



Trailblazers Parent Manual 2026



Welcome to Trailblazers!

We are all looking forward to a summer that is safe, fun-filled, relaxing, and enjoyable! This packet was written to clarify our operating policies and procedures. Please review the contents of it carefully. All parents are responsible for reading and understanding its contents.

The philosophy of the Northfield Park District Summer Camps is to create an environment that encourages children to have fun and feel safe. Our entire staff strives to provide camp memories that are lasting and enjoyable for your child, with your child's safety as our number one priority.

Director Information

Our Trailblazers Camp is overseen and directed by our Director of Recreation, Vicki Heuer: vheuer@nfparks.org.

Schedule

Camp meets daily, rain or shine, from June 8th-August 7th. Camp runs from 9am to 12pm for the half-day option and 9am to 3pm for the full-day option. Morning drop-off is from 8:45 to 9:05am and the afternoon pick-up times are 11:45am to 12pm or 2:45 to 3pm, depending on which option your camper is registered for.

Outdoors (when possible)

All camps will be held outdoors as much as possible. Because we are outside most of the time, sunscreen is a must! Please use all day protective sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher. Counselors are **not permitted** to apply sunscreen on campers. Applying bug spray is also a good idea; we don't want those bugs ruining their day. Wearing a hat is always a good idea too.

Park District Staff

Training is our most useful tool for ensuring professional, prepared, and caring staff. Before camp begins, the staff is trained in safety, dealing with behaviors in a positive manner, program/activity planning, emergency procedures, and more to prepare our team for a successful summer. Staff members are also trained and certified in CPR and First Aid.

Our staff is your first line of communication! They are busy, but will always make time for questions, concerns, suggestions, and to hear what we're doing well.

Communication

Communication is important to the success of Trailblazers. All of us, parents, counselors, directors, etc. are working together to ensure each child has a positive experience at camp. We can only do this through effective communication. The methods we use are:

- **Camp Calendars**
- Camp calendars are posted on our website at northfieldparks.org. Programs and Events -> Summer Camps -> Camp Calendars-> [Trailblazers Calendar](#). Please note that all camp calendars are subject to change.
- **Weekly Newsletters**
You will be emailed a weekly newsletter every Friday of the summer once camp starts. This newsletter will include the Trailblazers activities to come in the following week.
- **Email**
Please do not hesitate to contact me, vheuer@nfparks.org, with any questions, comments, or concerns throughout the summer.



Field Trips

All our field trips are scheduled as **full days** on Wednesdays. If any of these trips need waivers signed, I will let you know. We will include everything your camper will need on these field trips in the weekly newsletters that will be sent on the Friday before. Check the [camp calendars](#) for these dates. If you have any questions about upcoming camp days, feel free to ask your child's counselor, Camp Director, or myself.

Medical/Emergency Forms

This year, our Emergency Contact and Medical Information form is online [here](#). This Google Form must be completed and submitted for EACH individual camper before their first day of Trailblazers. The Authorized Pick-Up List ([here](#)) must also be completed for each of our families. **Both these forms must be completed and submitted to us before your child will be allowed to attend camp.**

Emergency contacts will be called when parents/guardians are unavailable and your child is sick, injured, or still at camp after it ends. If there are any changes and/or additions to the emergency contacts, please email them to me.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency or accident, camp staff, or a full-time Park District staff member will provide emergency first aid. We will then contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact. If the parent/guardian or emergency contact cannot be reached, and emergency care is required, the staff will call the Northfield Fire Department to transport the child to the nearest hospital, at the expense of the parent/guardian.

Medicines

Necessary medications may be administered to a child during camp upon filling out the Permission to Dispense Medication form. If you need one, ask at the front desk of the Community Center, contact us, or download a copy [here](#). Prescription medications must be labeled. Medicine must be brought in its original container.

Illnesses

For the protection of all campers, your child should be kept at home (we CANNOT accept them at camp) if they show any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature or rash
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Lice
- Discharging of ears or eyes
- Repeated toilet accidents
- COVID-19

Parents should exercise every precaution. Children must be well enough to participate in all regular planned camp activities upon returning to camp from an illness. If a child has a contagious disease, they should be kept at home and the *FACT OF THEIR CONDITION SHOULD BE REPORTED TO ME*. Strep throat, hand-foot-mouth, measles, mumps, chicken pox, head lice, COVID-19, etc. are among these conditions categorized as "highly contagious".

