if proper documentation has not been provided.

Discipline—All students and staff are expected to follow the established school rules. Everyone must work together to support a safe, conducive learning environment.

Dismissal—For school dismissal, students will be released upon the arrival of their transportation. If picking up a student early, please contact the office (not the classroom teacher) to let them know about the early pick-up, and then make sure to sign the student out in the school office. All students must be picked up by 3:15 p.m.

Dress Code (Middle School Through High School Vocational Dress Code)--The Board of Education believes that a professional appearance allows students to achieve their fullest potential while maintaining their health and safety. The administration's decision is the final authority as to whether or not attire is considered appropriate, unreasonable, or disruptive.

1. Since students will be participating in vocational education, skill-building activities, and work study throughout each day, students are expected to dress appropriately at all times. A list of vocational clothing needs was included with the 2025-2026 School Supply List (If you need another copy of the supply list, please call the school office.). Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process, vocational training, or presents a health or safety risk will not be permitted.
2. Students who are not prepared to work because of lack of safe apparel may be denied vocational training credit and work study opportunities.
3. Apparel or items which allude to drugs, guns, alcohol, sex, the occult, gangs, profanity, obscene, disruptive, abusive, lewd or which are offensive to ethnic, religious, or racial groups, is prohibited.
4. Frayed, torn, cut, or ripped clothing should not be worn if those items are above mid-thigh if the body/skin is visible. Holes are to be no larger than a pop can circumference.
5. Students must recognize that revealing clothing is not appropriate apparel for educational and vocational training. The following examples include but are not limited to:
    a. Tank tops, halter tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, and strapless garments
    b. See-through, low-cut, or garments exposing one's midriff, cleavage, or back are not acceptable.
6. The bottom hem of dresses, skirts, culottes, skorts, or shorts must be mid-thigh in length (front and back).
    a. To address health and safety concerns, all pants must fit around the waist, not sag below the waist, be properly fastened, held up if necessary with a belt, and not drag the floor below the heel.
    b. No pajamas, pajama look-alikes, or slippers are permitted unless authorized by the principal or superintendent for a special spirit day activity.
7. Bandanas, headphones, sunglasses, and head coverings are not to be worn in the building. Hats and/or hairnets are permitted and required while working with food in the kitchen and coffee shop.
8. Appropriate, closed toe shoes must be worn. Shoe strings are to be tied to ensure students' safety
9. Dress code may be varied for certain theme days.
10. Facial hair must be neat, clean, shaped, and trimmed.
11. The wearing of jewelry will be limited in accordance with vocational activities and employer expectations.
12. Hair must be neatly groomed.
13. Students violating the dress code will be required to change their attire and/or appearance. When in doubt, a student should have acceptable alternatives with them (An extra set of clothes was requested on the 2025-2026 School Supply List.). Repeat violations of these policies will be subject to further disciplinary action including suspension and dismissal from work study programs.
14. As no dress code can keep up with the ever changing world of fashion, check with administration before purchasing items which may be questionable. The administration reserves the right to make any and all final decisions in regards to what is and what is not acceptable with respect to the vocational dress code.

Educational Programs–NHA offers programming for early intervention (EI) through high school transition to work. **All students are legally required to and expected to attend school daily.**

- **Early Intervention—**3-5-year-olds are involved in rotational pre-academic activities developing language, cognition, fine motor, gross motor, social skills, and school

behaviors. Preparation for kindergarten in the areas of academics and social and behavioral modification is the goal of the pre-kindergarten program.

- **Primary & Elementary—**Kindergarten through 4th grade students are involved in developmental and academic activities on each child's level. The curriculum is individualized with emphasis on challenging each student academically, socially, physically, and behaviorally. To practice smooth transitions from activity to activity, the elementary school classes rotate across the subject areas.

- **Middle & High School—**Students in 5th through 12th grades participate in a rotational, team-teaching approach. Their schedule includes all of the content standards and testing required from ODEW, as well as daily life skills and vocational skills training. Middle school and underclassmen participate in vocational skills within the NHA and Sara's Garden Buildings while the upperclassmen also utilize Career Center, Special Grounds, Triangular Processing, and other community work placements.

