

**North Star Charter
School 6-8 Student
Handbook
2022-2023**



North Star Charter School
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NORTH STAR CHARTER SCHOOL
Home and School Contract

Administration: To support and encourage student/parent/teacher partnerships, I will:

- Provide an environment that permits positive communication between the student, parent and teacher(s).
- Encourage teachers and parents to provide regular opportunities for practicing academics at school and at home.
- Provide equal and fair opportunities to access staff and the opportunity for parents to volunteer time to NSCS.

Teachers: We understand the importance of the school experience to every student and our position as a teacher and a role model. We agree to:

- Be aware of your child's needs.
- Frequently communicate with parents about their child's progress.
- Teach basic concepts and skills to your child to meet academic core standards.
- Motivate and encourage your child to practice academics at home.
- Annually hold parent/teacher conferences.
- Deliver high quality curriculum and instruction.
- Provide resources and/or materials for home to enhance literacy and other academic subjects.

Student: It is important that I do my best. I know my parents and teachers want to help me, but I am the one who has to do the work. So, I will:

- Continue to believe that I can and will learn.
- Be responsible for my behavior.
- Give work and school papers to my parent(s)/caregiver.
- Follow appropriate conduct throughout school including the use of technology.
- Pay attention and ask for help when needed.
- Complete class work on time and to the best of my ability.

Parent/Caregiver: I want my child to succeed. I will encourage him/her to:

- Maintain a positive attitude about school.
- Support the school discipline policy and school policies.
- Attend school regularly.
- Get enough sleep and eat nutritious meals.
- Establish a place and time to study along with daily reading time.

MEDIA/DIRECTORY PERMISSION RELEASE AND USAGE AGREEMENT CONTRACT

Directory: Due to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) laws we are unable to share emails or phone numbers with other parents without written permission. Therefore, the staff would like to create class directories of student's emails and phone numbers. **If you do not agree to share your child's information, please contact North Star Charter School's office via email or letter (see more information regarding FERPA on the following page) within 30 days' receipt of the Handbook.**

Media Access: Throughout the year, our staff, students, and representatives of the media may be in our school or at school-sanctioned events to take pictures and write about the good news happening here for school newsletters and other print and electronic publications, as well as for newspaper, television, and radio coverage. These tend to be "human interest" or "good news" stories. We also understand that some parents have concerns. **If you object to having your student participate in district media coverage, please contact North Star Charter School's office via email or letter within 30 days receipt of the Handbook.**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Notice for Directory Information

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* of 1974 (FERPA) is a Federal law that requires North Star Charter School (NSCS) to notify parents/guardians that Directory information about their child can be made public by the school without parental consent. ***If you do not want NSCS to disclose Directory Information about your child you must notify a member of the Administration team in writing within thirty days from the distribution date of the Student Handbook that you do not authorize the school to disclose such information.***

At NSCS "**Directory Information**" includes the following:

- Student name, address, birthday, and grade level;
- The student's parent/guardian name(s);
- Telephone listing;
- Major field of study/IB enrollment;
- Attendance dates, awards earned, honor roll data, and diplomas earned;
- Participation in officially recognized activities such as sports;
- Height and weight for members of athletic teams;
- Information typically found in school yearbooks, athletic programs, or graduation programs;
- Photographs or digital media of the student used by the School for recognition of student achievement and for community relations, school publications, or the school website.

"**Education Records**" are defined as those records directly related to a student and maintained by NSCS or by a party acting on behalf of NSCS. Any Educational Record concerning a student may only be disclosed in accordance with NSCS Policy, and are otherwise confidential. A parent/guardian may inspect and review their student's educational records, and request that the school amend any record that is believed to be inaccurate or misleading. NSCS will comply with a request of access to records within a reasonable period of time, but in no case more than thirty (30) days after it has received the request

North Star Charter School Calendar 2022-2023

August 22-24	6-8 Teacher In-service days, no school for students
Thursday, August 25	First full day of school for grades 6-8.
Monday, September 5	Labor Day- No School
Monday, September 19	Teacher In-service day, no school for students
October 10 - October 14	Fall Break- No School
Friday, October 28	End of First Quarter
Monday, October 31	Parent Teacher Conferences— No School for Students
Tuesday, November 1	Teacher In-service day, no school for students
November 21-25	Thanksgiving Break- No School
December 22 - January 4	Holiday Break- No School
Monday, January 16	Civil Rights Day- No School
January 17-20	Semester Finals. Early release at 10:50 on 1/19 and 1/20.
January 30	Teacher In-service day, no school for students
February 20-24	Winter Break - No School
March 20-24	Spring Break- No School
Friday, March 31	End of 3 rd Quarter, 9-12
Friday, April 28	Teacher In-service day, no school for student
Monday, May 1	Family Time Long Weekend, No School
May 29	Labor Day – No School
May 30	High School Graduation 6:00
May 30 - June 2	Semester Finals. Early release at 10:50 on 6/1 and 6/2
June 2	Last Day of School

Introduction

School is an important time in the lives of children, as they make critical and complex life choices and form attitudes, values, and habits that will guide them on their path to graduation. Many of the provisions in this handbook are required under state or federal regulations. Unfortunately, the sheer volume and character of some of the provisions may give the impression of an overly formal school system rather than a friendly, personal one. Therefore, in sharing this handbook, we would like you to understand we seek to cultivate an active partnership with you. The information contained here is to enrich this partnership through understanding of expectations. What is more important than these written provisions, however, is maintaining open communication with you on issues affecting the progress and growth of students.

Mission Statement

North Star Charter School provides students a world-class education characterized by a safe, supportive and structured learning climate that encourages high academic achievement, intellectual confidence, leadership and virtuous citizenship.