If a child is kept home with a contagious disease a doctor's note is required before that child may return to camp. Doctor's notes should be emailed to me at vheuer@nfparks.org.

If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent/guardian or emergency contact will be called with the request to take the child home.



Clothes/Dress

Please dress your child according to the weather and our camp schedule. A general rule of thumb is to **dress for mess!** They're kids and it's summer, so expect paint, glue, mud, water, and, of course, popsicles on clothes.

It is also very important that all children wear gym shoes to camp because we will be running around and playing games. We don't want anyone to injure their toes, so please no sandals or flip-flops unless we're having a water day!

Camp T-Shirts

Your child will receive a camp t-shirt and bag tag for their backpack brought from home on their first day of camp. **All campers MUST wear their camp t-shirt on field trip days.** Backpacks brought from home can be used to carry extra clothes, sunscreen, towels, water bottles, and other necessities. We will tag everyone's backpack during their first week of camp. Each child will be responsible for carrying their own backpack.

Lost & Found

Items accumulate quickly! If items are marked with names or initials, they can easily be returned. Items not marked will be put in the blue lost and found box in the lobby of the Community Center. At the end of camp, items not claimed will be donated to a local charity. It is the parents' responsibility to check this lost and found box.

Items from Home

If an item from home is brought to camp, the Northfield Park District cannot be held responsible for it. Please do not send your child with any valuable items, toys, etc. as they are easily misplaced.

Parent Supervision

Parents are not permitted at camp after drop-off. Campers not prepared to join their groups at 9:05am, when drop-off ends, can either be left with camp staff or taken home for the day. Parents are not permitted to accompany camp groups to their first activity. No refunds or make-up days will be permitted for campers that are not dropped off.

High Touch High Tech

High Touch High Tech Science will be part of our summer camp program this year! Every child will participate in a 45-minute fun science experiment on Tuesday mornings that will allow them to explore and experiment.

Water Days/Pools Days

Trailblazers will have Water Days on Thursdays this summer. Campers should dress appropriately: swimsuit, sandals or water shoes, towel, camp shirt, and sweatshirt if needed. SPF 15 or higher sunscreen should also be applied **before** coming to camp, as **camp counselors are not permitted to apply sunscreen on campers.** Campers can reapply sunscreen themselves, as needed.

Please have your child wear their swimsuit and sunscreen to camp. We will have sprinklers set up in the park and play water games all morning and maybe more after lunch! **Half-day Trailblazers campers stay in their swimsuits after water activities and full-day campers will be given the opportunity to change during lunch.**

Bike Riding/Walking

We know that some of the Trailblazers campers walk or ride their bikes to camp. Please see link to fill out the [walk/bike form](#). We must have this by the campers' first day of camp to allow them to walk or ride their bike. Please make sure you and your camper about being extremely alert and careful when riding or walking. A crossing guard will be present at the corner of Willow and Wagner from 8:45 to 9am, 11:45am to 12pm, and 2:45-3pm.



Parking

During the summer months, the Community Center is a busy place and parking can be a challenge. Please park in the designated areas only. Please be sure to drive slowly and watch for children walking or riding bikes.

Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures

Trailblazers drop-off begins at 8:45am and ends around 9am, pick-up is 11:45am-12pm for half-day campers and 2:45-3pm for full-day. If you arrive after 9am, you will need to walk your camper into the Community Center where PD staff will get them to where they need to go.

Drop-off/pick-up will be in the turnaround of Middlefork School this summer. We will follow the same drop-off/pick-up procedures as Middlefork School. There will be **NO** parking in the Middlefork turnaround. Counselors and CITs will assist with getting campers in and out of vehicles. We ask that **parents stay in the vehicles** so that this process moves as quickly as possible. If you wish to walk your camper to their group, as many of you may on the first day of camp, please park in the Community Center parking lot or the parking spaces on Wagner Road (north of the school) and use the sidewalk to walk campers to the front of the school.

Upon entering the driveway, drivers with Trailblazers campers should use the driving lane to pull up past the front doors of Middlefork School and then move to the right-hand curbside lane. This portion of the driveway is for Trailblazers drop-off/pick-up and begins just after the playground. Once you have dropped off your camper, please carefully merge into the center driving lane and follow the driveway to the exit at the far north end. As cars leave, waiting cars should pull forward. There is a 5 MPH speed limit in the driveway.

