



**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Mrs. Dawn A. Maluchnick**

North Star Central Elementary Principal

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1215 Morris Avenue

Boswell, Pa 15531

814-629-5627

***This agenda belongs to:***

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_


CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_



**PLEASE NOTE:** The front cover is sensitive to extreme heat. Do not leave in direct sunlight!

Printed on recyclable paper 

Parent signature signifies that parent and student have read this handbook: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you and your child to North Star Central Elementary. The faculty and staff join me in saying that we are happy to have you as part of our North Star family. I am extremely proud of the programs we offer our students and I encourage our parents to become involved with the school and your child's education.

I also hope that your child will learn to use this day planner effectively. Time management is a critical skill for success as a student and eventually as a professional in the workplace. The pages of this handbook are filled with important information regarding school policy and procedures. We suggest that parents and students review the contents together. If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, please call me.

I feel that open and clear communication between the home and school is of vital importance in the education of our students.

I welcome and encourage your participation and support during the school year. Working together, we will provide the best education possible for your child!

Sincerely,

*Mrs. Dawn A. Maluchnick,*

North Star Central Elementary Principal

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

North Star School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and handicap in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

For information regarding civil rights, grievance procedures or activities and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, contact the North Star Superintendent at 1200 Morris Ave., Boswell, PA, 15531, (814) 629-5631.

## **SCHOOL SPIRIT**

**School Colors:** Forest Green and White

**Mascot:** Cougar

**Alma Mater:**

To our Alma Mater dear, to the one we hold so true,

We her children raise our voice in song,

And praise that is so rightly due,

Oh, how happy are the memories as we go our separate ways,

They will live with us forever,

North Star High to thee our praise.

## **NORTH STAR CENTRAL ELEMENTARY**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

North Star Central Elementary is an exemplary learning community school. Our purpose is to provide a quality education to every child, every day. We will advance 100% of our students at least one full year, every year. All students will acquire the intended knowledge, skills, and dispositions deemed most essential to their success.

Our students are encouraged to be responsible, independent learners. Staff members are committed to understanding the uniqueness of each student. We assure that each child is nurtured in a stress-free and safe environment.

The North Star Central Elementary staff will build shared knowledge of best practice(s) by using each member's resources, experience, knowledge and technological skills to produce quality teaching and leadership by working as a Professional Learning Community. As teachers, we strive to help all students reach their fullest potential by providing instruction, support and modeling for our students.

Our intention is to broaden our students' horizons by promoting an active learning environment through different activities and the Unified Arts Programs. As

a result, our students have the opportunity to shine in areas for which they have a passion.

We assess our students in all areas, using this data driven instruction, which sets the foundation for their educational success so that they will become positive productive members of society.

Parents play an important role in the education of their children working collaboratively and positively with staff to maximize their children's educational experience.

Our school provides opportunities for students to serve and participate within the extended community. We believe that community involvement is essential to the success of our students.

North Star Central Elementary will operate in accordance with a commitment to learning for all students.

## **NORTH STAR CENTRAL ELEMENTARY**

### **VISION**

#### **A SHARED VISION OF THE SCHOOL WE**

#### **STRIVE TO CREATE**

In order to fulfill the fundamental purpose in helping all our students learn at high levels, we are dedicated to creating a school in which...

1. All staff and its stakeholders will be a successful Professional Learning Community in which all students are actively engaged, solving real world problems and contributing to a global society with infinite learning opportunities.
2. A climate where a rigorous, rich curriculum is delivered to students and students thrive physically, socially and emotionally. Staff members will communicate their high expectations to students, parents, and one another.
3. A collaborative culture assures staff members work together, interdependently, to better meet the

needs of our students and to analyze and improve their professional practice.

4. The staff and parents take collective responsibility for student learning, staff members communicate effectively with parents and the school will give community support. Informed parents will help academically at home and show support for the school.
5. Our school is full of joy, art, music, and activity where teachers love to be and love the children.
6. Data is analyzed, in a timely fashion, enabling frequent reporting of students' progress toward explicit benchmarks raising student achievement and closing achievement gaps. This data will be shared with parents ensuring that parents know at what level their child is performing.
7. Technology is integrated into the curriculum and students are afforded state of the art facilities that are welcoming, safe and clean learning environments.
8. Efforts, improvements, and achievements of the school, teachers and students will be recognized and celebrated.
9. North Star Central Elementary will unlock student achievement, we have the key!