This mission represents our belief that all of our students will receive an education that prepares them to handle the issues of the 21st century world by equipping them to think critically and creatively and gain confidence in their skills and knowledge, resulting in citizen leaders with virtue. They will achieve this through the “North Star Way”:

- **Students:** We believe all of our students deserve and can benefit from the educational programs we offer. We are a public, K-12, tuition free charter school.
- **World-Class:** We are an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. We engage students in exploration and discovery of their 21st century world through the IB Diploma program, learning a second language, surveying music or art, and investigating global entrepreneurship.
- **Safe, Supportive and Structured:** We help our students become virtuous citizens. Our elementary program prepares students both morally and in conduct, for the leadership, service and hard work of our secondary and IB diploma programs. We provide a safe learning environment allowing students to focus on a challenging curriculum and accelerated learning
- **High Academic Achievement:** We believe that all students can meet high expectations and overcome obstacles that seem insurmountable. We equip students to think critically and creatively and gain confidence in their skills and knowledge. All students in all grades strive to be “college-ready”.
- **Community:** We are students, teachers, staff, parents, and directors of the North Star Charter School community. We focus on a shared vision of educational excellence and character development. We strive to understand our unique roles in that common vision. We all have a responsibility to educate NSCS students.

Vision Statement

North Star students will mature as confident architects of their future and thrive at every level of their education and careers.

This vision guides North Star Charter School to:

- Forge “high performance” principles into a stellar public education.
- Ignite in our students a passion for critical and creative thinking balanced with a deep ability for self-reflection.
- Fuel a vision of perseverance, compassion and depth of character that empowers our students to flourish in their community, nation and world.

By “high performance” we mean having a universal and pointed focus on accelerated educational expectations for all students. In aligning curriculum from K through 12th grades, high standards for teaching and learning can be achieved. We promote and train effective teachers and leaders that use the powerful tools of collaboration and communication to unite the whole NSCS community.

HOMEWORK

It is our intent to require reasonable and constructive homework assignments that will encourage the student's success in the classroom. Research shows that the most successful students, regardless of family income level or ethnic background, are those who have regularly structured homework time. The primary responsibility of homework belongs to the students themselves. Administrators, teachers, and parents also play an integral role in a successful homework experience. The need for active communication is essential throughout the homework process.

Purposes of homework:

- **Preparation:** to introduce material to be presented in future lessons (6th-12th).
- **Practice/Review:** to reinforce and/or master basic skills already presented in class (All Grades).
- **Responsibility:** develop organizational and time management skills as well as self-discipline (All Grades).
- **Feedback:** to give teachers valuable feedback to monitor student progress (All Grades).
- **Application:** to enable students to connect skills and concepts to new situations within the subject matter (6th -12th).
- **Extension:** to provide students with opportunities to transfer specific skills or concepts from one subject to another (6th-12th).

MONITORING STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Our school provides 24/7 online access to student grades, assignments, and other information through web-based programs such as **Power School and a Google Portal**. Please contact the student's teacher for further information.

Parent Conferences – Our school hosts at least one conference session for students, parents and teachers to meet face to face and discuss progress.

Report Cards – Report cards can be accessed on PowerSchool at the end of each semester.

Grade Point Average (GPA) – The total number of points divided by the number of counted classes equals the GPA.

The point system is as follows:
A = 4.0 B = 3.0 C = 2.0 D = 1.0 F = 0

Testing – Our teachers use a variety of assessments, quizzes, tests, projects, portfolios and homework to measure student achievement. Idaho requires all students in grades 3-10 to participate in the ISAT 2.0 in the spring. Additionally, students K-3rd participate in the Idaho Reading Indicator to measure their reading achievement.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION POLICY
(IDAPA 08.02.03 State Board of Education Rules Governing Thoroughness)

Progressing to the next grade level is earned through academic achievement. Further, each 6TH- 8th grade student must attain a minimum of eighty percent (80%) of the total credits attempted in order to be eligible for promotion to the next grade level.

To be eligible for promotion to the next grade level, each 6th-8th grade student must earn at least one credit from each of the following year-long classes: Math, Science, Reading, Language Arts, Social Studies.

Credit Recovery: 6th- 8th grades students who do not meet the minimum credit requirements will be given the opportunity to recover credits or complete an alternate mechanism in order to become eligible for promotion to the next grade level. Credit recovery options include, but are not limited to lab classes, scheduled intervention, summer school, online courses and after-school intervention.

Alternate Mechanism: By the end of their current academic year, 6th- 8th grade students may demonstrate proficiency of required content standards through an alternative mechanism to determine eligibility for grade level promotion. The alternative mechanism will include but is not limited to: improved attendance; academic growth; improved grades; ISAT scores; and end of course assessments. The alternate mechanism will be determined on an individual basis and will assess current levels of performance. Students may petition for reconsideration and must show data to support the petition. A School Review Team composed of the administrator(s), teacher(s) and counselor will review each petition to determine if a student has demonstrated proficiency of the appropriate content standards. The decision of the School Review Team may be appealed to a school committee composed of the Administration and one other school representative. The decision of the School Review Team is final.

Students who struggle academically will be referred to the RTI team (Response to Intervention), asked to create an alternative plan that applies to the student's needs and apply the plan during school hours. Parents may be asked to attend planning meetings and the student plan will be shared with parents.

Alternative criteria may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Meet goals established in Special Education Individualized Education Plan.
- Meet goals established in English Language Learner Plan.
- Miss no more than four classes per quarter.
- Earn grade-level team recommendation.
- Finish school year with a 2.0 grade point average or higher.
- Pass end-of-course exams.
- Demonstrate growth on the SBAC.
- Participate in academic assistance such as:
 - Response to Intervention programs
 - Tutoring
 - Summer school
 - Online classes such as Idaho Digital Learning Academy.

Idaho Digital Learning Academy Classes

The Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA) is a statewide, web-based, educational program set up to provide Idaho students with greater access to a diverse assortment of courses. This virtual high schoolhouse was created to address the educational needs of all Idaho students: traditional, home schooled, at-risk, gifted, and adult learners. North Star Charter School will use IDLA classes to supplement the curriculum and to provide remedial academic support. Teachers, counselors, and administrators will identify those students who will benefit from IDLA classes and recommend those who will meet the additional demand of on-line classes accordingly. Students may be denied the privilege of having financial support for IDLA courses if their behavioral record does not indicate the self-discipline needed to succeed in on-line classes

ATTENDANCE

Students, parents, and educators recognize the importance of attendance and punctuality at all grade levels. Key reasons for regular and punctual attendance are employability, educational benefits and success in school.