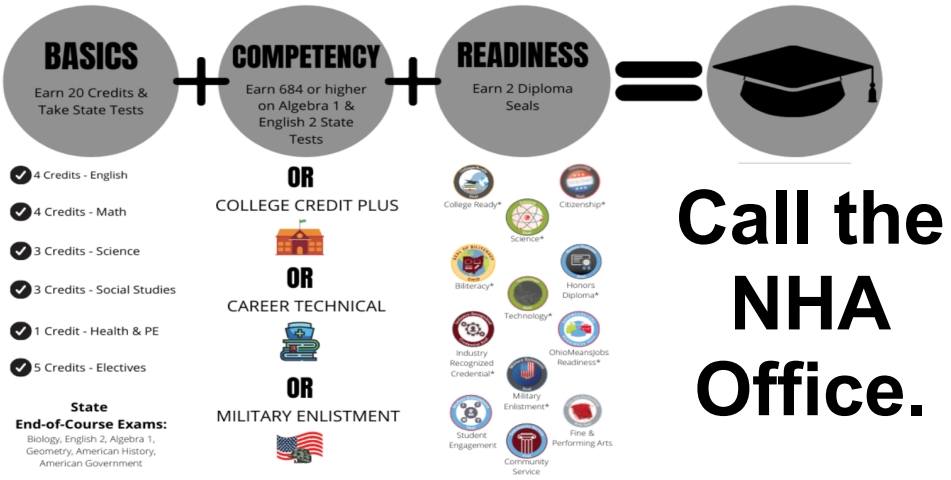
- **School to Work Transition—**Under the Jon Peterson and Autism Scholarships, students may attend NHA until they meet all of their high school graduation requirements or the school year of their 21st birthday whichever comes first. The focus here is on life and work skills with a smooth transition planned from school to the workforce or to community-based adult activities. These discussions and transitional timeframes will be a part of all high school individualized education plan (IEP) and transitional meetings.

Emergencies—NHA conducts regular fire, tornado, and lockdown drills. In the unlikely event of an environmental threat or threat of violence, the staff will secure the children in the safest location possible, contact the authorities, follow their instructions, and contact the parents as soon as the situation allows. If a parent cannot be reached, we will call the child's emergency contacts. In case of a severe injury or illness, NHA will not transport children. In an emergency, 911 will be called, and EMS will provide transport.

Field Trips—On occasion, field trips may serve as an educational, vocational, therapeutic, and/or evaluative purpose. Routine field trips are those which occur on a regular basis, whereas special field trips occur once (e.g. trip to the fire station). Permission slips must be on file for both types of field trips, and emergency medical forms must accompany all classes on the trips. Routine and special trips are planned in advance. If you have any questions, please call the school office. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to help with their child's field trips. Please talk with your child's classroom teacher.

Grade Computation—Letter grades, based upon percentages, will **not** be used in the evaluation of academic progress for grades PK-4. The students' academic progress will be charted and monitored through written narratives and assessment lists, which will follow ODEW's Core Curriculum Standards and OCALI extended standards in conjunction with IEP's. Middle school and high school students, grades 5-12, <u>may</u> receive pass-fail grades or letter grades, based upon percentages, to evaluate their academic progress.

Graduation Requirements—



Holidays—Please see the school calendar in the front of this handbook for the holiday dates.

Homework & Make-Up Work—NHA recognizes that many demands are placed upon the students' time. Both time and learning are valuable commodities. Every effort will be made to make the students' assignments meaningful to the course objectives, accomplished in a reasonable amount of time, and based upon the students' ability, grade level, and maturity. In addition to academic homework, assignments may be made to—

- Improve performance
- Increase levels of physical function
- Correct or modify behaviors
- Alter attitudes and/or perceptions
- Increase independence

Hours & Days of Operation—NHA will be in operation Monday through Friday. Students may begin arriving at **7:45 a.m.** with school beginning at 8:30 a.m. For school dismissal, students will be released upon the arrival of their transportation. If picking up a student early, please sign them out in the school office. All students must be picked up by 3:15 p.m.

The school doors will be unlocked at 7:45 a.m. with all bussed students going directly to their classrooms. Parents, dropping off students, will wait in their cars with their children until staff come out to guide them into the school. This will assist in the smooth transition from home to school for our students.

Please see the school calendar in the front of this handbook for holiday and inservice dates. Teacher and staff in-service and training days are listed to allow for professional growth and development. These are non-school days for students.

Lost & Found—Lost and found is located in the school lobby with valuable items stored in the school office.

Lunch–NHA allows for morning snack time, lunch, and afternoon snack time. Since the school does not have an industrial kitchen, parents must provide snacks and lunch for their children. Parents also need to notify the school of any food allergies. All students will be required to pack their lunches daily.

- Due to limited microwave accessibility, please pack lunches that require minimal reheating or cooking.
- Due to limited refrigeration capacity, please pack lunches with suitable cooling packets.
- Refrigerators and microwaves are not permitted in the school classrooms, but staff and students may have personal **water** containers there.
- In accordance with ODH, all lunches stored in the classrooms must be kept "in a rodent-free container and stored in a sanitary manner."

MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESSES—NHA strives to provide a clean and healthy environment for children in our care. Some of the children in attendance have compromised immune systems and greater susceptibility to illnesses, and even the common cold could have long-term health implications for them.

