



“The fact is that given the challenges we face; education doesn’t need to be reformed — it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education, but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions.”

- **Sir Ken Robinson**

North Star Microschool and Nalu Homeschool Enrichment Program

Welcome, and thank you for your interest in North Star Microschool! If you are looking for a safe and enriching space for your child to learn, grow, and thrive you will be pleased to know that NSM is just that. Since beginning in the fall of 2020, NSM has evolved and adapted to a changing educational climate. Offering both full and part-time program options and serving students in kindergarten through 6th grades, NSM has developed a homeschool-hybrid option for families seeking part-time support for their homeschooling. Nalu Homeschool Enrichment Program offers augmentations in core subjects in addition to classes in Spanish language, art, music, swimming, horseback riding, and cooking. The mission is to provide opportunities for positive social interactions and enrichments for students and to bolster parent's efforts to provide a well-rounded education for their children.

What makes us different?

Microschooling is a relatively new movement in alternative education. Individualized attention and explicit, personalized instruction set North Star Microschool apart from traditional educational models. Through project-based and experience-led learning, unit studies, arts and crafts, music, and field trips, your child will experience education in a whole new way. Outdoor play and choice time give children multiple opportunities to engage with peers. Days are structured but relaxed. There is always time to slow things down, accommodate ability levels, and just enjoy the learning process. We aim to combine both personal and professional knowledge to create a program tailored to your child. They will spend their school days exploring many facets of education. There is so much joy in childhood and Fran firmly believes that children should be given the freedom to explore interests, develop social skills, engage in self-paced learning, and spend time outside the four walls of a classroom!

How will you benefit?

First, your child will LOVE school! Imagine, they will *want* to go to school. It's been incredible to see how much students enjoy their days. This is so key, their days! This is a place where children have the freedom to come in whatever state they are in and have a semblance of control over how the day goes. This is not a one-size-fits-all kind of school. It is an individualized program that caters to the unique needs of students and parents alike. Parent input is always prioritized. It is important that you are part of your child's experience. I am always available to speak with you about any questions or concerns you may have. You are always welcome to come in and be part of your child's day.

Our Teachers

Fran Stuart



As a young child, I was the kid who gathered the neighborhood children for lessons in math and reading. My love for teaching of one sort or another has never waned. My passions include live theater, cooking, horses, swimming, hiking, spending time with my family, and SCUBA diving. As a young mother, I decided to homeschool my oldest child, Laurel. At the time we were living in the Washington D.C., area with three young children. I loved the freedom that homeschooling provided and became very interested in educational reform. Upon moving to Santa Fe, NM, twins followed, and together with my husband, Jimmy, we successfully home-educated all five. Using a variety of resources including community college for Jr. and Sr. high school, all my children have graduated college. I went back to university to finish my degree at the same time my two oldest children began formal classes. I received my bachelor's in education with Highly Qualified in Language Arts status and an endorsement in TESOL and taught in the Santa Fe Public Schools for 4 years. I moved to Colorado in June of 2016 to provide an opportunity for my youngest daughter to climb with ABC Kids Climbing's Elite team in Boulder. I opened 5 Stars Tutoring in 2017 while caring for my elderly mother. In the fall of 2020, I opened a Pandemic pod school and the following year established North Star Microschool.

Kate Otte

Kate teaches multi-media art exploration sessions. With ten years of experience teaching multiple grade levels at The Dawson School, Kate brings both enthusiasm and creativity. From drawing and painting to printmaking, metal embossing, sculpture, and clay work, students will use different art materials and learn a variety of art techniques. She is incredible with children, tailoring projects to all ages and abilities.

"I am always doing what I cannot do YET, to learn how to do it." ~ Vincent Van Gough

Lacey Wheeler

Lacey is a vibrant and talented musician, and we are honored to have her come in to teach private piano lessons and group music. With 32 years of experience, she holds a degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from Colorado State University. She has developed her own curriculum geared toward children's development and music's impact on the brain. Children love her group class! You can find more information [about Lacey](#) here.

Foundational Principals

Vision Statement

North Star Microschool is a home-based learning center catering to students in Pre-K through 6th grade. It is modeled after the “one-room schoolhouse” to provide an educational experience that enriches children academically and socio-emotionally. The setting is relaxed, child-centered, and holistic. We believe that every child deserves to be treated with respect and kindness and that every student can learn. We aim to provide opportunities for growth and development in all aspects of life.

The North Star connotes guidance and direction. With steadiness and clarity, our objective is to offer enriching educational opportunities in a flexible environment. The curriculum is tailored to the individual child. We believe that collaboration is the key to real learning and are committed to the success, confidence, and growth of the whole child. At NSM we believe that children learn through a variety of experiences and that they learn best when given the freedom to choose their path. With mindful guidance, students can tap into their strengths, find support for challenges, and receive instruction that is fitted to their unique person.