- Employability- Punctuality and attendance are important skills for employment identified by employers. Developing these skills is critical whether students plan to work during the school year, after graduation, or after college.
- Educational Benefits- Regular attendance helps to assure that students are getting the benefits of a program that is 90% direct instruction at the K-6 levels, 75% interdisciplinary study at the 7-12 levels along with 20% cooperative problem solving.
- Success- Students must be present in order to experience success. Further, each student's presence enhances the success of the entire class.
- Financial Solvency of our School- The school's funding is based on obtaining an average of 96% attendance in Kindergarten through grade 12. Average daily attendance is determined on a weekly basis. It is critical to the financial viability of the school that parents/guardians adhere to their commitment of at least 96% attendance.

All absences, excused, or unexcused, count towards the 96% attendance criteria.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

According to North Star Policy Code No. 501.1, applying to all students grade 6-12. North Star Charter high school students must attend a 4 period block schedule school day to be considered a full time student.

At the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade levels, three (3) unexcused absences in a semester will result in the dropping of one letter grade in each subject area during that same semester.

APPEALS PROCESS

If a student disputes an absence-based decision, the student will be required to present his/her appeal to a faculty committee selected by the school administrator. Following this process, the committee may recommend an amendment to the disputed decision, including 6-8th grade students regaining the loss of a letter grade. The school administrator and faculty committee will make decisions in keeping with the overall intent of this policy. The appeal process will be first to the school administrator and faculty committee and second to the Board of Directors.

Attendance codes will be used as follows:

- Unverified: no information regarding absence
- Bereavement: student is absent because of a death in the family
- Truant: student is absent without permission of parents or school official
- Alternative School: student is attending an alternative setting such as homebound
- Parent call: student is absent as verified by parent phone call
- Ill: student is absent as indicated by documentation from medical personnel
- Vacation: student is absent and on vacation or trip

EXTRAORDINARY ABSENCES

Extraordinary absences require prior written request from a parent or guardian, except in the case of illness, accident, or bereavement. Written communication must come from the parent to the school office within 48 hours of the absence to prevent truancy. The following criteria are used to determine extraordinary absences:

1. NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES: Events organized for the purpose of continuing competition or an extension of an approved school program/contest, or special activities such as Olympic qualifying meets
2. ILLNESS/ACCIDENT; Confinement either at home or in a hospital, which can be confirmed in writing by a licensed physician, dentist, psychiatrist, nurse or other health professional.
3. COURT APPEARANCE: As verified by official documentation.
4. PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS: As confirmed by documentation by professional personnel such as medical doctors, optometrists, dentists, orthodontists, psychiatrists, or attorneys.
5. EXTENDED FAMILY EDUCATIONAL TRIP ABSENCE: In the instance that an extended family, educational trip occurs while school is in session, the parent and students requesting this exception must do the following:
 - a. Submit a letter or request to Administration at least two (2) weeks prior to the trip.
 - b. The requesting student must have passing grades in all classes.
 - c. This request may be granted if the requesting student has not exceeded six (6) absences per class in a traditional schedule or four (4) absences in a block schedule prior to this request.
 - d. The requesting student does not have any trancies or school suspensions.
 - e. All pre-arranged work is due on or before the first day back to class.
 - f. Parents/guardians must write the office prior to the dates of absence.
 - g. Students are responsible to make missed academic work, as pre-arranged with the individual teachers.
6. BEREAVEMENT: Up to five (5) days for a member of the immediate family, i.e. father, mother, brother, sister, grandparents.
7. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES: When participation is required and can be verified by an appropriate church official document.
8. ACTIVITY ABSENCE: an absence for a school sponsored program, athletic event, or activity.
9. ABSENCE ON DAY OF ACTIVITY: A student who is absent during any part of the day of an evening performance or event may not participate in that performance or function unless deemed an extraordinary absence

UNVERIFIED ABSENCES

1. All absences except those in the extraordinary portion or under special provisions, are considered unverified absences. Unverified absences change to trancies if written communication does not come to the school from the parents/guardian within 48 hours of the absence.
2. Persistent truancy may result in suspension/expulsion from school.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Students who accrue six (6) absences in a block schedule may be dropped from school and placed at the bottom of our waitlist. When the students name is at the top of the waitlist again then they may be re-enrolled in school. Students served by homebound tutors will not be included in this procedure. In addition, students with six (6) unverified absences in a block schedule, whether consecutive or cumulative, may be referred to the Board of Directors as a habitual truant. If a student is absent six (6) absences in a block schedule, he or she may be dropped from school without verification of circumstances warranting the absences (i.e. doctor or court excuse).

**COVID-19 verified absences will be considered an extraordinary absence, and will not fall under the normal policy of excessive absences.*

TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as a student being absent without approval of his/her parents, guardian, or school officials. Truancy occurs when:

1. An unauthorized phone call is made.
2. An unauthorized note is sent to school.
3. The parent refuses to excuse an absence.
4. The student leaves school without permission to leave.
5. The student is in the building, but is out of class without permission.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Secondary students, grades 6-8, are not permitted to leave campus upon arrival and must remain on campus in designated areas. Violation of the closed campus policy will result in truancy.

MAKE-UP WORK

When a student has an absence, they are given two (2) days for every day absent to make up missing homework. It is the student's responsibility to make sure they receive and complete all of the missing assignments. The student or parent should check the website or email the teacher for assignments.