Under no circumstances should a child be sent to school sick! Children, who arrive at NHA with any of the following symptoms or who have had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours, should be sent to the school office. If students develop any of the following symptoms during the school day, please send them to the school office. The administrative assistants will immediately isolate them, evaluate them, and if needed, call parents/and or guardians for <u>IMMEDIATE</u> school pick up:

- Temperature of 100 degrees F or higher
- Diarrhea (more than three abnormally loose stools within a 24-hour period)
- Severe coughing (causing the child to become red in the face, to make a whooping sound, or to vomit)
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning or itching
- Rashes or unusual spots on the skin
- Unusually dark urine or gray or white stools
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, fleas, or other parasitic infestation
- Vomiting more than once when accompanied by other signs of illness
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Ear ache and/or problems with balance
- Extreme lethargy
- Difficulty with balance and/or mobility

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be closely observed, and the parent will be notified. Any time a child is isolated, they will be kept within sight and sound of a staff member. Any mats and/or linens will be washed and disinfected before being used again. Parents will be notified by a note home if children have been exposed to a communicable illness.

Children may only be readmitted to NHA, with a note from a doctor or other medical provider, after being determined fever- and symptom-free.

Medications—NHA's trained staff will administer medications to children at school **AFTER** the parent completes an Authorization to Administer Medications Form and/or a Non-Prescription Medication Permission Form.

Medications will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children. Medications **may not** be stored in a child's cubby or book bag. **Children, who require a rescue inhaler or other emergency medication, may not carry it on their person or in their book bag. It will be kept out of the reach of children but in an area easily and quickly accessible to staff.**

- **Prescription Medication—**Must be in its original container and administered in accordance with instructions on the label. If parents request any different dosages or uses, a physician must provide written instructions on the Authorization to Administer Medications Form. Medications will be administered by NHA's trained staff.

- **Seizure Protocol—**NHA will need a written seizure protocol or medical plan for all students, who have a history of seizures.

- **Over-the-Counter Medication—**Must be administered in accordance with the label instructions. It will only be administered after the completion of the Non-Prescription Medication Permission Form.

- **Food Supplements or Modified Diets—**If a child requires a food supplement or a modified diet, a copy of the physician's order must be submitted to the school office.

Outdoor Activity—Children may participate in outdoor physical education, recess, and/or group activities in suitable weather. Children will not be taken outside when the temperature (wind chill and heat index factored in) drops below 25 degrees or rises above 100 degrees.

Orthopedic children will not be taken outside when the temperature drops below 40 degrees or rises above 100 degrees. If the situation requires it, we will adjust outdoor time due to rain, threatening weather, ozone warnings, etc.

On days that outdoor play is not possible, we will provide indoor free play or time for indoor gross motor activities. Please send your child to school with appropriate clothing for the weather, so they may be comfortable and safe whenever we are outside.

Parent Participation—Opportunities will be made available for the parents/caregivers to observe and/or work with their children individually. These opportunities may be built into the program by staff or the parent may request them. Should the parent make such a request, staff will notify the school office, and NHA will use its discretion in scheduling the visit/observation appropriately and to gain the needed permission of the other classroom parents if a classroom observation is requested, so as not to disrupt the regular routine of the program or infringe upon other students' confidentiality.

During parent participation, siblings and other relatives are not permitted in the classroom. If parent participation has not been scheduled, parents are kindly asked to remain in their cars, lobby, or waiting area.

Parent/Teacher Conferences—Communication between home and school is crucial for student success. Conferences will be held on at least two days per school year and may be scheduled more frequently at the parent and/or teacher's request. Please see the school calendars for the dates. If circumstances require, these conferences may be virtual.

A conference may include any or all of the following staff: teachers, conductor, intervention specialist, occupational therapy assistant (OTA), behavioral specialist, speech/language pathologist (S/LP), paraprofessional, and school administrator.

Additional communication is encouraged and promoted through letters, notes, telephone calls, emails, texts, and informal interactions during drop-off and pick-up times.

Photography, Recording & Videography—Photos and/or video are taken regularly at NHA to document the safety and progress children are making and to promote the school's services. Parents, guardians, and staff are asked to sign a Photo Release at the beginning of each school year. We do not allow outside persons to take photos, audio recordings, and/or video in the classroom or school without special permission. For the privacy of our students, we ask parents **NOT** to forward or repost any classroom photographs sent by your child's classroom teacher.

Project Lifesaver Locator— Many autistic children and teenagers wander off, even when adults are supervising them. To help keep them safe, the Board has approved the use of passive, locator technology through the Project Lifesaver Program. To protect students' privacy and confidentiality, no active tracker, video, or audio technology may be used within the school environment.

Project Lifesaver is a 501(C)3 community-based public-safety non-profit organization that provides law enforcement, fire/rescue, and caregivers with a program designed to protect, and when necessary, quickly locate students with disabilities who are prone to the life-threatening behavior of wandering. Prior to the use of a locator device in school, a parent/guardian must first complete a written application and be accepted into the Project Lifesaver Program through their county's sheriff's department and submit a written request to NHA's school office. NHA will confirm participation with the sheriff's department and its individual procedures for contacting the department when locator assistance is needed for a student. NHA will fully cooperate with the Project Lifesaver Program and its trained staff. Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their locators. The Board assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage to, or misuse of locators on school property.

