

**HANDBOOK
OF
THE NOTRE DAME OF DALLAS SCHOOLS, INC.
2018-19**

HISTORY

Notre Dame School was organized August 20, 1962, by the School Sisters of Notre Dame and opened in September 1963. Notre Dame Vocational Center, the secondary component of The Notre Dame School, was opened in September 1973. Both schools were located in Irving, Texas. In August 1989, the schools moved to 2018 Allen Street, the former site of St. Peter's Catholic School and the schools were combined.

The Notre Dame School became a separate corporation in 1985. The Corporation is owned by the School Sisters of Notre Dame (the trustees) and is under the supervision of an advisory council made up of parents, local business representatives and community volunteers.

The Notre Dame School is a private, non-profit diocesan school. The school receives no subsidy from any parish or parish-related organizations. The school building is owned by the diocese and is leased to the school. The school is responsible for all maintenance and repairs. In 2015 the school embarked upon a major capital campaign which raised 7 million dollars to renovate the building.

MISSION STATEMENT

“To provide a quality education to persons with intellectual disabilities and to facilitate their integration into society.”

PHILOSOPHY

The Notre Dame School is under the sponsorship of the School Sisters of Notre Dame Central Pacific Province whose mission is expressed through ministry directed towards education. For the School Sisters education means enabling persons to reach the fullness of their potential as individuals created in God's image and assisting them in using their gifts to the best of their ability.

Notre Dame believes that each child is a unique individual who should have the opportunity to develop his/her potential in an atmosphere of love and genuine concern. As a Catholic educational institution, Notre Dame believes in providing a Christian educational environment, which prepares students to be integrated into society.

DISCLAIMER

This handbook does not establish a contractual relationship between Notre Dame School and its students and their families. This handbook only serves to highlight the School's general policies, practices and procedures for your personal benefit and cannot be construed as a legal document of any kind. Any procedure contained within this Handbook is strictly intended to provide all students and their families with a framework for resolving various situations that may arise from time to time. However, such procedures are not intended to represent the precise formula to be followed in every occurrence that may arise. Notre Dame School reserves the right to change, alter, remove and/or amend all procedures, policies and regulations contained within this handbook at any time, with the discretion of the Administration, whenever such changes are deemed necessary, and without prior notice or cause.

OVERVIEW

Notre Dame School is a non-profit day school approved by the Texas Education Agency as a contract school for the instruction of the following types of students: mild to moderate intellectual disabilities, minimally brain injured, and learning disabled.

Notre Dame School has been recognized as an exemplary school by the National Association of Special Educators for the past 5 years.

Additionally, Notre Dame School is accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department. The school is in compliance with Title VI and Title IX Policies on Non-Discrimination. Students ages 8-23 are accepted without regard to race, sex, religion, gender or national origin. The schools' goal is to provide the student with the best possible training to enable him/her to live the most independent life possible upon graduation.

The Lower School has one self-contained classroom for students 8-11 yrs. of age who are first time students who may need additional support before moving into the intermediate program. The intermediate program (similar to middle school) is for student ages 11-15. It concentrates on academic achievement and independent living skills within the student's handicapping condition. These students change classes and have a homeroom base.

The BRIDGES program serves students 15-18 years of age. This program provides a transition between the Lower School and the Vocational Center with emphasis on functional academics, career exploration, community- based instruction and independent living skills.

The Vocational Center for students 18-21; teaches a wide variety of marketable skills, as well as valuable home-living techniques, and functional academics. Transition services are provided to assist the student and family to access the appropriate services available upon graduation. Services may include job placement, further vocational training and/or referral to other agencies as needed.

The STAR program serves our students who have graduated but are in need of continued job training and functional living skills.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADMISSION

Students must be ambulatory and have all their self-help skills. The target population is students with developmental disabilities between the ages of 8 and 21 without regard to race, sex, religion, gender or national origin are considered as prospective students. While the student may stay through their 21st year, they will not have an initial admission past the age of 18.