## **GUIDANCE**

Students are encouraged to visit with the counselor for personal guidance and for information on grades, study help, and testing programs.

The counselor is available to discuss any home, school, or social concerns.

# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## ATTENDANCE

Student success in school is directly tied to attendance. Responsibility for attending class lies with the student and parent.

Every effort should be made to make sure students are at school on time every day. Please try to schedule routine appointments during the non-school hours/days, whenever possible.

State laws regarding compulsory school attendance are very clear in their intent that students are required to attend school.

Absence from school will be excused for illness, emergency family matters, death in the immediate family, doctor appointment, approved educational trip, quarantine, and emergencies as recognized by the office.

**All absences that are not classified into one of the above categories are considered to be either unlawful or unexcused.** When a pupil has been illegally absent from school for three days, the law requires that a first offense notice be served on the parents. After missing three additional illegal days, parents are again notified. Upon accumulation of seven days of illegal absence, a complaint against the parents is filed with the District Justice for a Court and hearing.

**Every absence from school requires a written explanation.** When a student is absent, he/she must present an excuse within three days of attendance. If an excuse is not presented within three days, the absence will be considered illegal.

Act 29 provides for up to a \$300.00 fine and allows the court to impose parent education classes and community service sentences for parents of a truant child who do not show that they took reasonable steps to ensure the child's school attendance.

**A warning will be issued if a student misses ten days (excused and unexcused). A doctor's excuse must be presented after fifteen days of absence.** If a required doctor's excuse is not presented, the absence will be considered illegal.

**Half day absences and tardy minutes will be accumulated to make full day absences.**

Students who are late to school should present a signed excuse to the office upon entering the building.

**Parents must accompany their child to the office and sign them in.**

To be excused during the school day, the student must present a parent's written request to the office. If coming to school late, the student must be signed-in by the parent or guardian. At times, your child may become ill while at school. At the beginning of the school year, we will require you to complete an emergency form. If the information on the form changes during the school year, please notify the office. **Only persons designated on the emergency form will be permitted to pick your child up from school.**

Educational trips must receive prior approval from the administration. A written and signed explanation of the trip must be submitted by the student's parent/guardian at least two weeks before the trip. **If the letter is not received two weeks before the trip, the days will be considered illegal.**

**Only one educational trip (up to 10 days) will be approved per year.**

## ATTIRE AND GROOMING

### FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Personal Appearance Guide

Pride in school includes the appearance of students. Also, the concern for the safety, health, welfare, and morals of the students as well as the prevention of disruption of the educational program indicates the need for a Personal Appearance Guide.

School clothing should be appropriate as to time, place, and weather, and should promote a sense of proper attire for public functions, which includes school attendance.

The following clothing is unacceptable:

- ▶ Tank tops, fish net tops, or tops with large arm holes.
- ▶ Tops with less than a 2 inch shoulder strap.
- ▶ Bare-midriff tops, halters, low cut tops.
- ▶ Tops not capable of being tucked in.
- ▶ Muscle shirts.
- ▶ Shorts/pants made of spandex, lycra, or similar material.
- ▶ See through clothing.
- ▶ Excessively tight clothing.

- ▶ Excessively torn jeans or very low riding pants/shorts.
- ▶ Appropriate undergarments must be worn and not exposed.
- ▶ Clothes/jewelry which promote, advertise, suggest, display or promote the use of alcohol, prohibited drugs or tobacco products.
- ▶ Clothes which depict or suggest sexual relations/nudity or vulgar/obscene language or images. This includes shirts that portray suggestive sexual logos from restaurants, bars and other establishments. Examples include: Hooters, Brass Balls Saloon, Big Peckers Bar and Grill, or similar.
- ▶ Clothing that depicts violent acts, inappropriate images or terminology.
- ▶ Outer garments, such as coats and jackets shall be placed in the cubbies provided and must not be worn in the classroom. Hats, handkerchiefs, and other head garments are not to be worn inside the school building.
- ▶ Skirts, split-skirts, culottes, skorts, and shorts shall be no shorter than straight arm, finger tip length (use prudent judgment, a 5" inseam is appropriate).
- ▶ Shoes must be worn – flip flops are not acceptable.