Promotion or Acceleration—While continuous progress and improvement is the aim, there may be occasions in which a student may need to be promoted to a different learning or educational environment. The teacher will discuss the pro's and con's of this with the parent and school administration before any decision is made.

Reporting Student Progress—Accurate and regular documentation of student progress is essential to the integrity of the educational program.

- Parents and staff will participate in all Evaluation Team Reports (ETR's) and IEP meetings. These meetings are important steps in setting children's goals and tracking their progress.
- Progress will also be reported on a daily basis between staff and parents at pick-up and drop-off time, through communication notebooks, or electronically through classroom apps, texts, or emails.
- Progress reports will be written for all children, reflecting their academic, social, and physical development.
- Progress will be documented in a variety of ways including through testing, portfolios, classroom assignments, videotaped interactions, etc.
- For continual improvement, NHA encourages its staff to participate in research projects and programs with the compliance officer ensuring student privacy and confidentiality.

- At least two days of parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled each school year to monitor children's progress and to evaluate consumer satisfaction.
- School administrators are available and more than willing to meet with parents to discuss student progress and consumer satisfaction.
- School and organizational information, activities, and progress will be shared through Sara's Garden's quarterly e-newsletter and through NHA's social media accounts.
- Parents will also have the opportunity to share and document their joys and concerns with NHA, its school services, and student progress as a part of ETR, IEP, and transition surveys and meetings.

Safety—Staff and student safety is NHA's top priority.

- Report any suspicious or safety concerns to the school office.
- Regular fire, tornado, and lock down drills will be scheduled.

Safety Team–NHA's Safety Team oversees the safety and security of its schools, staff, students, and visitors. They audit the school's safety plans and procedures and make recommendations to improve the school's overall security. They were appointed by and received written authorization by NHA's School Board to carry weapons onto school property after meeting the following qualifications and being recertified each year:

- Successfully completing the curriculum and training required under State law, or alternatively have received a certificate of satisfactory completion of an approved basic peace officer training program, or are a law enforcement officer;
- Submitting to an annual criminal background check, and
- Participating in an annual psychological screening and evaluation.

Scholarships—For students to qualify for the Jon Peterson (JPSN) or Autism Scholarship, they must have specific diagnoses, finalized IEP's or Autism Education Plans (AEP's) and ETR's from their district of residence, be accepted for enrollment into NHA, and apply for the scholarships through NHA. ODEW will review the scholarship applications and notify the parents in writing of the amount. Renewal scholarship applications will be mailed to the parents' home.

If approved for admission, NHA will accept the Jon Peterson or Autism Scholarships AS PAYMENT IN FULL for the school's tuition. ODEW will be billed monthly for the scholarships with parents signing the scholarship acceptance form noting their approval for direct deposit.

In the event a student is withdrawn from NHA whether from parental or school request, Sara's Garden and NHA will prorate the school's tuition billing for the Jon Peterson and/or Autism Scholarship based upon the student's attendance or the time that the student is present at school. Any tuition charged after a student's withdrawal would be the parent's responsibility. If a student is withdrawn mid-month, Sara's Garden and NHA will bill the cost of tuition for that month based upon the student's attendance. During this withdrawal period, parental signatures are not required nor needed for the final tuition billing.

Service Animals—A service animal is permitted to accompany a student with a disability to whom the animal is assigned anywhere on the school campus. A service animal is the personal property of the student and/or parent(s), and they are responsible for the training, daily care, and/or healthcare or supervision needs. NHA does not assume responsibility for personal injury and/or property damages arising out of or relating to the presence or use of service animals on the Sara's Garden Campus.

A service animal that meets the definition set forth in the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) shall be under the control of the student with a disability, or a separate handler if the student is unable to control the animal. A service animal shall have a harness, leash and/or tether, unless either the student with a disability is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash and/or tether, or the use of a harness, leash and/or tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the student's control *voice control, signals, or other effective means* or under the control of a handler other than the student.

If the student is unable to control the service animal, the family may provide another person to act as the animal's handler. That individual shall be treated as a volunteer, and as such, will be subject to all school policies. Neither the board nor school staff are responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal. According to the ADA, the responsibility for the service animal's needs lies solely with the animal's handler.

While the service animal is at school, it must be accompanied at all times by its handler or the student with disability. The service animal's trainer may help the student or handler develop a plan or schedule with the school to provide the student with the necessary time to care for the animal and designate a location for the animal's toileting needs. According to the ADA, a service animal may be removed from the school property if the animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it or the animal is not housebroken.