Procedures:

1. After the school has been contacted regarding a possible placement, an appointment is set up by the Principal for the parents and child when appropriate.
2. Parents tour the facility and a preliminary decision is made as to the appropriateness of placement after reviewing records indicating the nature and severity of the child's disability.
3. The applicant spends a complete day (possibly longer) to ascertain if the school can meet his or her needs.
4. After a consultation with appropriate faculty members, the Principal informs the parents of the school's decision concerning the placement of the applicant.
5. If the applicant's needs cannot be met by the school, referral is made to another agency.
6. All admissions are for a 90-day trial period.

The student is conditionally accepted until the following records are obtained:

- a. Birth certificate
- b. Baptism certificate and First Communion records (if applicable).
- d. Current psychological evaluation (within three years of date of application) as required by the Texas Education Agency. (public school FIE)
- e. Previous educational records (IEP and testing)
- f. Health history form (including immunization requirements and physical examination)
- g. Complete parent information and emergency information card.

- h. Information for the student directory
- I. Release form for dispensing medication (if applicable)
- j. Media release
- i. Income summary (federal guidelines require this form)

APPEAL PROCESS

Parent/Guardian Grievance

If a parent/guardian has a grievance against a teacher or employee of the school, the following is the method of making that grievance known.

1. The parent/guardian will first go to the one with whom the difficulty exists and make an effort to resolve the difference.
2. If resolution is unsuccessful, the grievant will then go to the principal and make the grievance known (grievance should be in writing).
3. If resolution is unsuccessful, the grievant will have the principal set up an appointment with a committee of the board. The meeting will be set within five working days of contact with the Board President.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES

The School office opens at 7:30 A.M. and closes at 4:00 P.M. each school day. Classes begin at 8:30 A.M. and are dismissed at 2:55 P.M. Students who arrive earlier than **7:30** will be charged a monthly fee for supervision. Students will be charged for after-school care if not picked up by 3:15 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school affords students the opportunity to master skills needed to prepare them for the future. It also teaches responsibility, an important skill for job placement. The school provides 182 instructional days, which includes two days for Parent/Teacher conferences.

Tardy students are to report to the office to receive an admit slip before going to their classroom. Tardiness is disruptive to not only the student, but the teacher and classroom as well. **It also predicts future job success. Please make every effort to get your child to school before 8:25 A.M. Excessive tardiness and absences may result in dismissal from the school.**

Lower School students: Please call or e-mail the office, in the event of an illness that requires a doctor visit please bring an excuse.

Vocational Center / Bridges students: The student (preferably) or parent should call the school office before 8:30 A.M. to report his/her absence.

BAD WEATHER

The Notre Dame School has incorporated two days into the calendar in the event of extremely hazardous driving conditions. Information regarding the closing of school will be on WFAA channel 8 and a parent alert through our RENWEB program will also be sent. (please make sure your e-mails and phone numbers are up to date).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All activities and affairs of the corporation (Notre Dame of Dallas Schools Inc.) are conducted under the direction of the Board of Directors. The Board serves in an advisory capacity and reviews and approves all policies of the school. The Board consists of up to twenty members in addition to the Principal and Development Director as ex-officio members. There is at least one School Sister of Notre Dame (sponsoring Religious order) on the Board. The board also includes at least two parent representatives and other community representatives that represent areas of expertise that would be beneficial to the school

The officers of the Board are as follows: President-Kim Roosevelt Vice President-Bruce Newsome, Secretary –Sr. Georgiann Wildhaber SSND, and Treasurer-Patrick Church. The standing Board committees are: Governance committee, Executive committee, Finance committee and Audit committee. A list of the Board of Directors is included for your information. Two board members sit on our foundation board which manages our endowment investments.

BUS

The Notre Dame School provides bus service from central locations for an additional fee. A contract is signed by the parents/guardians of the students and the school. \$1000 for one way contract and \$1500 for two-way.