## **YEARLY BUS REGULATIONS/TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Bus transportation procedures will be as follows:

Parents will have to designate in writing one PRIMARY and one SECONDARY drop-off location for their child.

- ▶ The primary location will be their 911 (home) address.
- ▶ The secondary location may be a day care, grandparent, or relative's address.
- ▶ Parents will provide a weekly schedule at the beginning of each semester; designate the days of the week, 911 address and the name and phone number of the responsible adult that will be present at their drop-off locations.

### **▶ DAILY AND WEEKLY REQUESTS FOR BUS CHANGES WILL BE DENIED.**

- ▶ The only reason a bus location may be changed within a semester is if by court order or in an extreme emergency, with written approval of the office.

## **BUS BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT**

Rigid standards of discipline must be maintained at all times in order to satisfy requirements. Whenever a driver must direct attention away from the road, danger exists. Foremost in our minds is the safety of each passenger.

While riding a bus:

- ▶ The students shall use their indoor voices.
- ▶ Students shall sit in their seats, facing forward, with their feet on the floor.
- ▶ No part of the body or any material will be extended through the bus window.
- ▶ Students shall not tamper with any seats, windows, or bus equipment.
- ▶ Students may not eat or drink on the bus.
- ▶ Students shall not litter. Any student caught littering will be required to clean up the litter.

### **Bus privileges may be revoked for violation of the rules or for conduct which is detrimental to the safe operation of the school bus.**

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Students may not possess the following items on school property or at school events without the permission of a teacher or administrator.

- ▶ Electronic devices such as: CD players, DVD players, game boys, beepers, cameras, handheld televisions, or any other electronic item of distraction.
- ▶ Trading Cards or gambling devices such as: dice, playing cards or similar
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages, narcotics, over-the-counter medications, cigarettes, tobacco products, inhalants, cigarette lighters, matches, and any look-a-like.

Any pupil who possesses or uses tobacco in a school building, school bus, or property owned by, leased by or under the control of a school district, will be subject to a complaint filed with the District Justice and upon conviction, may be sentenced to pay a minimum \$50.00 fine and court costs and suspended from school for a designated period of time.

- ▶ Cell Phones must be turned off and place in the student's book bag. Those phones that are visible or heard will be confiscated and turned over to a guardian.

## **BULLYING**

*A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself."*

This definition includes three important components:

1. Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength.

Students should report bullying to an adult!

## **HARASSMENT AND TERRORISTIC THREATS**

Harassment includes slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age or handicap/disability.

A Terroristic Threat is a threat to commit any crime or violence with the intention to terrorize another, to cause evacuation of a building or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing terror or inconvenience.

Harassment and Terroristic Threats will be reported to the principal. The administration will investigate and if the report is substantiated, the police will be notified. Depending upon the disposition of the police investigation, the administration may begin expulsion hearings.

## **SAFE SCHOOLS ACT**

A weapon shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

Act 26 creates a mandatory one year expulsion for the possession of weapons on any school property, including buses and school-sponsored events, subject to the right of the Superintendent to recommend modifications of such expulsion requirements for a student on a case-by-case basis.

The law requires parents to provide a sworn statement upon registering their child in school as to

whether the child had previously been suspended or expelled from another school. Act 26 also requires schools to maintain records on acts of violence and weapon possession and to forward student discipline records when a student transfers to another school.

## **SEARCHES**

School authorities may search a student's locker/cubby and seize any illegal materials. Such materials may be used against the student in disciplinary, juvenile, or criminal proceedings.

School lockers/cubbies are school property, loaned or rented to the students for the students' convenience. Students shall not expect privacy regarding items placed in school lockers/cubbies. School property is subject to search at any time by school officials and random, periodic or sweeping searches of all lockers/cubbies without prior warning in seeking contraband, because, standing in loco parentis, school authorities are charged with the safety of all students under their care and supervision. Such a search is not an illegal, but a reasonable exercise of school authority in the interest of the health, welfare, and safety of all school districts.

