Bulldog Banner

August 28, 2026

Our Mission:

Lead with Strength.
Live with Integrity.
Learn with Perseverance.
Leave with Confidence.

Dear NES Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year at Nappanee Elementary! We just completed our first full week of school! While we're just getting started, there is already plenty of excitement throughout our building. Classrooms are buzzing with learning, students are getting to know their teachers and classmates, and we're beginning to settle into the routines that make each school day run smoothly.

So much work happens behind the scenes before our students ever walk through the doors, and I want to thank our staff for the countless hours they put into preparing for a new school year. I also want to thank you, our families, for helping your children get off to such a great start. It truly takes all of us working together to create a school where kids feel safe, supported, and excited to learn.

A special thank-you to everyone who joined us for Back-to-School Night! It was great to see so many of you in our building, and we appreciate the opportunity to begin the year together. That partnership between home and school is one of the most important parts of a successful school year, and we look forward to continuing to build it throughout the year.

At the end of each month you will receive our Bulldog Banner. It will include upcoming events, important reminders, celebrations, and other information to help keep your family connected to what's happening at NES. Families who have provided an email address will receive the newsletter electronically, while a paper copy will be sent home to families without email access. There is so much to look forward to this year, and I'm excited about the learning, growth, friendships, and memories that await our students. Thank you for trusting us with your children and for being such an important part of the NES family. Here's to a fantastic year together!

Have a great weekend,
Mr. Randy Cripe, Principal

Dates to Remember

Jog-A-Thon Collections	Sept. 2 - Sept. 16
PTO Meeting @ 3:30	Sept. 3
Labor Day: No School	Sept. 7
Picture Day	Sept. 14
Jog-A-Thon	Sept. 18
Book Fair	Sept. 25 - Oct. 1
Bulldog Open House	Oct. 1

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TEAM BULLDOGS

Visit our Facebook page

Nappanee Elementary News & Notes

Skyward Family Access: Please be sure to check over your Skyward Family Access account to make sure that all household and emergency contacts have been added. We have found many accounts that only have one parent listed and no additional emergency contacts. Visitors must be on the student's emergency contact list in order to pick students up. If they are not, the office must receive an email, note, or call from the student's guardian giving permission for that person to do so.

Food Services: You can access your child's food services account through Skyward Family Access. On the Food Services tab, you can see purchase and payment history, sign up for email notifications on low meal balances (under account settings), add money to your child's lunch account, and apply for assistance for meals. Food Service prices are located on the back of the food service menu each month.

SchoolPass: If you will be making any changes to your child's normal dismissal schedule, we would appreciate you doing it through the SchoolPass app instead of emailing or calling the office. When a parent makes a dismissal change in SchoolPass, the parent receives a confirmation email of the change and Mrs. Stutzman and Mrs. Roa are cc'd on that email to show that all parties have been notified. We do have the option of cc'ing the homeroom teacher but decided that we would rather notify the teacher personally. Since teachers don't always have time to check their email, this will ensure that they receive all notifications prior to dismissal time. While we hope that this doesn't lose our personal connection with families, we feel that this is the safest way to guarantee that your child is dismissed to the correct location each day and that a student's dismissal change is being made by the guardian rather than an unverified person calling in. Mrs. Stutzman and Mrs. Roa are familiar with most of our parents' voices and names, however not every staff member who might need to answer the phone is.

Please note:

- Same day requests need to be made by 1:30 p.m.
- All bus changes still need to be made through the transportation department.

Attendance: Please call the school or report your student's absence in SchoolPass by 9:00 a.m. if your child is not going to be attending that day or will be late due to an appointment. You can even report absences in advance in SchoolPass if you know that your child will not be at school. When reporting an absence in SchoolPass, please be sure to mark the reason for the absence in the notes section so that we know how to mark the absence in Skyward. If a reason is not listed, you will receive a phone call for clarification. Students returning to school after an appointment need to be signed in by an adult and have a doctor's note to be excused for the time they missed.

Notice of Planned Absence: If you know your child will be out of school for three consecutive days or more (i.e. vacation, funeral, etc.), please fill out **this form and turn it in at least two weeks in advance, if possible.** Last minute trips make it difficult to plan for work to be done outside of school.

Attendance Letters: Attendance letters are automatically generated in Skyward for students that have accumulated 5 absences, 7 absences, and 10 absences. You will receive an email notification if that happens. This is to make you aware of the total number of instructional days that your child has missed and to encourage you to make sure that your child is in attendance unless he/she is sick.