The school provides a monitor to ride the bus and provide additional supervision. It is the parents/guardians' responsibility to pick up the student on time at the bus stop. **IN THE EVENT NO ONE IS THERE TO PICK UP YOUR STUDENT, HE/SHE WILL BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL TO WAIT FOR HIS/HER PARENT/GUARDIAN.**

In the event a bus breaks down while en route, all efforts possible will be made to notify at least one parent at each bus stop. Please note that the bus driver cannot stop the bus except at the designated pick up points. If you are late and miss the bus you must go to the next stop or bring your child to school.

Other students are transported by their parents or in carpools. DART Handi-ride may be available. For more information on DART Handi-rides, call 214-515-7272. Parents who pick up their students are required to wait in the carline in the parking lot until your student is released. They will be walked to the car by a staff member. If you pick up your student by walking up to the school building. Please do not cross in front of cars in drive and use the cross walks (you are providing an example to your child).

A written notice/or e-mail of change in a student's transportation routine **MUST** be sent to the school office. If an emergency occurs, parents are expected to notify the office with the change by 2:00 P.M. If one of the above procedures is not followed, students will follow their regular transportation schedule.

COMMUNICATION

Good communication is paramount to a successful school/parent partnership. Each department has a preferred mode of communication with parents. In recent years, many parents and teachers have begun to communicate through e-mail. This year teachers will use Class Dojo to share classroom and job activities, please respond to the teacher invite so that you can see what is happening in the classroom. All teachers can be reached through e-mail at their first initial last name (tfrancis@notredameschool.org) for example. Teachers will respond to all e-mails within 24 hours. A monthly calendar is posted on RENWEB, and on our website. Additional information, handbooks, directory, teacher lesson plans etc. can be accessed through the website www.renweb.com. The school code is NDS-TX. The first time you log on you must enter the e-mail address that you gave to the school at admission. This will enable you to set a password. **If you have a problem logging on please contact the school office**

All office communication will be sent on Wednesday using RENWEB to all those who have e-mail addresses. If you do not have e-mail access or would like to have a hard copy of all communication please let the office know.

COMMUNITY BASED TRAINING

In order to meet the special needs of our student population in the areas of functional living, vocational exploration and community awareness, each student in Bridges and Vocational will participate in Community Based Training. Community Training activities are not field trips, but learning experiences that are an extension of what is taught in the classroom. **Participation in community based- training and vocational off campus activities is a privilege; inappropriate behavior or dress may prevent a student from participating.** Each student will participate at the level that he or she is able, with the Vocational Center and Bridges students receiving the most exposure to community-based and vocational training

activities. Student/teacher ratio for these experiences will be determined by the student's functioning level and the nature of the activity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Notre Dame School will protect the confidentiality of all data in its records. No information will be shared unless a release of information form is on file. Parents, and students age 18 or over will have full and free access to the student's school records.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum consists of that body of courses provided by the school to meet the academic, vocational and independent living needs and talents of the students. Notre Dame has developed a Curriculum Guide, which provides a curriculum structure for a quality instructional program and also complies with the requirements of the Texas Catholic Conference of Education and the Texas Education Agency.

Lower School: Programs of instruction include: reading, math, science/social studies, daily living skills, music, physical education, and language. Speech services are provided through DISD to those whose eligibility is determined through the ARD process. Parents must first contact CHILD FIND 972-581-4765 Spanish 972-581-4210 to initiate the process. Throughout the day each student is scheduled to participate in a variety of educational activities according to his/her particular needs.

BRIDGES: The BRIDGES program is designed to meet the unique social/emotional needs of adolescents, 15-18 yrs. This is a transitional program which introduces the students to vocational job interests that match with their abilities. Functional academics, reading, math and social studies continue to be emphasized as the students study various career options. The students also have P.E. daily living skills, music and community based instruction and job training classes.