Mission Statement

North Star Microschool is founded on the principle that all children are creative, curious beings and deserve an education where they can retain their autonomy, spend time outdoors, be protected from bullying, and experience an individualized education. Childhood is a precious time in life and NSM promotes the theory that children learn naturally and with proper guidance, a love of learning is fostered and developed.

The goal of NSM is to provide a caring, alternative approach to education in a setting where children feel comfortable and can be completely themselves. Using a multi-resourced curriculum, we focus on the development of both academic and socio-emotional skills. Students experience the freedom to develop naturally through play, engaging academic and social activities, and experience-based learning.

Belief Statements

NSM believes that children thrive in a one-on-one setting and that every child can learn.

Our small size allows Fran to individually tailor academic content. Students engage both independently and collaboratively with learning tasks and have plenty of one-to-one interaction with teachers. This nurtures confidence and supports students to fully embrace concepts that might otherwise be lost to them in a public school setting.

NSM believes that students should feel safe at school.

There is zero tolerance for bullying. Problems are solved in supportive and constructive ways. This is important because so many people have wounds from their experiences with other children and staff in public schools. When problems between students arise, address them immediately and work to find sustainable solutions.

NSM believes in developing the whole child.

We provide rich experiences designed to promote students' interests. Through unit study, play, social interaction, and individualized attention children are encouraged and have time to pursue their unique interests.

NSM believes that children are people too and should be honored and respected.

Children learn what they live. At NSM, your child will be given the respect they deserve. Their opinions, personal preferences, and ideas will all be honored. It is important to find our voice and confidently stand in who we inherently are.

NSM believes in a wholehearted approach to education.

We believe in a holistic approach to education. Every part of a child matters. Children come from a variety of home lives, have had many experiences, and possess multiple and varied abilities. Addressing each part of the child comprehensively is so important to the whole child.

NSM values strong communication between home and school.

Fran speaks with parents regularly and will schedule one parent-teacher conference in the fall and one in the spring. Communication between home and school is critical to student success. As part of supporting the whole child, this piece cannot be overlooked.

Foundational Principals

Multi-faceted learning Experiences

Children are provided with a variety of learning experiences. From reading, writing, and arithmetic to horseback riding, cooking, arts and crafts and outdoor play, Spanish Language and Chess students are given a variety of enrichments. At NSM, we believe that the development of the whole person is crucial. Children need positive guidance, explicit instruction, and a safe space to grow.

One-on-One Instruction

Class size is generally under 12 students, and this allows for direct instruction. When students are struggling with academic concepts, individualized support is readily available.

Problem Solving

We are a multi-level and age “one room schoolhouse.” Our goal is to create an environment that fosters both academic and socio-emotional growth in your child. As students collaborate with others in a mixed age setting, they learn how to help each other and work together.

Creativity

Unit Study fosters creativity by allowing children to engage with history, science and social studies in ways that promote comprehension and deepen understanding in a variety of ways. Hands on crafts and projects associated with the unit give students fun opportunities to explore content and take ownership of their learning.

Child Centered

At NSM children come first, every day. They are the focus of why we do what we do. Your child’s needs, desires, individual ability and character, academic progress, and social development are Fran’s priority. No matter what, your child is wholly considered in every aspect of the school day.

Respect

Mutual respect is taught and is non-negotiable at NSM. When issues arise, Fran gives every child an opportunity to express feelings and explain problems. Mutual respect is an essential part of what makes NSM different than public school. Your child’s autonomy and identity are rooted in them receiving respectful interactions with both teachers and peers.

Parent Teacher Cooperation

Communication is everything! It is vital that NSM hears from you regularly and especially as problems arise. This is a safe space committed to your child’s wellbeing and education. It is imperative that communication stays strong and current between home and school.

Tracking Progress

While NSM does not follow the traditional standards-based assessments of the public schools, we do track progress in multiple ways. Students are assessed upon enrollment in math, reading, and writing at the start of each term as well as through conversations with parents. The concept of progress can be interpreted subjectively so it is important to discuss your specific goals for your child at the beginning of each term. Fran is committed to your child’s progress and having clear understanding of expectations for progress is vital. Assessments are given both during and at the end of instruction. There is daily progress monitoring as students achieve mastery of concepts. I use online learning programs, daily checks for understanding, as well as unit quizzes and journal writing to keep track of how students are doing.