## **COMPUTER LABORATORY**

A computer lab is available to every elementary student. In order to use the lab each child must sign a computer usage contract. The contract must be followed in order to maintain computer usage privileges.

## **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

Under PA Code of Health Services 23.85, all students entering school for the first time are required to have the following proof of immunization: three doses of hepatitis B vaccine, a second dose of measles vaccine (MMR), three doses of polio, a fourth dose of tetanus and diphtheria vaccine, including one dose administered on or after the fourth birthday. Varicella (chicken pox) immunity either from vaccination or history of disease will be required for entering kindergarten students.

Health services include: dental examinations in kindergarten and third grade, and physical examinations in kindergarten. The fluoride treatment program, ear and eye screening, height and weight, and periodic head checks are offered in kindergarten through fourth grade.

## **SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH**

Breakfast is offered free to all North Star students. We encourage all students to take advantage of this program.

Regular lunches for elementary students are \$1.25. Extra milk is \$.40 and orange/fruit punch drinks and water is \$.25.

A free/reduced lunch application may be submitted any time during the school year. You may receive an application by calling the school office (814-629-5627).

At the beginning of each week, send your check or money in a sealed envelope to the cafeteria. Please write your child's name, their pin number and the amount of money enclosed on the front of the envelope. If writing a check for more than one child, list each child's name on the outside of the envelope and the amount to be deposited into each account.

Please keep your account up to date.

Some parents find it convenient to pay two weeks or one month at a time. Since the cafeteria accounts are computerized, it is easy to pay in advance. When an account is overdrawn by \$5.00 or more, a cold sandwich will be served until the account is paid in full. Students may also be restricted from activities until accounts are paid.

The North Star School District maintains a closed lunch period. **NO FAST FOOD MAY BE BROUGHT INTO THE CAFETERIA FOR BREAKFAST OR LUNCH.**

Packed lunches may be brought to school as an alternative to cafeteria lunches, but fast food breakfasts or lunches are not permitted.

## **HOMEWORK**

When your child is absent from school and needs his/her homework assignment, please telephone the school before 10AM. **REQUESTS MADE AFTER 10AM MAY NOT BE HONORED.** Homework requests may be picked up after 2 PM at the front office.

## **MEDICATION**

If medications must be given at school, it must be personally delivered by the parent, in the original container, and accompanied by a proper form

(available in the nurse's office). Any student requiring an inhaler should provide one to the school to be available to your child during the day. Inhalers may be transported on the school bus.

All medications will be stored in a locked cabinet in the nurse's room. Proper school personnel will be responsible for dispensing medication.

**MEDICATIONS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED ON SCHOOL BUSES (except inhalers).**

## **P.T.A.**

The P.T.A. is a vital part of our school program. We encourage parents to support it by becoming ACTIVE members. A successful school system needs the services of the P.T.A. Call North Star Central at 629-5627 for more information about the P.T.A.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be sent home with the students every nine weeks. Progress reports may be issued at the mid-way point of each marking period.

All elementary will be issued a Standards Based Report Card. Kindergarten will not issue a report card for the first nine weeks.

Students will be assessed with an A-Advanced, P-Proficient, B-Basic and BB-Below basic on the Standards Based Report Cards in all areas.

Honor Roll will be presented for only Grade 4. To qualify for the Honor Roll, the student must earn a minimum of one "A" and all other letter grades may be no lower than a "P". The student must not have any negative notes for Social/Personal Development or Work Habits.

## **SECURITY**

In order to have a safe and secure environment for your child, the school has a mandatory visitor policy. Any visitor permitted to enter a building must report immediately to the office or reception desk to sign in and receive a visitor or volunteer pass.

All doors are locked during the school day. Video cameras are at entry doors. Visitors will be monitored before permitted to enter any building.

Visitors are not permitted anywhere in the building until they sign in with the secretary at the reception desk or in the main office.

This visitor policy is not meant to discourage parents from visiting classrooms. We encourage parents, grandparents, and community members to be an active part of our school system. Parents that wish to visit the classroom, must fill out the appropriate form and receive written approval. The policy is to protect the children. Each child must feel that their school is a safe place.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

### **FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

#### **TITLE I**

The Title I/School Wide Program provides opportunities for all children, to increase the quality of learning time.

##### **► K-4**

This early childhood program is for children that are four years old by September 1.