Vocational Center: The Vocational Center offers a community based vocational training program. Each student receives training in a variety of settings. Meaningful employment upon graduation is the goal as the student's abilities allow. Parental involvement and commitment is required for successful placement. Daily Living Skills include: personal care skills, leisure activities, personal housekeeping, personal finances, grooming, health and first aid, functional academics, and communication skills. Parents and students must work with the staff throughout their tenure in the Vocational Center to maximize services and success upon graduation. Parents will be asked to sign a contract outlining expectations for pursuing employment for their student. Best practice trends indicate the need for self determination and advocacy skills for students with intellectual disabilities. Students deserve and have a right to participate in their own future's planning. Therefore, all vocational center students will be required to attend a conference at least once a year with their parents, teachers and others who may have an interest in order to plan for the success of the student in the future.

STAR program: This program offers continued learning opportunities for young adults including community based training and job skills as well as leisure and self advocacy, with emphasis on continuing independence and integration into the community.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an active teaching process whereby students learn the skills necessary to become contributing members of their community. Students learn that they are responsible for their behavior through the use of appropriate rewards and consequences. It is a supportive process in which the student is taught the necessary skills of self-control in an environment that strives to build their self-esteem. Discipline sets consistent, firm and reasonable limits of behavior. Respect for oneself and others; honesty, good sportsmanship, cooperation, kindness and courtesy are characteristics of good citizenship and the Christian way of life.

Discipline procedures at Notre Dame are positive in nature and teach appropriate behaviors. The school uses the Project Career program to offer incentives and rewards for appropriate behavior. The faculty meets on a regular basis to discuss problem behaviors and ways to improve these behaviors. When applicable, a home-to-school behavior program may be developed with input from the parents. Parents are expected to cooperate with the school in developing appropriate behavior programs when necessary.

Suspension is the temporary dismissal of a student from the classroom and/or school. Decisions to suspend follow only after other means of motivation have failed and an aggressive or highly disruptive behavior necessitates this disciplinary action. Consideration must always be given to the welfare and Christian development of the individual student and the practical, common good of the entire student body. Only the principal or her designee may suspend a student; parents/guardians will be notified to pick up the student. Parents must meet with the principal to return the child to school.

Expulsion is permanent dismissal of a student from school and is invoked only as a last resort. While the decision to expel a student could result from a single occurrence, the decision will generally be supported by documentation of student's previous behavior; conferences with student and parents/guardians; and of students, parents and/or guardian's awareness of the possibility of expulsion.

DRESS CODE

Students in the Lower School 8-15 are required to wear uniforms:

The uniform is as follows:

BOYS

- White or navy polo or button down shirts
- Navy or Khaki slacks or long shorts
- Notre Dame sweat shirts (as needed)
- Students may wear tennis shoes with socks (no sandals)

GIRLS

- White or navy polo or button down shirts
- Navy or khaki skirts, slacks or jumpers
- Notre Dame sweatshirts (as needed)

Clothing is widely available at local department stores. Please note that students will be asked to keep their shirts tucked in so please purchase the appropriate length.

Friday is Spirit Day and all students may wear jeans (no torn jeans) and Notre Dame T-shirts.

(Bridges and Vocational Center Students) Please note: shirts must be tucked in at all times.

Student clothing and appearance have implications for future vocational success and indicate a respect for the educational process. The staff encourages neatness, cleanliness and appropriateness in dress at all times. The following specific dress code will be enforced:

Boys	Girls
Clean slacks (jeans on Friday)	Skirts, dresses of modest length, slacks
Clean shaven – no hair over the collar	Tights or leggings with shirt/dress that covers rear
No earrings	No crop tops or shirts that are low cut
Polo style or button down shirts (no t-shirts)	
Shoes should be appropriate for the job site	
No hoodies in classroom	No flip flops/backless sandals or high heels
No torn or baggy jeans on Friday	

Bridges students may only wear jeans on Fridays- knee length shorts (not gym shorts) may be worn until Labor day.