Please see the drop-off/pick-up map on page 8 of this manual.

For security reasons, please inform your child's counselor in writing of any changes in your child's day, especially if your child is going home with someone other than a parent. **Staff will not release your child to any person who has not been authorized, in writing, by the parent(s) to receive the child.**

Late Pick-up Policy

Camp ends at 12pm for half-day camp and 3pm for the full-day option. The camp staff has other commitments. Please be considerate and pick up your children promptly at dismissal time. **Failure to pick up campers by 12 or 3pm will result in a verbal warning for a first offense, and thereafter, a \$10 fine for each 15-minute increment.** Parents that are constantly late in picking up their children from camp may be asked to leave the program.

Snack/Lunch

Please send your child with a nut-free snack each day and include a beverage. If your camper will be with us all day, they will need to bring a snack as well as a lunch each day. If a child does not have a lunch, we will call you to bring something so make sure you check that your full-day camper has brought their lunch. The Northfield Park District does not have food to give campers who forget their snack or lunch. We will eat lunch at approximately 12pm each day. Children are not permitted to share food. **Trailblazers SNACK TIME is NUT FREE, no snacks with nuts.**



Behavior Expectations/Discipline

All campers are expected to always exhibit appropriate behavior. The following guidelines have been developed to help make children's programs safe and enjoyable for all participants. Additional rules may be developed for specific programs as deemed necessary by staff. All camp participants should:

- Show respect to all participants, staff, and volunteers. Campers should follow program rules and take direction from staff.
- Refrain from using abusive or foul language.
- Refrain from threatening or causing bodily harm to self, other participants, or staff.
- Show respect for equipment, supplies, and facilities.

General unacceptable/inappropriate behaviors at camp include:

- Any aggressive behavior (slapping, punching, kicking, biting, etc.) either initiated or in retaliation.
- Any disrespectful behavior toward staff and/or other participants.
- Continuous disruptive behavior.
- Any swearing or inappropriate language.

Northfield summer camps follow a progressive discipline approach to participant-related issues. Depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior, steps may be accelerated or skipped at the discretion of the Camp Directors.

- First Warning
 - The first time any inappropriate/unacceptable behavior occurs, the parent will be notified by phone or in person.
 - If that behavior occurs again that day, the parent(s) will then be called to come and remove the child from the program for the remainder of that day.
- Second Warning
 - If a child continues to display any unacceptable/inappropriate behavior after a first warning has been given, the child will then receive a written note of the second warning.
 - This note will state the unacceptable/inappropriate behavior of the child and notify the parent(s) that one more incident of such behavior could lead to possible removal from the program.
 - This letter must be signed by a parent and returned to a Director the next day of camp.
- Third Warning
 - After a first and second warning have been issued and inappropriate behavior is once again displayed, the parent(s) will be contacted by phone and receive written notice that their child must be removed from the program for a certain period of time or permanently, depending on the severity of behavior.
 - The minimum suspension time after a third warning is issued is 5 camp days, unless otherwise determined by the Camp Directors.
- Final Notice
 - Upon returning to camp after suspension, any inappropriate/unacceptable behavior occurring will be grounds for the Camp Directors to issue the Final Notice.
 - If a Final Notice is issued, the participant will immediately be dismissed from the program.

No refunds are issued for suspensions/dismissals from Northfield Park District programs.



Adding/Switching Days and Refunds

We will try to accommodate requests to add/switch days, if possible, based on space and staffing. However, we have put some policies in place to try to cut down on confusion.

- All registrations for the following week close at 11:59pm on the Sunday before said week begins. No exceptions will be made.
- All day switch requests must be made at least five business days prior to the days being switched so we can notify staff and make sure we have the appropriate supplies and transportation, if applicable.
- Requests to register during the current week will be accommodated based on availability and will be subject to an additional fee.
- Currently, all days are still open, however, we may have to close certain days if we reach maximum participant capacity.

Friday, May 22nd, is the last day to get a refund of any kind for dropping days. After May 22nd no refunds will be issued for any reason.

Happy Summer!

Vicki Heuer

Director of Recreation
Northfield Park District
vheuer@nfparks.org
847.446.4428



MIDDLEFORK SCHOOL TURNAROUND MAP