##### **► Reading Rangers**

This is an early intervention reading program offered to “at risk” first grade students.

##### **► Reading Intervention**

This is a reading intervention program designed to assist “at risk” readers in grades K-2.

### **CHILD STUDY**

The child study process is a resource for helping students that are having academic, behavioral or social problems. Parents, teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and specialists work as a team in making decisions that will allow each child to be given any number of specially adapted interventions before referral to a special educational placement. If no significant improvement is noted, the child study team may consider referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Special needs services are available to all North Star students from kindergarten through graduation. When appropriate, services are available for pre-school students as well as those requiring services through the

age of 21. These special education services are provided both in district operated classes and other outside agencies.

If a student is thought to be in need of special services, parent permission is obtained for the student to be evaluated by our school psychologist. If the student is determined to be in need of services, the student’s placement is determined by a team which includes the school psychologist, principal, guidance counselor, teachers and parents.

An IEP (Individualized Education Plan) is written annually on each eligible student. The IEP is the plan that outlines the student’s educational strengths, needs, and objectives. It is unique to each student and is written according to his/her degree of need.

The majority of our special needs services are provided by the District learning support teachers. The diversity of the program allows it to serve students with a wide range of needs.

Learning Support classes are available at North Star Central. One Life Skills classroom beginning with Grade 3 is available at North Star East.

Also offered are: Gifted Support, Speech and Language Support, Emotional Support and Social Counseling. Teachers and counselors for these programs travel to each building to provide services to identified students during the school day.

There are children with other exceptionalities which require special attention. Because of the low number of these cases, the District has opted to contract with the Appalachia IU08 to provide the services needed. Some such exceptionalities includes deafness and hearing impairment, blindness or visual impairment, some multiple disabilities, autism, serious emotional disturbance, social counseling, and the need for physical and/or occupational therapy.

There are also rare instances when a child’s needs are not best served within the boundary of our own school district. In some cases, children are transported to a neighboring district which has a class more appropriate for the child’s needs. We also are able to draw upon the resources of approved private schools and other Intermediate Units as necessary.

All buildings and playgrounds are handicapped accessible to accommodate students with physical disabilities.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents of students attending North Star School District are notified annually in local newspapers and radio of their right to inspect the records, procedures to follow, location of record policy, record of disclosure of information, opportunity to amend the records and request a hearing on the records in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Each year pictures are taken of our students. They are made available to parents at a nominal charge. If a student is absent when the pictures are taken, he/she will be scheduled at a later time. A yearbook is sold in the spring each year.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks, library books and agendas are loaned to your child by the school system and should be treated as borrowed property. Students must pay for the loss or damage to these items.

## **PARKING**

Our school parking lots are very congested in the mornings during student drop off and in the afternoon with student pick-ups. Please use the designated drop off areas and do not drive in the bus lane. Please drop off students at the cafeteria double doors or park and walk your child in to the school. For pick-up, park and go to the gym to sign out your child. Also, give consideration to the handicapped parking areas and keep them accessible for the people who need them.

## **STUDENT PICK-UP AND DROP OFF PROCEDURES**

- ▶ AM -Drop Off – from 7:15AM to 7:44AM: Pull up to curb by the second double door entrance and drop off student
- ▶ AM Drop Off- on or after 7:45 AM: Park in parking lot and walk student into lobby and sign in.
- ▶ Must call before 10AM to add child to PM pick up list.

▶ PM Pick up: Must park in parking lot and walk to gym entrance.

### **Gym Doors will open at 2:45PM.**

Any person picking up a student may be asked to present ID. Students will only be dismissed to those persons listed on their contact list, unless special prior arrangements are made.

### **▶ Never drive in the bus lane.**

### **▶ Never park on the outer side of the bus lane and drop your child off.** **Students should never cross the cement divider or space leading into the bus lane.**

## **FIELD TRIPS/FIELD DAY**

**All students on field trips must ride the bus to and from the trip. These trips are school sponsored and are treated as a regular school day.**

**All students must remain with their assigned chaperone for the day.**

Our goal is to have all students attend all trips or activities with our faculty and staff. For the safety of all students and staff, continual behavioral infractions will result in removal of that student from the field trip.