Vocational Center students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for the job setting. Shorts are permitted until Labor Day for Bridges and Vocational Center students when they are not on the job.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE USAGE

Electronic devices must be put in the student's backpack upon entering the school. Phones, ipads, etc. must remain in the backpack unless directed by a teacher. Students who ride the bus may listen to an ipod or their phone while in transit. These items are off limits on campus before school starts and during the day unless permission is given by the teacher. These devices may be used during classroom time but only for educational purposes, which might include playing a game with another student or to share photos as a tool to promote communication or small group work as directed by the teacher. (the school is not responsible for the loss or damage to a personal electronic device of any kind)

Students who abuse the privilege of using these devices will be given a signature/warning. A second offense will result in the item being collected and kept by the teacher until the end of the week. A third warning will result in the parent coming to school to pick up the device.

Parents- the school cannot be responsible for these devices during the school day. Please clearly mark devices with, at a minimum, the student's name. We do not want these devices to replace communication and interaction with peers. There have been instances of cameras being used inappropriately, photos may be checked. Students should not have the cell phone numbers of staff in their phones unless they are working at an independent job site.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Due to the nature of our student population it is of the utmost importance that the school has accurate and up-to-date medical information. All students are required to have an emergency procedure card and an updated medical history form completed upon entrance. Any additions or changes in the initial information **MUST BE REPORTED IN WRITING** to the school office. This would include activity limitations, medication changes or special procedures to be followed in case of an emergency.

The following standard procedures will take place in case of a medical emergency:

1. In a life-threatening situation 911 will be called by an appropriate staff member. The student will, at all times, be supervised by a staff member.
2. If CPR procedures are warranted, an appropriately trained staff member will be called.
3. Students will be accompanied to the appropriate medical facility by a faculty member who will remain with the student until the student's parent/guardian arrives.
4. The school does have an AED on site and designated staff have been trained in its usage.

All other emergencies will be handled following the procedures outlined on the Emergency Procedure Form completed at the beginning of each school year.

EVENTS

For the lower school Birthdays may be celebrated at school within a child's homeroom period from 2:00 – 2:45 or during lunch time. Arrangements concerning date, time and refreshments must be made with the child's homeroom teacher **BEFORE** the party occurs.

Bridges students may celebrate birthdays on their birthday during the lunch hour. This is to be coordinated with the Homeroom teacher.

Vocational Center students, birthdays are scheduled once a month on a Friday. During this time all birthdays for the month will be celebrated. Homeroom teachers coordinate this activity.

Graduation:

Lower School: Students may continue in the Lower School through their 15th year. Students will graduate into the BRIDGES program at 16 years of age and will continue through their 18th year.

Vocational Center: Students entering the Vocational Center should be at least 18 years of age as of September 1. Students graduate in a formal graduation ceremony in May after a minimum 2 years of attendance (students are eligible to continue in the program through their 21st year.) A diploma is awarded to those students who have completed the requirements of the Vocational Program. Students in the vocational center may receive their school ring any time after their first year in the program. However, you

must let the homeroom teacher know that you would like to receive a ring and be a part of the ring ceremony at Graduation before the Christmas break.

Parent Meetings/ Coffee with the Principal

The School holds parent meetings as necessary throughout the school year. The meetings provide parents/guardians and teachers the opportunity to meet one another, discuss projects of The Notre Dame School, and enjoy fellowship. Once a bi-monthly coffee with the Principal is offered on timely topics of interest. Parents are encouraged to attend all school-sponsored gatherings and show their support of the school.

Vocational Center/BRIDGES Social Activities

Two annual dances are sponsored by the Bridges/Vocational Center; the Christmas dance to which alumni are invited and the Prom, which is only for bridges and vocational students. Students from the Intermediate classes have a spring and fall dance after school. The school also sponsors a Boy Scout and Girl Scout troop as well as cheerleading, sports and Best Buddies.