Please notify the principal or superintendent if your child has any allergies, asthma, or other health conditions that might be aggravated by the service animal's presence. The principal and/or superintendent will take appropriate action to protect any student or staff member from exposure to the service animal.

Search & Seizure—All in-school storage, including desks, lockers, cubbies, coat racks, etc., remain the property of NHA and Sara's Garden and in accordance with law, may be the subject to random searches. Where locks are provided for such places, students may lock them against incursion by other students, but in no such places shall students have such an expectation of privacy as to prevent examination by NHA staff. At the direction of the Board of Directors, the superintendent or principal shall conduct a routine inspection at least annually of all such storage spaces.

All other searches will be conducted sparingly and only when such search is reasonably likely to produce anticipated tangible results to aid in the educational process, preserve discipline and good order, and to promote the safety and security of persons and their property within the area of the school's responsibility. It is the policy of NHA and Sara's Garden to permit school administrators and/or other designee(s) to search any locker or storage space and its contents as the school administration sees fit.

Student owned or operated vehicles parked on or in proximity to school property and/or parked at or used during school activities held off school grounds may be searched by school personnel when such personnel have reasonable suspicion or reasonable cause to believe that a vehicle contains illegal or unauthorized contraband or is involved or associated with illegal or unauthorized behavior. Students' vehicles parked on or in close proximity to school property are subject to routine patrol and school personnel may look through vehicle windows for any contraband lying in plain view. This authorization to search shall also apply to all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board. Please direct any questions or concerns to the school office.

Sensory Processing—NHA has sensory rooms and equipment to help students with sensory integration (SI) issues. They are managed by Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA's) under the supervision of a contracted Occupational Therapist.

State Testing— State achievement tests tell us how well our students are growing in the knowledge and skills outlined in Ohio's Learning Standards; and as a nonpublic, chartered school, NHA is required to participate in state testing. Parents will be given copies of their students' test scores.

Standardized testing is an integral part of our children's and student's academic development and progress monitoring. NHA's and Sara's Garden requires all of its Autism and Jon Peterson (JSPN) Scholarship students to participate in standardized state testing. Non-compliance with state-mandated testing may put the students' scholarships in jeopardy with ODEW.

To the extent required by law, NHA shall administer the state-required tests for students in third through twelfth grades in accordance with the schedule established by ODEW. Students with disabilities shall not be excused from taking required assessments unless no reasonable accommodation can be made to enable the students to take the assessments. For testing, all students will receive the accommodations, modifications, and exemptions noted in their IEPs.

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is used to assess four areas of early learning:

- Social foundations,
- Mathematics,
- Language and literacy, and
- Physical well-being and motor development.

Content, alternative, and grade level testing for elementary and middle school students—

	English language arts	Mathematics	Science
Grade 3	✓	✓	
Grade 4	✓	✓	
Grade 5	✓	✓	✓
Grade 6	✓	✓	
Grade 7	✓	✓	
Grade 8	✓	✓	✓

End-of-course and alternative testing, as well as ACT testing, for high school students—

Test
Algebra I
Geometry
Integrated Mathematics I
Integrated Mathematics II
*English Language Arts I
*English Language Arts II
American History
American Government
Biology
Physical Science

Student Code of Conduct—A violation of any rule may result in disciplinary action. Students, who have attained the age of 18 or older, remain subject to all NHA's policies.

- Rule 1—Disruption of School—A student shall not, by use of violence, coercion, or threat, cause material obstruction of any educational program as determined by staff.
- Rule 2—Damage of School Property—A student shall not cause or attempt damage of any NHA property or property belonging to a staff member or anyone associated with Sara's Garden.
- Rule 3—Damage to Private Property—A student shall not cause or attempt to damage private property on the Sara's Garden Campus.
- Rule 4—Physical, Verbal or Sexual Abuse—A student shall not physically, verbally or sexually harass, threaten, or behave in such a way as could cause mental distress or physical injury to any staff member, student, or other person. This includes hazing in any form and sexting.
- Rule 5—Firearms, Dangerous Weapons & Instruments—A student shall not possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any object that can be construed as a firearm or dangerous weapon or instrument. This list includes but is not limited to: knives, explosives, chains, clubs, lighters, matches, and box cutters. Nor shall a student use any type of NHA-related instrument or equipment as a weapon.
- Rule 6—Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages & Drugs—A student shall not possess, use, transmit, or conceal narcotics, alcoholic beverages, drugs, and/or look-alike (counterfeit) drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- Rule 7—Tobacco—No student shall smoke, use, or possess any substance containing tobacco, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, vapors, clove cigarettes, and chewing tobacco.
- Rule 8—Improper Conduct—Students shall not participate in activities such as plagiarizing, gambling, hazing, forgery, truancy, tardiness, use of obscene language (verbal or written), fighting, misuse of motor vehicles, cyberbullying, sexting, or sexual harassment, etc.
- Rule 9—Stealing—A student shall not steal or be in possession of stolen property.
- Rule 10—Emergency Safety Equipment—A student shall not use or tamper with any emergency safety equipment unless an actual emergency exists. This includes but is not limited to: fire extinguishers and fire alarms.
- Rule 11—Public Displays of Affection—Hand holding is permitted. Any excessive show of affection between students that attracts undue attention to them, shall be considered

in poor taste and is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: close body contact, kissing, hugging, etc.