TARDIES

Students are expected to be in their assigned classroom when the period begins; if they are not, the student will be considered tardy. The only "excused" tardies are for illness, approved school activity (example: meeting with a school counselor), or scheduled medical appointments. Four (4) unexcused tardies are equivalent to one unexcused absence and subject to the policy/consequences related to unexcused absences. Parents will receive a letter from the school when a student reaches their third, fourth, and fifth unexcused tardy. Six (6) unexcused tardies will result in loss of credit

North Star Student Behavior Expectations

The following list of core beliefs outlines the professional actions and attitudes of all staff members in this school, as borrowed from the Love and Logic Philosophy:

1. Every attempt will be made to maintain the dignity and self-respect of both the student and the teacher.
2. Students will be guided and expected to solve their problems, or the ones they create, without creating problems for anyone else.
3. Students will be given opportunities to make decisions and live with the consequences, be they good or bad.
4. Misbehavior will be handled with natural and logical consequences instead of punishment, whenever possible.
5. Misbehavior will be viewed as an opportunity for individual problem solving and preparation for the real world as opposed to a personal attack on school or staff.
6. Students are encouraged to request a “due process” hearing whenever consequences appear to be unfair.
7. School problems will be handled by school personnel. Criminal activity will be referred to the proper authorities.

North Star’s goal is to work closely with parents to uphold standards of courtesy, respect, and kind behavior. Our staff will apply corrective actions consistently. Consistency means that when there is a problem, it will be addressed; and that when there is misbehavior it will be addressed. Consistency does not mean that every situation or problem will be handled the same way.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at North Star

The main focus of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is to provide a clear system for all expected behaviors at North Star Charter School. While many faculty and students may have assumptions of what is expected behavior, we cannot assume that everyone’s beliefs are similar. Through PBIS, we will work to create and maintain a productive, safe environment in which ALL school community members have clear expectations and understandings of their role in the educational process.

Proactive Approach to School-Wide Discipline - Schools that implement school-wide systems of positive behavior support focus on taking a team-based system approach and teaching appropriate behavior to all students in the school. Schools that have been successful in building school-wide systems develop procedures to accomplish the following:

1. **Behavioral Expectations are Defined.** A small number of clearly defined behavioral expectations are defined in positive, simple rules. Students and Staff will have:
 - Practice Safety
 - Act Responsibly
 - Work Hard to Achieve

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

Think Time – Form completed by student outlining his/her thinking error.

Time Out – Student is removed to another classroom and allowed back when s/he is ready to learn.

Lunch Detention - Students must be on time, prepared with reading or study materials enough to occupy the detention time.

In School Suspension (ISS) - Provided daily during school hours. Students may be assigned for a portion of a day, up to 10 days of ISS.

Suspension from school (OSS) Students may be suspended from school and all school-related activities for a period of 1 to 5 days, with an extension of up to 10 days for violent or severe behavior.

Expulsion - Any student who is continually disruptive of school discipline, disrupts the instructional process, or whose presence is a detriment to the health and safety of other students may be denied attendance by expulsion. Only the Board of Trustees can make this decision.

- Show Respect
- “PAWS” Before we Act

2. **Expectations are Taught.** The behavioral expectations are taught to all students in the building, and are taught in real contexts. Teaching appropriate behavior involves much more than simply telling students what behaviors they should avoid. Specific behavioral examples are:

- Practice Safety
- Act Responsibly
- Work Hard to Achieve
- Show Respect
- “PAWS” Before we Act

Behavioral expectations are taught using the same teaching formats applied to other curricula. The general rule is presented, the rationale for the rule is discussed, positive examples (“right way”) are described and rehearsed, and negative examples (“wrong way”) are described and modeled. Students are given an opportunity to practice the “right way” until they demonstrate fluent performance.

3. **Appropriate Behaviors are Acknowledged.** Once appropriate behaviors have been defined and taught, they need to be acknowledged on a regular basis. North Star has designed a formal system that rewards positive behaviors. North Star Reward Tickets are immediate rewards used by the individual teacher, at their discretion, as a tool of encouragement and a student motivator, to encourage and reinforce positive behaviors demonstrated on a consistent basis. Teachers can award Reward Tickets to students, whether they teach them or not. Reward tickets are also turned in to the office to enter students and teachers in drawings for tangible rewards.
4. **Behavioral Errors are Corrected Proactively.** When students violate behavioral expectations, clear procedures are needed for providing information to them that their behavior was unacceptable and preventing that unacceptable behavior from resulting in inadvertent rewards. Students, teachers, and administrators all should be able to predict what will occur when behavioral errors are identified. Student Incident Reports (SIRs) are used to document and record incidents managed by the teacher in the classroom. Office Discipline Referral forms are used to refer major incidents or chronic disruptions to the administration. The Student Behavior Management Process Flowchart is used to help teachers distinguish major from minor behavioral incidents.
5. **Decisions about Behavior Management are Data Based.** One of the most important features of PBIS is the use of the web-based data management system called SWIS. The SWIS database tracks what types of discipline incidents are occurring, where, what time of the school day and who is involved in them. SWIS eliminates guesswork from the decision-making process about what is and is not working in a building’s behavior management system. It allows decision makers to create reports that enable them to devote resources and time to the precise place, parts of the school day and people that need them.

North Star Charter School Suggested Teacher Interventions

The following are intervention suggestions that may be utilized in correcting student behavior. The list is not comprehensive or hierarchical within each level and not all intervention strategies for each level need to be used.

Level 1: Behavior causes minimal interference with instructional process (SBR).

- Proximity control
- Nonverbal cues
- Verbal warning
- Conference with student
- Modified seating

Level 2: Interference with instructional process and/or repeated level 1 behaviors (SBR).

- Complete Think Time
- Referral to guidance
- Out of class time with another teacher
- Parental contact (phone call, letter, email)
- Detention
- Participation grade deduction

Level 3: Behaviors requiring parent notification, including repeated level 2 behaviors (ODR).

- Parental contact (phone call, letter, email)
- Parent/student/teacher conference
- Parent/student/team conference
- Parent/student/team/administrator conference

Level 4: Office managed behaviors.