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

Notre Dame provides an after-school program for our students. The cost is \$190 per month for 10 months or \$15.00 a day, drop in. The service is provided from 3-6 P.M. The program includes a variety of educational and recreational activities. The program is supervised by Notre Dame staff under the supervision of the Principal.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The school offers various extra-curricular activities, some of the activities are sponsored by the school, such as Special Olympics and summer activities, and others are sponsored by outside groups. Participation in these activities is a privilege. Students may lose the privilege of participation due to inappropriate behavior that is detrimental to the reputation of the school.

FIRE AND DISASTER DRILLS

The Notre Dame School follows standards set by the Texas Education Agency and the Dallas Fire Department. Fire drills are held once a month. Tornado drills are held twice a year. The school has a Crisis management plan that will be followed in the event of a disaster. This plan is on file and available for review in the school office. In the event of a lockdown situation or tornado emergency, students will not be released to their parents until the threat is over.

FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES-PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As stated earlier, The Notre Dame School is a private Catholic school owned by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. The school is not supported by a parish and receives no operating or capital funding from any parish. The yearly tuition (\$9250) does not reflect the true cost of care (\$16,500). This deficit is met through various activities including an Affair of the Heart, the Annual Fund, an SSND subsidy, an endowment drawdown and the generosity of many supporters in the community. Therefore, it is most important that everyone participate in fund-raising activities sponsored by the schools. **All parents are expected to participate in the Annual Fund and to assist with An Affair of the Heart.**

BULLYING

The school is committed to provide a learning environment that is free from bullying in any form. Bullying of any student by any other student, lay employee or religious is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of bullying seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted advances, imitations, or comments.
- Using the internet to harass, insult, bully, or attack others.

- Visual content such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
- Physical contact such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movements, or interfering with work, study, or play.
- Threats and demands to submit to inappropriate requests as a condition of continued employment or grades or other benefits or to avoid some other loss and offers of benefits in return for inappropriate favors.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

Any incident of suspected bullying must be reported to a teacher or administrator immediately. The incident will be investigated and appropriate consequences will be determined by the administrator.

HARASSMENT

Notre Dame School is committed to a policy of non-discrimination within all school programs and activities. Harassment of employees or students is not condoned in a Christian environment and is strictly prohibited at Notre Dame School. All allegations of harassment will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. Any student or teacher who believes he or she has been the subject of harassment shall report the alleged harassment in writing to the school principal. The principal will take whatever actions he/she deems necessary to investigate the complaint, including but not limited to interviewing the accused person, the accusing person, and any witnesses. The principal will render a decision within thirty days of receiving the complaint.

ILLNESS

If a student becomes ill during school hours, appropriate measures will be taken concerning care for the student. Parents will be notified of the student's condition. If a child has a fever or suspected communicable disease, parents will be expected to make arrangements to come for their child. All diagnosed communicable diseases of a Notre Dame student must be reported to the school office. A doctor's certificate is required upon return to classes. **Due to the nature of our student population, the school asks that you keep your child home if you suspect an illness and let the school know so that other parent's may be notified. Infectious illnesses are becoming an increasing problem which cannot be controlled when students are in close quarters here at school. All students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

IMMUNIZATIONS: All parents must present an up-to-date immunization record. A student may be excluded from the program if required immunizations are not noted on the record.

INCLUSION

It is the primary purpose of the Notre Dame School to serve the special academic, vocational and emotional needs of our student population. The goal of the program is to maximize the students' participation in his/her community. We feel that building self-esteem in a warm, nurturing environment where each student is allowed to feel success at his or her own level is the key to a well-adjusted adult. The School provides many opportunities for our students to interact with their non-handicapped peers. The staff, in conjunction with parents, will continue to work towards providing planned activities with same age peers that will promote self-esteem and awareness for all participants.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN

The Notre Dame School will develop and implement an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student with input from parents, teachers, other professionals and the student, when appropriate. The program will be reviewed periodically, but not less than annually.