- Rule 12—Cheating—Any student discovered in possession of another student's work, copying another student's work, having teacher's materials, or using notes (cheat sheets) shall be guilty of cheating.
- Rule 13—Civil Compliance—No student shall violate any federal, state, or city laws or ordinances.
- Rule 14—Excessive and/or Habitual Absences—Students are required to attend school. Any student found to be excessively or habitually absent or truant must actively participate with their parents or guardians in the Parent Attendance Intervention Plan (PAIP). Failure to cooperate with or follow through on the plan may require the school to involve Children's Services, the Juvenile Court System, and/or withdraw the student from NHA.
- Rule 15—Insubordination—Students not complying with a reasonable request made by a staff member may be considered insubordinate. Any action, judged to involve misconduct not specifically mentioned in any other section, may be considered insubordination.

Student Employee Handbook–As a part of vocational training at the Career Center, all high school students participating in Work Study activities will be issued a Student Employee Handbook, which spells out student expectations and responsibilities while learning valuable vocational skills through Special Grounds Coffee. Both parents and high school students will need to review and sign off on the handbook before students may participate in Work Study activities.

Supervision of Students—One of NHA's primary responsibilities is to ensure the overall health and safety of each child entrusted to our care. Our staff is alert to the safety needs of children, anticipating possible hazards, and taking the necessary precautions and preventive measures.

- **Preschoolers—**At no time will a child be left unattended. Staff will supervise children at all times and will stay with a sick child until the parent or emergency contact person is able to pick up the child.

- **School-Age Children—**School-age children may use the restroom alone without the supervision of an adult as long as the following conditions are met: children are within hearing distance of the teacher, a staff member checks on the children regularly until they return to the classroom, and the children have the physical ability to be alone while maintaining their safety. Children of school-age are never permitted to exit the building without being accompanied by an adult staff member.

- **Release of a Child—** Staff will release children only to someone on the NHA enrollment form, provided and signed by the parent or guardian. If an emergency arises and someone new is being sent to pick up the child, the parent needs to either provide a written, signed note or call the school office to authorize the school to release the student to him. Staff will check the identification of any individual they do not recognize.

  Staff will not release children to anyone, including parents, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home. Police will be notified if necessary.

Technology Fee–NHA instituted a $60 per student technology fee to help defray the ongoing costs of educational technology and equipment. The fee may be paid by cash, check, or credit

card at the Open House or in the school office. Once school begins, a cash or check payment may be sent to school in a sealed envelope with the student's name or it. To pay by credit card or to set-up a payment plan, please call the school office.

Transportation—NHA does not transport students.

- **Home School District Bussing—**As a non-public, chartered school for students who qualify for transportation, their home school district may bus them from their home or from the main school building to NHA. This arrangement must be negotiated between the parent and the home school district. NHA cannot be held liable or responsible for any of the costs or consequences.

- All buses will pick-up and drop-off students through the bussing lane at the designated bus entrance. Only students, riding the bus, may use this entrance/exit. It cannot be used for parent drop-off or pick-up. No student may walk through the bus lane or between buses.

- For the regular drop off and pick up of students, parents must use the designated parents' and visitors' parking spaces. Parents, picking up or dropping off students, will wait in their cars until staff come out to guide them. This will assist in the smooth transition from home to school for our students.

- If you need to drop off your student late or pick them up early, please park your car in the designated parents' parking space, come into the school office, and sign your student in or out for the day.

- **Emergency Situations—**In the case of a severe injury or illness, NHA will not transport children. In an emergency situation, 911 will be called, and EMS will provide transport.

Weapons–Student and staff possession of weapons are forbidden in any school setting (except noted below). The term weapon includes any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, incendiary devices, explosives, and other objects defined as dangerous ordnances under State law.

Exceptions to this policy include:

1. weapons under the control of State or Federal agents authorized to carry deadly weapons who are acting within the scope of their duties or law enforcement agents, and weapons carried by security personnel employed by the Board who are qualified under State law to carry a weapon while on active duty;

2. handguns in the possession of an individual who has been issued a concealed handgun license that is valid at the time of conveyance or who is an active duty member of the armed forces with a valid military identification card and documentation of successful completion of firearms training if the handgun remains in a vehicle with the individual or is left in a locked vehicle when the person exits the vehicle;

3. weapons carried by other qualified individuals who receive written authorization by the Board as summarized below:

Qualified Individuals with Written Authorization to Carry Weapons
Individuals who are not hired to serve as special police officers or security guards, or to serve in similar law enforcement or security positions, may receive written authorization from the Board to carry weapons onto school property if they meet the following requirements:

- the individuals have successfully completed the curriculum and training required under State law, or alternatively have received a certificate of satisfactory completion of an approved basic peace officer training program, or are a law enforcement officer; and
- the individual submits to an annual criminal background check.