- Complete an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) form

Examples of Minor and Major Offenses

Minor Offenses	Major Offenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Language ● Lateness ● Blurting ● Dress Code ● Put Down ● Throwing objects ● Refusing to work ● Minor dishonesty ● Tone/Attitude ● Inappropriate comments ● Electronic devices ● Food/gum/drink ● PDA (Public Displays of Affection) ● Running in hall ● Not coming to class prepared ● Missing homework ● Defiance/disrespect/insubordination ● Academic Dishonesty ● Textbook abuse or loss ● Inappropriate behavior at assemblies/school activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weapons ● Fighting or aggressive physical contact ● Chronic minor infractions ● Aggressive/Demeaning language ● Threats ● Harassment of student/teacher ● Truancy ● Vandalism (significant) ● Smoking/Alcohol/Controlled substances / Drugs ● Gambling ● Theft ● Lewd notes ● Repeated backtalk ● Dress code - 3 minors for same offense ● Discrimination (race, color, creed, national origin, sex, disability, or religion)

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

1. **Threats of Violence:** An action or behavior that disrupts the educational process or that threatens harm to students, staff or property may lead to suspension or recommendation for expulsion. This may include the pulling of school fire alarms.
2. **Demeaning Language:** Any language that demeans others will not be tolerated. Specially, the use of racial slurs is prohibited and considered a severe misbehavior. This behavior, profane language, or inappropriate gestures could all result in suspension from school.
3. **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment shall be defined as conduct involving any unwelcome sexual advances or request for sexual favors or comments of a sexual nature. It is North Star Charter School's policy to have an environment free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of North Star staff or student body to harass another staff member or student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature.
4. **Discrimination:** No student or employee of North Star Charter School shall, because of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, disability, or religion, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by or sanctioned by North Star Charter School. North Star Charter School recognizes that different treatment because of race is prohibited under Title 42 §2000d, United States Code, in all programs and activities. Students and parents are encouraged to bring formal and informal concerns of race discrimination by school staff or students to school administration. These concerns should be made in writing.
5. **Bullying:** Bullying occurs when one or more students repeatedly hurt another student through words or actions. In bullying incidents there is an imbalance of real or perceived power, such that the victim has a hard time defending himself/herself against the tormentors. State and Federal laws and North Star Charter School board policy prohibit any form of racial or ethnic harassment by any student or staff member that is meant to demean, degrade, embarrass or cause humiliation to any student or staff member. Any student found to be in violation of this policy may be suspended. Consequences for staff members are defined by existing board policy for similar offenses.
6. **Cyberbullying** is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact. These include but are not limited to:
 - a. Text-message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
 - b. Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people.
 - c. Phone-call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages.
 - d. Email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages
 - e. Chat-room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
 - f. Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where students are sent messages as they conduct real-time conversations online.
 - g. Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal website etc.
7. **Fighting:** Fighting will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Students who fight may be suspended for up to five (5) days and/or recommended for expulsion. Students who either encourage a fight or incite a fight through teasing, harassing, posturing, staring, “dogging”, or intimidating another student will be subject to the same

consequences as those who are physically fighting. Students involved in any way will be referred to the city or county police officer for possible citation.

8. **Reporting All Types of Harassment:** A student may choose to report the complaint of harassment to any teacher, school counselor or administrator. The teacher or counselor will forward the complaint immediately to the Principal. If the student chooses not to report the complaint to a teacher or counselor, the student should report the complaint to Administration. In the event an allegation of harassment or bullying involves a member of the Administration, and if the student has not chosen to report the complaint to any other teacher, administrator or counselor, the student may report the complaint to the Board of Trustees.

A student should be made aware that in reporting such complaints of harassment, while it is the intent to maintain discretion and confidentiality, that in certain instances or circumstances, North Star Charter School is required by law to report the incident either to Idaho Department of Health & Welfare, Law Enforcement Agencies or other persons. All reports of harassment or bullying should be summarized in writing by either the student or the person receiving the complaint, and then signed by the student.

Due to the sensitivity of these complaints, no specific period is instituted for reporting sexual harassment and a late reporting of any harassment will not preclude any remedial action.

It is expected that any investigation will be thorough, with an attempt to ascertain all relevant facts. The person conducting the investigation, at his or her discretion, may interview the student, the student who is accused of harassing, other students and/or employees who may have knowledge of the incident. All interviews should be documented as thoroughly as possible.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the person conducting the investigation will make a report of the findings and recommended actions to the Elementary or Secondary Administrator. Students determined to have improperly harassed another student or teacher, or a teacher harassing a student will be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with the discipline policy and procedures of North Star Charter School.

If an investigation determines that no harassment occurred, and that a student falsely accused another of such harassment, either knowingly and/or maliciously, that student may be subject to discipline under North Star Charter School policy and procedure for discipline.

9. **Gangs and Hate Groups:** Gangs, hate groups, and similar organizations or groups, which advocate hatred or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, or handicap, are inconsistent with the fundamental values and educational environment at our school. The activities of such groups and their members are prohibited on school property and at all school functions. Such prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. The congregation of members that block building entrances, hallways, or otherwise disrupts campus;
 - b. The solicitation or recruitment of members;
 - c. The possession of group paraphernalia and materials;
 - d. The intimidation of others;
 - e. The advocacy of discrimination; and any other behavior, (such as wearing clothing with gang colors or insignia, or the use of language, codes, or gestures) that provoke violence or seeks to advocate the purpose and objectives of such groups.
10. **Possession of weapons:** Weapons are described as any object, which can be used to cause either temporary or permanent harm to a person or property. Weapons include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Guns
 - b. Knives of all types

- c. Spikes of any type
- d. Mace or pepper spray or any similar product
- e. Water and toy guns that resemble real weapons
- f. Lead pipes, bats, chains, chuck-sticks, throwing stars, darts
- g. Metal knuckles, black-jacks
- h. Screwdrivers, slingshots
- i. Explosives
- j. Any instrument that could injure another person

Any violation of this policy or rules and/or regulations to administer this policy, may result in expulsion from school for a period of not less than one semester.

Suspension is a prerequisite to expulsion, pending investigation and hearing.