Procedures:

1. It is the responsibility of the school to initiate and conduct meetings to develop, review and revise students' IEP.

2. Parent input will be solicited and considered when developing the annual goals based upon the school curriculum
3. The IEP Committee will include: the student's teacher(s), one or both of the student's parents/guardians, the student (when appropriate), and other individuals at the discretion of the school or parent.
4. The IEP will include
 - a. A statement of the student's present level of educational performance,
 - b. A statement of annual goals, including short-term instructional objectives
 - c. A statement of specific services provided,
 - d. The projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of services; appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining if short-term instructional objectives are being met.
5. A copy of the IEP will be given to parent/guardians.
6. Each student's IEP will be reviewed quarterly and a quarterly progress report will be sent to the family.
7. An ITP (Individual Transition Plan) will be written for Vocational Center and Bridges students and reviewed on an annual basis. Bridges and Vocational students are asked to participate in their transition meetings as this allows them to become involved and take ownership in their future.

LUNCH

Lunches are prepared by the Vocational Center student's food Service Class under the supervision of the Cafeteria manager, five days a week. Each student may purchase his/her lunch on these days. Lunch may be purchased for \$3.50 a day. This includes lemonade/tea. Milk can be purchased for an additional \$.50.

Lower School: Students may purchase milk or lemonade or bring a thermos. Parents are asked not to send soft drinks with their children.

Vocational Center/Bridges: Students may purchase milk, lemonade/tea, or bring a thermos.

NO GLASS Bottles/Dishes allowed

MEDICATION

All prescribed medication must be accompanied by a signed medication form from the parent/guardian giving the school authority to administer the prescribed medication. Any other medication, whether prescribed or an over the counter drug, must be sent to the office with instructions for administering said medication. All medication must be sent in the original bottle.

Home School Association (HSA)

Notre Dame has a Parents' Club whose purpose is to support the educational goals of the school. The Parent's Club provides lunches for the staff throughout the year and provides funding for special all school activities and programs. All parents are expected to join the Parent's club and participate in events sponsored by this group, ie Carnival and Spring show. Dues support various events for both the students and the staff.

PARKING

Parking for staff and visitors is provided in the adjacent parking lot (entrance on Allen Street) during school hours. **Do not park in the bus lane at any time.** The handicapped parking spot should be used only by those with a legitimate handicap sticker.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year, during the fall and spring. All families must participate in at least one conference per year. At the conferences the student's progress is discussed and any alterations in the IEP are made. Vocational Center and Bridges students are expected to attend these meetings so they can participate in the planning process, this self advocacy increases the likelihood of future success in the community.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

New students are required to have a current physical examination on file. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school IN WRITING of any change in the child's medical condition that occurs during the school year. If students participate in Special Olympics, a physical examination is also required. The forms for these examinations are available in the school office. Medical forms must be updated at a minimum once every 3 years (or any time a major change occurs).

PROGRESS REPORTS

Written Progress Reports are issued four times each year, at the end of each nine-week period. Any questions or concerns may be discussed with the appropriate teachers(s) by calling the school office and scheduling an appointment.

RESOURCES: The school strives to be a resource for families for needs outside of the school. The school maintains a list of resources: doctors, counselors, camps, residential services, and other resources as they become available. This information is provided to parents as needed. There is also a section in library of parent resources. Parents are invited to check out these resources as needed.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS/ATHLETICS

Students eight years of age and older are encouraged to participate in the locally sponsored Special Olympics Track and Field, Basketball, Bowling and Soccer activities. The following forms and/or fees are required for participation:

- *1. Medical Application/Parental Release Form
 - *2. ALL students with Down Syndrome are required to be examined for Atlantoaxial Dislocation Condition. A copy of the results of the completed examination is to be filed in the school office.
- *Forms may be obtained from the School Office.

A \$35.00 participation fee is required for all Special Olympic athletes per sport. This fee is used for equipment, water and stipends for coaches. Parent volunteers are needed to make our Special Olympics team successful. All fees will be billed through FACTS. Students who participate in these activities are expected to abide by the same rules of behavior that are followed during the school day. Disruptive and or disrespectful behavior may result in a student not being allowed to participate.