Staff members shall immediately report any information concerning weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the administration. Failure to report such information may subject the staff member to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The school will post notices prohibiting the carrying and possession of concealed weapons on school premises. These signs shall conspicuously be posted near each main entrance of a school building and in areas inside the building where visitors are required to report.

What To Bring To School–NHA will provide a cubbie, space, coat rack, or locker for each child's personal items. Recommended items to keep in the child's space include—

- Extra diapers & wipes, pull-ups, or underpants
- Personal & feminine hygiene products
- Extra sets of clothing
- Arm & leg splints, AFO's or other bracing
- Lunch boxes or bags & any special silverware with ice or an insulated unit for cold foods
- Book bags
- Jackets or coats
- Any requested classroom supplies (Supply lists will be sent home before school and may be accessed through the school's website.)

Please do not bring other personal or electronic items or devices such as toys, phones, or tablets to school.

New Horizons Academy

Northwest Ohio's new home for SPECIAL education!

Student Withdrawal Form

Student's Name_____

Parent/Guardian's Name_____

Address_____

Phone Number_____

Reason(s) for Withdrawal—

_____ Transfer back to home school

_____ Transfer to another school

_____ Homeschooling

_____ Transportation issues

_____ Medication issues

_____ Safety issues

_____ Other_____

This student has an active IEP/AEP. Student educational records will be forwarded to the receiving school.

School Name_____

School Address_____

Phone Number_____

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

For Office Use Only—

Date Transfer School is notified of the transition_____

Date Student Records Sent_____

TUITION & BILLING

NHA's students overwhelmingly qualify for the Jon Peterson or Autism Scholarship, which the school accepts as payment in full; but these scholarships **do not** fully cover our educational and intervention costs. Fundraising is a large part of Sara's Garden and NHA.

NHA's tuition is $35,000 per year or $17,500 per semester. Tuition may only be invoiced for students attending the chartered nonpublic school. For students NOT on the Jon Peterson or Autism Scholarships, tuition payments are due on August 1 and November 1. Student admissions after September 15 will be charged on a prorated basis. Tuition payments should be made by check, credit card, money order, or direct draft with tuition and the child's name on the payment line. Families paying on a monthly payment schedule will be charged a 5% service charge. Payments should be dropped off in the school office or mailed in.

Prorated Billing—In the event a student is withdrawn from NHA whether from parental or school request, Sara's Garden and NHA will prorate the school's tuition billing for the Jon Peterson and/or Autism Scholarship based upon the student's attendance or the time that the student is present at school. Any tuition charged after a student's withdrawal would be the parent's responsibility. If a student is withdrawn mid-month, Sara's Garden and NHA will bill the cost of tuition for that month based upon the student's attendance. During this withdrawal period, parental signatures are not required nor needed for the final tuition billing.

ADDITIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

In addition to education, aide, intervention, and therapy services provided through the tuition, NHA and Sara's Garden also provide additional hourly therapeutic services for children and their families outside of school hours. The services include—
Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)—$120/hour
Sensory Integration (SI)—$150/hour, which cannot be invoiced to the Autism or Jon Peterson Scholarships.
Speech/Language Pathology (S/LP)—$200/hour
Occupational Therapy (OT)—$150/hour
Intervention—$100/hour
Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT)—$100-$150/treatment depending upon condition, which cannot be invoiced to the Autism or Jon Peterson Scholarships.
Summer Camp—Cost determined by length of time and services requested, which cannot be invoiced to the Autism or Jon Peterson Scholarships.

Scholarship services are billed on a monthly basis while additional therapy services are billed on a weekly basis. Families are expected to pay for these services at that time unless a payment plan has been set up and approved. Please call the school office for more information on summer camp or any of the other therapy services and to discuss fundraising options for them.

I acknowledge that I have read, reviewed, and agreed to follow Sara's Garden's and New Horizons Academy's Tuition, Billing, and Additional Therapy Services rates and responsibilities.

_____ _____
Student's Name Grade Level

_____ _____
Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

Computer Usage Guidelines

New Horizons Academy (NHA) utilizes computers and educational technology with its elementary to high school students. Computer equipment will be used for instructional, educational, behavioral, and intervention purposes only. They will not be taken home. They will only be used at school. Parents or guardians must read and sign these guidelines before students may use NHA's computer equipment and technology.