11. **Possession of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs:** All school property is a Drug-Free Zone. State law prohibits students from possessing, using, distributing, or being under the influence of illegal or controlled substances including, but not limited to, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, narcotics, tobacco, hallucinogenic drugs, inhalants, alcohol, or intoxicants of any kind while at school. This includes attending a school activity or event, and/or while being transported in a contracted or school vehicle of any kind or at any location, public or private, where students are attending as representatives of North Star Charter School.

The school recognizes that student involvement with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco causes problems in their daily lives. We also recognize that in many instances a student's involvement may lead to addiction. Therefore, we support prevention, early intervention, disciplinary action and appropriate referral. This may include counselors, drug education classes, assessment referrals and/or other interventions.

The school will make every effort to identify, intervene, and refer for possible treatment, students who experience chemical abuse problems. North Star Charter School will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by the students at treatment facilities. Assessment and treatment must be conducted by appropriate outside agencies.

12. **Items Inappropriate for School:** Items that are inappropriate for school are those items that can cause a disruption to the learning environment and serve no educational purpose. The following are examples of items that may be deemed inappropriate for school:
- a. Sunflower seeds, gum, toothpicks, rubber bands, squirt guns, etc.—these items are not permitted because of the problems caused by misuse.
 - b. Riding skateboards, bikes, roller skates, scooters, shoes with wheels, and roller blades— these items are prohibited from all school property except as a means of transportation to and from school.
 - c. Trading cards, toys or other items of value.
 - d. Animals, unless brought with administrative approval.
 - e. Large chains.
 - f. Laser pens, shock pens.
 - g. Selling of candy or other items as part of a fund-raising project for another school or organization on the school campus.
13. **Public Display of Affection:** Students are to keep their hands and feet to themselves at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, public displays of affection, horseplay, pushing, shoving or bumping into each other. Dependent upon the severity, PDA violations can be minor or major violations of the school discipline policy.

Dress Code: *Our students strive to dress for success in a manner appropriate for the school setting. Students may not wear clothing that is disruptive to the educational process. Some examples in which clothing is considered disruptive are:*

Gang attire of any kind (i.e., hair nets, bandanas, garments that are suggestive, colors or belts that have gang symbols on them).

Garments/items that advertise illegal substances or display obscene statements.

Pants not worn at the waist and show undergarments.

Brief garments such as halter-tops, shirts that don't cover the stomach when sitting (bare midriffs), tube tops, net tops, tank tops, spaghetti straps and plunging necklines (front or back), off the shoulder shirts, skirts and shorts that are shorter than mid-thigh.

Hats that are distractions.

Any attire or grooming habit that disrupts the educational atmosphere.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

It is the aim of North Star Charter School to:

1. Provide all students an equal opportunity to succeed.
2. Reward hard work and honesty.
3. Maintain the value and reputation of a North Star education.
4. Provide accountability:
 - a. Student to Faculty
 - b. Faculty to Student
 - c. Student to Student

Academic Misconduct

1. **Cheating** - Students are expected to act with integrity and submit original work and use their own knowledge and skills when tested.
2. **Plagiarism** - When a person takes credit for another's work be it from printed material (ex: Internet, books, newspaper, encyclopedias, or periodicals) or from a peer without proper documentation on purpose or by accident. The following are examples of instances of plagiarism:
 - a. Copying from another student's test/work
 - b. Obtaining by any means another person's work and submitting it as one's own work
 - c. Failing to give proper credit to sources used in papers and projects
3. **Academic Dishonesty** - When a student fraudulently gains access to knowledge for the purpose of assignments, colludes with other students to gain an unfair advantage, etc. The following should be used as a guide to help students understand academic dishonesty:
 - a. Seeking aid from another student during a test or activity, unless permitted by the instructor.
 - b. Preparing any academic work with another student, unless permitted by the instructor.
 - c. Possessing or using material or notes not authorized by an instructor.
4. **Collusion** - Supporting misconduct by another student, for example:
 - a. Allowing one's work to be copied or submitted in another's name.
 - b. Providing assistance on an assignment or exam without instructor consent.

COMPUTER USE

The purpose of North Star Charter School Internet and local network access is to facilitate communication in support of research and education. To remain eligible as a user, access must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of North Star Charter School. Access is a privilege and not a right. Users should not expect that the files stored in the district's systems would always be private. Electronic messages and files on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and/or messages to maintain system integrity and ensure users are utilizing the system responsibly.

North Star Charter School Appropriate Use Policy for Computer and Computer Systems: Computers and computer networks, including Internet access, provide valuable tools that support the education of students at North Star Charter School. The student and his/her parent(s) should read and discuss the school policies concerning computer use.

Unless a parent has contacted North Star, in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the Handbook, all students will be given access to the Internet. In many cases, library research resources, such as databases of magazine, journal and newspaper articles, are only available through Internet access. In addition, the Internet provides access to information and media resources, simulations, and other online educational activities. Its proper use can open new opportunities for research, learning and communication. Improper use of the internet will result in disciplinary consequences.

Students will be assigned a network login. With this access comes responsibility. Student logins on the school's network system(s) are considered a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to use only the software made available to them by their teachers or designated technology staff. They are allowed to save documents and other school-related files to their home directories on the network, or other drives only as specified by their teachers or designated technology staff. A student who gains access to inappropriate material on the Internet is expected to discontinue the access as quickly as possible, and to report the incident to a staff member.

Students will not install or download games, utilities, plug-ins or other programs or files from the Internet or any other outside source to the network or individual systems. Students will not stream content from Internet sources (examples are not limited to Pandora, Netflix, etc.) Hacking (attempting, without authorization, to access or alter Internet, network or local hard drive functionality, configuration, data or software) is forbidden. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation or transmission of computer viruses, WORMs or any programs/files that would disrupt the use or functionality of the computers or network. Any attempt to harm or destroy functionality of computer-related equipment or data will be considered vandalism (see Idaho State Code 18-2202).