Notre Dame School is a non-smoking facility. There should be no smoking within 25ft. of the building.

TESTING

All students are assessed, informally, throughout the school year. A curriculum-based assessment is conducted annually. Parents/Guardians are given copies of the results. Vocational Center: An Adaptive Behavior Scale and Job Interest/Aptitude Survey will be completed on each student prior to graduation. Curriculum based assessments are used for math, reading and daily living skills. Parents/Guardians are advised when the tests are completed. A complete psychological and achievement battery can be requested through DISD by calling Child Find at 972-581-4210. Students may be eligible for speech and/or other services through DISD but you must first contact Child Find to request an evaluation.

TRANSITION

Transition is the process of preparing a student and his/her family to move from the school setting to adult life. The school will work with the student and his/her family to develop an Individual Transition Plan that addresses the student/family needs in the following areas: Vocational, Residential, Income, Medical, Long Term Care and Support, Recreation/Leisure, and Transportation. This plan will be developed when the student enters the Bridges Program and will be reviewed and updated when the student is preparing to graduate from the vocational center. Parents are encouraged to participate in this planning process to assure that they receive the necessary support services to enhance student community participation.

All parents upon admission are highly encouraged to add their child's name to the waiting list for Home and Community Based Services (HCS) or CLASS. These are waiver lists that provide many needed services to families of children/adults with Intellectual disabilities. Waiting lists are long, if you have not signed up. Please do so. This can be accomplished by calling your local disability agency. In Dallas the agency is Metrocare (214-743-1200) in Plano it is Lifepath (972-727-9133). The state agency phone number is 877-438-5658. In the eastern counties the agency is Lakes Regional (972-524-4159)

TUITION

Tuition for the school year is set by the Board of Directors annually. Tuition for the 2018-2019 school year is **\$9250**. **This figure does not reflect the true cost of education at Notre Dame, which is over \$16,500**. Pledges to the Annual Fund and other fundraising activities help to make up the deficit between the cost of care and the tuition. Every parent is expected to contribute to the Annual Fund. No amount is too small; 100% participation is our goal. A limited amount of financial assistance is available for persons who cannot pay the full tuition. Applications for this assistance are made in the spring when registration forms are distributed. In order to apply for financial assistance, Parents/Guardians must apply through the FACTS tuition grant and aid program. A committee of the board reviews the applications and makes recommendations for assistance based on the information submitted.

All families are required to sign up for the FACTS Tuition Management program and must use this system to pay their tuition and other miscellaneous fees including lunch, day care, transportation and other fees as appropriate.

If tuition is delinquent more than two months the student will not be allowed to attend school.

Prospective graduates' tuition balance must be paid before graduation. A prospective graduate may not take part in the graduation exercises if his/her tuition balance is not current at the time of graduation.

VOLUNTEERS

The Notre Dame School has a successful volunteer program. Students from local public and Catholic high schools, universities, as well as parents and other interested adults and adolescents, serve as peer tutors on a regular weekly basis. These volunteers provide supplemental help to students and teachers and are a valuable resource to the school. **All volunteers over the age of 18, including parents, must complete an application, view a training video, submit three references and have a background check. Please call the office if you would like to have a packet sent to you. It is requested that all new parents complete this information packet. This process must be renewed every other year. All parents are asked to provide a minimum of 15 hours of volunteer service annually. A list of volunteer opportunities will be posted. Volunteer training must be updated annually.**

VISITORS

Parents/Guardians are most welcome to visit and observe their child at Notre Dame. However, parents/guardians are asked to call the office to set the time and day they would like to visit. All visitors are asked to wear a "Visitor" badge while in the school building. These are obtained in the office at the time of the visit. Interested persons wanting to tour the facilities are most welcome. For dates and time of tours, please call the school office.