Computer & Internet Acceptable Use Policy

All technologies are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. Failure to adhere to this policy and the guidelines below will result in the revocation of the user's access privilege. Unacceptable uses of the school's computer/network include but are not limited to:

1. violating the conditions of State and Federal law dealing with students' and employees' rights to privacy, including unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information;
2. using profanity, obscenity or other language which may be offensive to another user or intended to harass, intimidate or bully other users;
3. accessing personal social networking websites or applications (aka "apps") for non-educational purposes;
4. reposting (forwarding) personal communication without the author's prior consent;
5. copying commercial software and/or other material in violation of copyright law;
6. using the network for financial gain, for commercial activity or for any illegal activity;
7. "hacking" or gaining unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or attempting to gain such unauthorized access;
8. accessing and/or viewing inappropriate material;
9. unauthorized downloading of freeware or shareware programs and all copyrighted material, including music, videos, and applications (aka "apps");
10. sending or forwarding chain letters or "spam" to a large group of users; and
11. storage of "personal files" including pictures, jokes, videos, games, apps, and other recreational software.

Employees, students, and parents of students must be aware that the privileges to access online services are withdrawn from users who do not respect the rights of others or who do not follow the rules and regulations established. A user's agreement is signed to indicate the user's acknowledgment of the risks and regulations for computer/online services use. The school has implemented technology-blocking measures and monitoring devices that protect against access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or, with respect to the use of computers by minors, harmful to minors. Students and employees have no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of any school Information Communication Technology. Violations of school regulations, disciplinary code or the law may result in severe penalties, including, but not limited to termination of employees or expulsion of students.

Responsibilities

NHA will be instituted a $60 per student technology fee to help defray the ongoing costs of educational technology and equipment. The fee may be paid by cash, check, or credit card at the Open House or in the school office. Once school begins, a cash or check payment may be sent to school in a sealed envelope with the student's name or it. To pay by credit card or to set-up a payment plan, please call the school office. Students will not be able to utilize NHA's computer equipment and/or technology until the technology fee is paid.

Students are responsible for the general care of the computer equipment they are using. Computers will not be issued to individual students but will be used within the classroom and testing settings. Students are responsible for charging and plugging the computers they are using into their charging stations before leaving school for the day or making arrangements with the teacher and/or paraprofessional to do it.

1. No eating or drinking around electronics;
2. No transporting computer equipment while open or with power cord plugged in;
3. Do not lean or put pressure on the top of the computer equipment or screen;
4. Do not touch the screen with anything that could mark or scratch it;
5. Do not place anything on the keyboard;
6. Ask the teacher or paraprofessional to clean the screen;
7. Do not write on or put stickers on the computer equipment;
8. Do not drop or throw computer equipment;
9. Do not sit or store anything on top of computer equipment;
10. When not in use, keep computer equipment in the computer carts;
11. Keep computer equipment clean and do not misuse it.

Computer equipment that is broken, or fails to work properly, must be reported to a classroom teacher or the principal.

If the student is found to be negligent in the damage of computer equipment, the student will not be able to utilize NHA's computer equipment and/or technology until equipment repair and reimbursement has taken place. Students and their parents or guardians will be held responsible for the following device repairs:

1. Keyboard Repair—$60;
2. Broken Screen—$95;
3. Lost and/or Destroyed Device—$275

I have read, understand, and agree to follow the Computer Usage Guidelines and Computer & Internet Acceptable Use Policy for New Horizons Academy.

_____ _____

Student's Signature Grade Level

_____ _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

New Horizons Academy

Northwest Ohio's new home for SPECIAL education!

Class Change Request Form

As a reminder, student home room needs and graduation course requirements drove the master schedule; therefore, schedule changes are difficult to make within PowerSchool. New Horizons Academy worked hard to ensure that students' needs were addressed with its scheduling. Classroom and course changes will only be granted when they are necessary for the success of the student's educational program.

Student Name_____ **Grade**_____

Student or Staff Requesting_____ **Date**_____

Requested Change

Home Room (From/To)_____

Class Change (From/To)_____

Course Change (Course To Be Dropped)_____

(Course To Be Added)_____

(Course To Be Added)_____

Reason for Request

Please explain the reason for requesting this change and how it will benefit the student.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Submit to Superintendent William D. Hanak—

_____Approved Date Changed in PowerSchool_____

_____Not Approved



PARENT SIGNATURE PAGE

After reading this handbook, please sign and return this page, the Tuition & Billing Page, and the Computer Usage Guidelines Page to the school office or by confirming your review in PowerSchool when you update your child's annual emergency information. These pages need to be returned **before** your child attends New Horizons Academy. Please call the school office for any questions you may have prior to signing these pages.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the parent handbook for New Horizons Academy and have read and reviewed its policies and procedures. I agree to follow the parent handbook throughout my child's enrollment at New Horizons Academy.

_____ _____

Student's Name Grade

_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