## **ASSEMBLIES**

In the event that a student is misbehaving during an assembly, the student will be removed from the assembly and required to sit in a classroom or the office. While in the classroom, the students will be supervised by a teacher and required to complete an assignment that relates to proper behavior during a school assembly.

## **NORTH STAR STUDENT ASSISTANT TEAMS**

The North Star Student Assistance Teams are people who have been trained through a state-endorsed program of drug, alcohol, and suicide prevention. This team works in cooperation with Mental Health/Mental Retardation and Drugs and Alcohol. Because the School District is devoted to the academic, physical and emotional well-being of our students, we developed an Elementary Student Assistance Program, to provide assistance to ensure that our students get a sound foundation for life. Little things can be overwhelming to a small child. Our Elementary Student Assistance Program can help students deal with any challenges such as these listed below:

Stress, Peer Pressure, Depression, Grief, Separation, Relationships, Drug and Alcohol Use.

Anyone concerned about a North Star Central student can refer him or her to the E.S.A.P. team.

To make a referral to E.S.A.P., call the school at (814)629-5627 and ask for a member of the E.S.A.P. team.

The source of the referral remains confidential as does the fact that the student has been referred. The only people who will know about a student's involvement with E.S.A.P. are the team members, including the local agency personnel (if any), the student's parents or guardians, and the student.

NSSAP is---

- ▶ an identification program.
- ▶ an intervention program.
- ▶ a referral program.
- ▶ a facilitator of support groups.

▶ a source of reference materials for students, parents and community (videos, software, published materials)

Members of the CORE TEAMS are::

Mrs. Dawn Maluchnick-Principal

Mr. Tom Washburn-Guidance Counselor

Mrs. Karen Mish-Art Teacher

Mr. JD Jones-Physical Education Teacher

Mrs. Josephine Gibson-Child Study Coordinator

Miss Kathryn Zimmerman-ES/LS Teacher

In the community call:

Mental Health-----443-4892

Mental Health Crisis-----443-4891

Twin Lakes Drug and Alcohol Center----443-3639

Toll Free 24 Hour Access Line ---1-800-452-0218

Alanon-----267-3942

Alcoholics Anonymous-----443-3046

Children and Youth Services-----445-1600

## **COMPLAINT OR CONCERN**

If a student or parent has a concern about a school policy or an employee, the following procedure should be followed in order to resolve the problem as quickly as possible:

- ▶ Contact the person that you have a complaint about to discuss both sides of the story.
- ▶ If the problem remains, contact the building principal.
- ▶ If it is still unresolved, contact the superintendent.
- ▶ Finally, if unresolved, ask the superintendent to place the complaint on the following month's Board of Education agenda for further discussion.

## **HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

The federal "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001" (NCLB) includes a provision to make sure that homelessness does not cause children to be left behind in school. Homeless children should have access to the education and other services that they need to meet the same challenging state academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

The North Star School District is required to provide activities for and services to, homeless children, including preschool-age homeless children and youths, enabling them to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school or preschool programs.

The law requires all school districts to inform parents or guardians of their rights under this provision of NCLB. Specifically, it states that, pending resolution of a dispute about school placement, a school district must immediately enroll a homeless student in the student's school of origin or other school selected on the basis of the child's best interest and provide a written explanation of the rights of appeal to the parent or guardian of the student.

## **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND**

NCLB is designed to improve student achievement by increasing federal involvement in public education both at the state and local level. NCLB will require significant changes in schools that receive Title I funding. Your child's school receives Title I funding and is covered under NCLB.

NCLB requires:

- ◆ Increased accountability for states, school districts, and individual schools
- ◆ Greater choice for parents, especially those in low performing schools

- ◆ Greater flexibility for states and local education agencies in the use of federal dollars

Under NCLB, parents have a right to know the professional qualifications of their children's teacher(s). This letter is to inform you of your right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the State of Pennsylvania has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether a teacher is teaching under an emergency permit or other provisional status through which state-licensing criteria has been waived.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees.
- Whether any instructional aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.
- If you would like to receive specific information about your child's teacher or paraprofessional, please contact your school's principal.
- For general information about NCLB, please contact the Federal Programs Coordinator, at 629-5631, ext. 1112.