State Law: It is important that you understand our school's policies and procedures, as well as Indiana State Law, to ensure your child is successful in school. From the time a student enters school until a student is at least 16 years attendance of all students. To attend school under Indiana law means that the student must be physically present in school during regular school hours. If a child experiences excessive absences of concern (including tardies), school policy and state law require schools to report the parent and child to the department of child services. If your student accumulates ten unexcused absences within the school year, we are required to file a petition with the prosecutor's office, alleging a violation of IC 20-33-2-27, the compulsory attendance law. You and your student may need to appear in Juvenile Court.

If we become concerned about your child's attendance, we will call you to set up a meeting to discuss ways that we can work together to get your child to school every day so that they do not fall behind.

Skylert: Skylert is the district's automated notification system that provides emergency alerts and attendance notifications via phone call, e-mail and/or SMS (text message). Parents/guardians have a great deal of control over how to receive these messages. This can be configured through your Skyward Family Access by clicking on the **Skylert** option on the left. By default, SMS text messages will NOT be sent. If you would like to receive text messages, be sure to enter your phone number under the "Text Message Numbers" field and check the boxes of the types of text notifications you would like to receive. Enter only numbers – no dashes, spaces, parenthesis, or other characters. If there is another phone number that needs to be called that doesn't appear in your notification fields, you can add that to Additional Phone 1. When multiple phones are selected, the system will call each phone number, starting with the Primary Phone and continue through the list up to three times until it receives an acknowledgement that the message has been received.

Device Insurance: While device insurance is optional, we strongly encourage families to purchase device insurance for each student. The cost is only $15 for the entire school year and can be paid through Skyward or you can send cash/check to the office in an envelope marked Device Insurance. A simple drop of a device can result in a $200+ fee if your device is not insured. We had several families last year regret not taking advantage of the device insurance that was offered.

Nurse Nuggets: We appreciate the support of our families to self-screen students at home prior to sending them to school. Take time to look over the symptoms listed below. If your child is exhibiting any of these symptoms, especially if the symptoms are new or unrelated to another issue, please keep your child at home. If you have questions, please call the school.

- Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher*
- Sore throat
- New or uncontrolled cough that is causing difficulty in breathing
- Diarrhea, vomiting or abdominal pain*
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- Loss of taste or smell

*Our nurse's closet is running low on clothing, particularly pants. We are grateful for any donations that are given.

The Care Closet: NES is excited to highlight The Care Closet! As educators, we know that there are many things that contribute to a child's successful learning day. This is why we have created a place where the students and staff of NES can come to get items that might help them have a more productive day at school. It will include personal care items (such as hair ties, hygiene products, and snacks) for anyone who needs them. We love and care for everyone in our Bulldog family and are thankful to be able to provide this service.

"The Center" Weekend Food Bags: Wa-Nee Schools will once again be partnering with The Center / Cultivate to provide food bags to families who could benefit from this support over the weekends. Families who indicate a need and would like to sign up can simply contact our school office. We will send home a form for you to complete. The Center will provide a food bag for each student who has returned a form to our office. Food bags will be delivered to classrooms each Friday for students to take home at the end of the day. Students must return the empty food bag on Monday or Tuesday to receive a food bag the following weekend. Students who do not return a food bag will not receive a food bag the following week but would be eligible again once the food bag is returned. This is a great resource for our community and one we hope families will participate in if this could fill a need for you. Please feel free to call the office if you have any questions.

ILEARN Checkpoints (Parent Information): Students in grades 3-5 participate in statewide testing each school year. ILEARN testing takes place in April and May. The state has created an assessment to help prepare students for the spring assessment. The ILEARN Checkpoints will be made available to students in grades 3-5 as a way to measure their progress and readiness. The attached ILEARN Checkpoint Guidance for Families provides a snapshot of what students will experience with these checkpoints throughout the year. Be sure to note there is a separate set of information for each grade.

NES Buddy Bench:

Did you know we have a "Buddy Bench" at NES? When someone is feeling alone and doesn't have anyone to play with at recess, they can take a seat on the Buddy Bench. Students are encouraged to invite anyone they see sitting on the Buddy Bench to come and play with them.

TEAM BULLDOGS:

Our school theme is *"OUR Team!"*—a reminder that when we work together, everyone wins. At NES, we believe in the power of teamwork to build respect across our school community—student to student, staff to student, and staff to staff. Just like in any great game, there are no bench warmers here. Every student and staff member is an important player, and everyone has a role to play.

We will also continue focusing on inclusion, making sure that all voices are heard and all abilities are celebrated. Each of us brings unique strengths and challenges, and by collaborating, encouraging, and lifting each other up, we can make this the best season yet. Let's cheer each other on and show what it means to be part of **OUR Team!**

PAWS:

Check out our PAWS PowToon video to learn about four important Bulldog Basics that we like to emphasize here at NES.