Students are expected to follow the guidelines and policies expressed in the handbook and the school's NETWORK, COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS Policy. If the guidelines and/or policies are violated, administrators will determine consequences based on the severity of the incident. This may include disciplinary action, loss of Internet access, loss of all computer privileges, removal from appropriate classes with an F grade, and/or legal action according to school policy and Idaho State Code (sections 18-2201 and 18-2202).

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students in grades 6-8 shall not use, at any time during the school day, any personal electronic device including a cell phone, unless approved by the classroom teacher. At the end of the class period when the device is allowed to be used, it must be returned to the student's locker.

PERSONALLY OWNED COMPUTER USE POLICY

Use of personally owned computers, laptops, tablets at North Star Charter School is considered a privilege, not a right. All electronics at North Star will be used for school related work only, whether they are lab/classroom computers provided by the school or personally owned devices brought from home.

1. All rules that apply to school computers and their usage also apply to personal computers/laptops that a student may bring to school.
2. Personal computers/laptops may be used in class only with the teacher's permission.
3. The teacher may, at any time, for any reason, have the students turn off personal computers/laptops and disallow them in the classroom.
4. North Star Staff will NOT be responsible for providing tech support for personal computers/laptops.
5. North Star Charter School will NOT be held responsible for any damage, loss or theft of any personal/laptop computer. It is brought to school at the student's own risk.
6. If a student fails to follow the directives of a teacher, the personal computer/laptop will be sent to the administrator's office and held there until the end of the school day, at which time the student may take the computer home.
7. Any use of a computer for criminal behavior including: threats, obscenity, bullying, harassment or fraud will be reported to the proper authorities.
8. Any attempt to circumvent school policies using a personal computer will result in loss of use of a personal computer/laptop at school.
9. Any violation of these terms will result in loss of the privilege of using a personal computer/laptop for a time specified by the administrator.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL CAMPUS

Attending school every day is essential to student success. Our school provides free bus transportation to eligible students. Once they arrive, in order to leave campus for any reason, students must have verified parent approval via a note or phone call prior to checking out from school. The student must check out and in through the office. Students who do not follow this procedure will be considered unexcused (truant) in all classes missed and will be subject to disciplinary action. Students may not leave campus prior to the end of the school day without parent permission. Students must follow this procedure to avoid being listed as truant. North Star Charter School is a closed campus.

For their safety, students are to arrive at school no earlier than 15 minutes before school starts. **North Star does not have supervision at school until 7:30.** Upon arrival 6th-8th grade students should go directly to their homeroom. The doors are unlocked at 7:30 for secondary students.

Students must be off school grounds 15 minutes after school is dismissed unless participating in an extracurricular activity under the direct supervision of a teacher/coach.

Secondary students cannot ride the Elementary buses.

Our goal is for your child to be safe. Please make thoughtful arrangements to assure that the arrival and dismissal procedures are followed.

TRANSPORTATION

Family-provided transportation: Parents are welcome to transport their children to school. We ask that the entrance and exiting paths be followed to ensure a smooth flow of traffic during peak times. Students are welcome to walk, bike, skate or scooter to school. Once they arrive at school, bikes should be locked in designated racks. Skates, skateboards, and scooters need to be carried into the school and locked into the student's locker. To ensure the safety of all students, these transportation devices cannot be used in the school or during school hours.

Bus transportation: Students who live more than 1-½ miles from school are eligible to ride an assigned school bus without charge. Out-of-district students are responsible for their own transportation. North Star Charter School provides bus transportation for all qualifying students through Brown Bus Company. Contact Brown Bus at 466-4181 for individual bus stop locations and bus numbers.

BUS RULES

- **SWEARING OR OBSCENE LANGUAGE IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.**
- **ALWAYS REMAIN SEATED.**
- **FOLLOW DRIVERS DIRECTIONS THE FIRST TIME.**
- **EVERYONE WILL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS.**
- **TREAT EQUIPMENT AND OTHERS WITH RESPECT.**
- **YOU MUST KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF AND INSIDE THE BUS.**

Visitors

As part of our effort to keep students safe, we require visitors to check in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass. Visitors may also be required to show ID.

We welcome parent visitors, but ask that you schedule appointments with teachers or staff so classroom teaching will not be disrupted.

Visitors who are not authorized on campus are considered to be loitering and may be charged with trespassing.

To protect students and school property, our school has a "No Loitering/No Trespassing" policy. School administrators must have immediate knowledge of any unauthorized persons inside the building or on its grounds.

Children who are not students enrolled in our school are not allowed on campus unless authorized by Administration.

Unauthorized visitors are trespassing.

Designated Bus / Permission Slip: Each student is required to ride their designated bus to and from school. Your child must have a written permission slip to ride a different bus home or to get off the bus at a bus stop that is not their regular designated bus stop. Permission slip forms can be obtained from the bus driver or from the school office.

Seating: Each driver has the authority to assign seats or establish seating arrangements as they see fit, in order to manage the students on their bus.

Bus Stops: Have your child ready to board at the designated bus stop 5 minutes before the buses regularly scheduled time. While waiting at the bus stop each student should stay out of the roadway and be respectful of other people's property. For the SAFETY of each student, there should not be any horseplay, pushing, shoving, or harassing at the bus stop.

Late Buses: Routes can be delayed for a number of reasons and most of them are out of the control of the driver. Some examples of delays that cause buses to be late are trains, road construction, weather, student discipline during the route, and field trip buses returning late.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The North Star Charter School counselor is available for student advocacy and assistance. Students must consult the counselor to secure information and guidance in the areas of education, career interest or planning and social development. Do not hesitate to speak to a counselor if you experience difficulties or problems. Request forms to see a counselor are available at the front desk. A request must be filled out and submitted to the office in advance. The counselor will send for the student when the schedule allows.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Illness Guidelines: The following are guidelines for keeping your child home from school to ensure his/her well-being and prevent the spread of illness:

- A 100-degree temperature or more.
- Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea.
- Nasal discharge with a yellow/green color.
- Student more lethargic than usual.
- Cough in combination with other symptoms.
- Contagious process- rash, pink eye, head lice, etc.