Class Offerings

<p style="text-align: center;">Science/Social Studies Tuesday or Wednesday TBA</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Writer's Workshop Wednesday 9:30-10:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Right Start Math Monday 9:30-11:30</p>
<p>Each month we will travel to a new continent. We will discover cultures, geographies, foods, religions, and languages! These visits will be fast and furious with the aim of sparking imagination and interest in the broader world.</p> <p>In Science, we will connect real-world events to our explorations of topics. Using methods of scientific inquiry, students are challenged to ask questions! They will have opportunities for hands-on learning, experimentation, and collaboration with peers.</p>	<p>Students are encouraged to think of writing as a tool for communication that is both artistic and expressive. We will work through the writing process from brainstorming ideas to presentation. Students will build confidence in their ability to write well-formed pieces on a variety of topics including expository research, personal narrative, compare and contrast, descriptions, and more.</p>	<p>Math is taught using Right Start Mathematics. The AL Abacus helps students to see the patterns in numbers. With clearly outlined objectives, lessons are designed and structured to promote a deeper understanding of concepts. Activities, games, and hands-on manipulatives help by giving kids multiple opportunities to engage with the material being taught. You can learn more about this program at http://rightstartmath.com/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Music Tuesdays 1:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Art Mondays 1:30-3:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spanish Tuesdays 9:30-10:30</p>
<p><i>Every Tuesday Lacey Wheeler joins us and gives private piano lessons in addition to a rollicking group music class geared to all ages. She is a comprehensive and vivacious teacher who builds foundations while scaffolding the complexities of learning a musical instrument. Her group music is a wonderful mix of voice, music history and musical instruments!</i></p>	<p>Kate Otte comes in each week and with 10 years with the Dawson School under her belt, she brings unparalleled expertise in not only artistic technique but also a unique and engaging way of working with kids. She masterfully constructs lessons to teach the fundamentals of art. From holographic printing and fractal design to clay work and collage, Kate's class is truly dynamic.</p>	<p>Come learn basic Spanish grammar, phrases, vocabulary, verb tenses, and cultural customs of Latin American Spanish. Fran uses La Classe Divertida curriculum as well as her own materials to provide a fun and comprehensive class!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Equestrian/Farm Days Thursdays</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Swimming Thursdays</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Field Trips Thursdays 9:00-3:00</p>
<p>Blue Ambition is Fran's gentle mare. She loves children and carrots. Students can experience individual riding lessons as well as learn how to handle horses on the ground. Blue lives on a farm in Ft. Lupton which we visit regularly.</p>	<p>Swimming is a lifelong passion for Fran. She is an experienced swim instructor and has worked as a lifeguard and USA Swimming Lane Coach. She understands body mechanics in water and enjoys helping children feel comfortable and confident as they develop new skills.</p>	<p>We take bi-weekly field trips to a variety of attractions in Denver and the surrounding areas. Some of our favorite spots include the Butterfly Pavilion, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, My Nature Lab, WOW Museum, Denver Children's Museum, and Zoo.</p>

Curriculum and Learning Materials

Curriculum is tailored, based on student needs and includes:

Reading, Spanish, Math, Online Programing, Science, Social Studies and Writing

Right Start Mathematics

Easy Peasy Science

Nebraska Scientific

La Classe Divertida

IXL, Guided Readers

Prodigy

Education.com

School Supplies are included in tuition:

Pencils, Notebooks, Binders

Tablets, Computers, Books

Some craft supplies

Field Trips/Special Projects

We take field trips regularly and engage in projects that require a bit of extra support from families. Costs will be minimal, given notice ahead of time, and include field trips to museums (entry fee), crafting stores (special supply costs for an activity), or recreational activities (entry or equipment fees).

Spring Schedule

Hours of Operation, School Closures, and Holidays

North Star Microschool Full-day classes: **Monday-Thursday from 8:30am-3:00pm**

Nalu HSE schedule is variable. Full-day/Half-day and class drop-in options are all available.

NSM runs on an independent school schedule. We try to match the St.Vrain District's schedule the best we can, however, some dates may not coincide. Below are the dates that we **will be closed**:

School Starts January 8th (meeting M-W for the first two weeks)

March 18th -22nd (Spring Break)

School ends on Thursday, May 23rd

Tuition and Fees

Spring 2024 Full-time NSM Tuition Payments and Sibling Discounts Tuition is due on the first of each month.	Spring 2024 NaluHSE Tuition Payments/Sibling Discounts Tuition can be paid by the class or monthly for 4 classes at once. There will be 14 classes in total for the semester. Prices are as follows: (sibling discount is 20%)																																																		
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Additional Fees are sometimes required for field trips. Lacey Wheeler charges separately for piano lessons.

Nalu Homeschool Enrichment

Nalu Homeschool Enrichment is a program within NorthStar Microschool that offers drop-in options for homeschooled students. Parents may choose one or more classes per week or opt from a full day or more with us. Class choices include Right Start Math, Writer's Workshop, Passport to Fun, Science, and Spanish. We are also offering a Field Trip Day and Farm Visits. Individual Classes are \$30.00 and full day drop in is \$52.50. Descriptions of our classes and information about enrollment can be found on our website at

<http://northstarmicroschool.com/naluclasses>