Health and Emergency Policy: If a student is injured or becomes ill at school, efforts will be made to notify the parent/guardian. If parent/guardian cannot be reached, the designated emergency contact will be notified. **Please advise the school of any changes in telephone numbers, places of work, or emergency contacts.**

In the event of serious illness or injury, the Ada County paramedics may be notified to assess the student's condition and transport to the emergency room if they determine it is necessary. Every effort will be made to contact the parent, who may then meet the student at the emergency room or at school. **It is the parent's responsibility to pay for medical services – including transportation to the emergency room.**

The school has personnel trained in performing CPR and first aid; these personnel along with the school administrators will be responsible for determining the need to call for further medical assistance. **If your student has a chronic or acute health condition that may affect them at school, please contact the office.**

Immunizations: Children must be in compliance with Idaho Immunization Laws in order to attend school.

Medical Insurance: Even with the greatest precautions and the closest supervision, accidents can and do happen at school. They are a fact of life and part of the growing-up process our children go through. Parents need to be aware of this and be prepared for possible medical expenses that may arise should their child be injured at school.

North Star Charter School does **not** provide medical insurance to automatically pay for medical expenses when students are injured at school. This is the responsibility of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s). North Star Charter School carries only legal liability insurance. Parents, please be prepared to pay for your child's possible medical expenses.

The office keeps a first aid kit to be utilized for small emergencies and mishaps.

GENERAL POLICIES

Student Records: Any student, parent, or legal guardian may have access to records (cumulative folders), which pertain to them personally. Unless there is a court order prohibiting it, non-custodial parents are allowed to see these records. Administrators may disclose personal information about students without prior consent from the parent/guardian if it is deemed necessary by the administrator. Cumulative records are available to certified staff. Records of a confidential nature are not open and remain with the person responsible for them (i.e. administrators, counselor, etc.).

Moving: During the school year, please notify the school if there are any changes to your student's home address or phone number.

Withdrawal from School:

- A parent/guardian must notify the school office as early as possible regarding the student's withdrawal. Notification can be a visit to the school (preferred), written note or phone call.
- The student will complete a check out form on their last day of attendance.
- **All schoolbooks and equipment must be returned on the student's last day of attendance.**
- Parents/guardians will be charged for all books or equipment that are not returned.

Lockers: Middle School students are advised to keep their locker combinations to themselves. Locker combinations will only be changed or lockers exchanged for security reasons. Backpacks should be kept in lockers. Lockers and desks remain the property of the school. The school is authorized to open lockers and desks to examine their contents, including personal belongings of students, when officials have reasonable cause to believe that the contents threaten the safety, health, or welfare of students or include suspected stolen property or items, which are specifically prohibited by law, Board Policy, or school regulations.

Messages: We are anxious to maximize students' uninterrupted learning time. We deliver emergency messages at the time of the call. Balloons (no latex), flowers, and other special deliveries are kept in the office until the end of the day. The recipients will be notified during their final class period.

Telephone Use: An office phone is available in case of emergencies only before and after school, and during lunch. Students must obtain permission at the front office for using the school's telephone.

Lunch Program: Students must bring a lunch from home. On Tuesdays students have the option to purchase lunch from the CupBop food truck on campus. On Fridays students have the option to purchase pizza organized by North Star PTO.

Closure Procedures for Weather Emergencies: The decision to close school will be made as early as possible, preferably the night before. Tune into your local TV station (channels 2, 6, or 7) for closure information between 5:45 and 6:00 a.m. Please check our website and Facebook page. Please do not call the school.

EXTRACURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

North Star Charter School is dedicated to offering an activities program to the young middle school men and women of North Star Charter School. It is the school's belief that there should be a proper balance between the academic and activity programs. A properly balanced and well-supervised activities program will provide social, emotional, and physical opportunities for those wishing to participate. This school will take the responsibility for providing a program that represents the interests of the majority of its students.

Extracurricular or co-curricular activities are supplements to the regular instructional programs and afford students opportunities for enrichment. Participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities is a privilege, not a right. *As representatives of our school, students participating in such activities are expected to meet high standards of behavior and maintain passing grades in all classes.* North Star Charter School will adhere to all rules and regulations of the Idaho High School Activities Association.

Definition of Extracurricular and Co-curricular Activities:

- Extracurricular activities are school-authorized activities, which take place outside of the regular school day and do not involve class credit, including, but not limited to athletics, student groups or organizations, and community activities.
- Co-Curricular activities are school-authorized activities held in conjunction with a credit class, but taking place outside of the regular school day including, but not limited to drama, band or choir.

Extra-Curricular Activities at North Star Charter School: The extra-curricular program consists of a variety of challenging activities designed to appeal to diverse interests and talents. To make the most of your school experience, get involved in one of the following: Basketball, Cross Country, Volleyball, Golf, Student Council, Track, Ski Team, Cheer, and/or National Junior Honor Society

Dances: Admittance to all school dances may require an admission fee or presentation of the Student Activity/Identification Card. Students must arrange for transportation to and home from the dance. Students cannot leave until the dance is over or their parents pick them up. Parents are reminded that students should be picked up within 15 minutes after the dance ends. (Students staying on campus after this time may lose privileges to attend other school activities.)

Student Government: The student government, or student council, consists of elected officers that may differ with each age group. There will be a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and class representatives. The student council meets regularly, at which time business is transacted and student body activities are discussed. To become a candidate for office, a student must file an appropriate petition and satisfy the academic and citizenship requirements. A plurality of votes cast is necessary for election. Once elected, student body officers must maintain academic and citizenship requirements.

RECEIPT OF STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK:

I received the Student-Parent Handbook and accept the responsibility to review it and discuss it with my student. I read and understood the Home and School Contract on page 2, and the guidelines regarding FERPA on page 3. I agree to ensure that my students abide by the information outlined in the Handbook.

PARENT NAME	PARENT SIGNATURE	DATE
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STUDENT NAME	STUDENT SIGNATURE	GRADE
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